



## **October 2016 MHBA Member Spotlight: Anamarie Reyes Kolden, Yost & Baill, LLP**

*I want to show young Latina attorneys that they can make it in this profession, even though the path may be tough. My advice to young attorneys is that if you are struggling, do not be afraid to ask for help.*



It is with great pleasure and excitement that we continue our MHBA Member Spotlight series by celebrating the recent election of Anamarie Reyes Kolden to the partnership of Yost & Baill, LLP. Anamarie is one of a handful of Latina attorneys in Minnesota who have achieved the distinguished title of Partner, and we are honored to share this exciting news with our MHBA community.

The granddaughter of a Mexican immigrant (Ruben Gutierrez, her late grandfather), Anamarie was born in San Diego, California and moved to Minnesota when she was thirteen. She was raised by her mother, RoseMary, in the small town of Hinckley, Minnesota and had instilled in her from a young age that she could be anything she set her mind to. When asked how she knew she wanted to become a lawyer, she recalled that she originally had her heart set on becoming a judge, but then her mother explained she would first need to become a lawyer. Thus began her journey to partnership.

The first woman in her family to graduate from college, Anamarie received her B.A. from the University of Minnesota. Rather than head straight to law school, she applied for a job as a legal assistant to make sure the legal profession was right for her. To her great fortune, she was hired at the firm where she would later spend her entire career, Yost & Baill (then Wasserman and Baill). After a couple of years of experiencing private practice at a small firm, she knew she was meant to be a lawyer. She received her J.D. from the University of Minnesota Law School, and then clerked for the Honorable Thomas W. Wexler (Fourth Judicial District) for just over two years.

Anamarie joined Yost & Baill as an attorney in 2003. Over the past thirteen years, her practice has grown to focus on civil litigation of property subrogation losses in the areas of products liability, construction defects, and general torts. A large part of her practice involves coordinating fire investigations for residential and commercial insurance companies across the United States, then litigating those cases when the responsible parties are identified. She brings an exceptional amount of experience to her clients' cases as she has reviewed, handled, or supervised the handling of over 2,000 files on every subrogation scenario imaginable. Anamarie finds meaning in her practice knowing that her work helps make the world a safer place – by holding manufacturers, contractors and others accountable for their defective work and products.

Anamarie was named a Rising Star Attorney by *Minneapolis/St. Paul Magazine*, *Law & Politics Magazine* and *Twin Cities Business*, 2005 and 2008. She has also been an active member of the National Association of Subrogation Professionals (NASP) since 2003, and became one of the first attorneys to be awarded NASP's Certified Subrogation Recovery Professional designation in 2004. She regularly presents at NASP conferences on topics ranging from small property subrogation to subrogation against governmental entities, and has assisted in the re-writing of the Certified Subrogation Recovery Specialists (CSRP) guidebook.

Despite these stellar credentials, she shared that it has not been an easy path to becoming an established practitioner in a field primarily dominated by men. Often the only female present at site investigations, she has developed skills that allow her to command the attention of all groups of people. Over the years she has formed close relationships with other members of the subrogation bar, which has allowed her to continually find joy in her work despite the lack of female counterparts.

Aside from spending countless hours devoted to developing her practice, Anamarie dedicates herself to others by serving as a mentor through several organizations including the MHBA, Leaders of Today and Tomorrow, and Big Brothers Big Sisters. She explained that she loves teaching others, and that her favorite part about mentoring is the opportunity to collaborate and learn from her mentees. In a time where millennials are gaining momentum in the professional world, she finds that learning from a younger generation helps guide her as she continues developing her career path.

When asked why she spends so much time mentoring young women, she explained that she wants to give to others what she did not have for herself – a strong female attorney mentor to help her navigate her career. Despite not having a female mentor, she thrived as a mentee of a partner who has mentored her since her time as a legal assistant. Now that she is experienced in her career, she enjoys the opportunity to help others develop their own. She stressed that being a good mentor is more about demonstrating a willingness to be involved in someone else's professional development, rather than having all the answers.

In her free time, Anamarie enjoys spending time with her husband of 23 years (Richard). Together and separately, they have traveled throughout the United States as well as Japan, France, and Germany (she has also studied the languages of each country!). During the next few months, you'll find these football season ticket holders cheering on the Gophers at TCF Bank Stadium and the Vikings at U.S. Bank Stadium.

Over the next few years, Anamarie is looking forward to continuing to build her practice as a Partner at Yost & Baill, traveling the world, and becoming more involved with the MHBA mentor program.

Anamarie is a remarkable attorney and mentor, who continues to pave the way for other Latina attorneys hoping to accomplish the same. Congratulations, Anamarie!