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COVER STORY

SFNet's 40 Under 40 Profiles

MEET THE INDUSTRY'S FUTURE LEADERS



■ **MATTHEW M. WEISS**
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Matthew Weiss is an associate in the Bankruptcy, Restructuring & Creditor Rights Practice Group at Parker, Hudson, Rainer & Dobbs LLP. He's a graduate of the University of Georgia and the University of Georgia School of Law. Following law school, Matt clerked for the Honorable Marvin H. Shoob of the United States District Court for the Northern District of Georgia. Matt's practice focuses on creditor rights and insolvency-related litigation in bankruptcy, federal and state courts. Matt serves on the Board of the Atlanta Bar Association Bankruptcy Section and has been named for the "On the Rise" distinction by The Daily Report, as one of the "Ones to Watch" by The Best Lawyers in America, as a "Rising Star" for Bankruptcy and Business Litigation by Super Lawyers, and as one of Georgia's "Legal Elite" by Georgia Trend Magazine. Matt has also been published in the Georgia Law Review, the American Bankruptcy Law Journal, the Journal of Corporate Renewal, and the American Bankruptcy Institute Journal.

How do you define a good leader?

A good leader is someone who sets a positive example and works for their own success and for the success of their team members. Throughout my career I have tried to demonstrate the attributes of a strong leader, even where I was not the most senior attorney working on a matter. For example, in a recent trial in a bankruptcy case, I took a lead role among several law firms representing multiple clients in drafting briefs for the bankruptcy judge's consideration.

What role has mentorship played in your career?

I have been fortunate to have a series of strong mentors during my career in bankruptcy. At each step, professional mentors at Parker Hudson and my previous firms provided me with guidance on how to be an effective bankruptcy lawyer, how to be a good litigator, how to generate business, and how to be a good firm citizen. I'd like to think that I have played the same role for junior attorneys that I currently work with at Parker Hudson.

What advice would you give on how to self-advocate?

Being a good self-advocate requires strong communication skills. It's important to let those who you work with, including partners or other senior managers, know what your needs are and where you want to take your career. I've been fortunate at Parker Hudson to work with other attorneys who have been very focused on helping me accomplish my professional goals.

What would you say to anyone considering a career in secured finance?

I think a few things are important for anyone interested in becoming

a bankruptcy lawyer. First, it is critical to develop strong litigation skills in addition to the transactional skills that are typically associated with a commercial finance or bankruptcy legal practice. In particular, I would encourage potential lawyers to consider a clerkship (either with a bankruptcy court or a district court) to become familiar with what happens in the courtroom. Second, it is important to develop a strong skillset in other litigation or transactional work because bankruptcy can be a cyclical practice. Overall, I have found bankruptcy to be a very rewarding area of the law to work in.

How would you encourage young professionals to become more involved in their community or volunteer? How have these activities outside of work helped shape your professional life?

Community engagement should be a critical piece of any young professional's career plan. Through my involvement with numerous boards and leadership programs, both in the bankruptcy/insolvency world as well as with various religious, political, and civic organizations, I have met a broad range of people who have served as professional mentors, served as sources of new business, and introduced me to various networks that have allowed me to further my career. I think my involvement with the local Bankruptcy Bar Association has been particularly beneficial, as it has allowed me to meet many other bankruptcy attorneys practicing in Atlanta and to interact with many of our local bankruptcy judges. These interactions are helpful when I'm in the courtroom and am a familiar face to the bankruptcy judge or opposing counsel and when other bankruptcy lawyers think of me and Parker Hudson to refer potential business.



Congratulations to

Matthew M. Weiss

on being named a recipient of the
SFNet's 40 Under 40 Award.

We celebrate Matt and the
other recipients recognized
for their contributions to the
secured finance industry.

