

## **CRITERIA FOR THE BUSINESS LAW SECTION'S "BUSINESS LAWYER OF THE YEAR AWARD"**

The State Bar's Business Law Section generally recognizes a "Business Lawyer of the Year" with an award. Selection of the award recipient begins with a call for nominations (and associated deadline) e-blasted to section members with a corresponding notice published in the *Bar Bulletin*. Nominations may be made by section members and submitted to the section's Award Committee. Section members may make as many nominations as they like and should bear in mind that a detailed description of what makes their nominee the best candidate should accompany the nomination.

The Award Committee reviews all nominations looking first and foremost for attorneys who promote the section's stated purpose, which is:

- A. to aid lawyers in the practice of corporate, business and banking law through research, educational programs and publications in related areas; and
- B. to represent the views of the members of the section to the legislature, the State Bar and the public.

Since the award is intended to recognize an attorney who, within his or her practice and location, is the model of a New Mexico business lawyer, the Award Committee considers additional criteria beyond promotion of the section's purpose. The committee takes into consideration the fact that section members work in communities throughout the state, work as sole practitioners, at non-profits and at firms, and include students, professors, public sector attorneys and in-house counsel. Likewise, section members' practices span the legal spectrum—working with transactions, litigation, and legislation—and they serve individuals, small and large businesses, banks, government agencies, non-profits and more. As a result, the following criteria are not hard-and-fast rules or strict standards, but rather serve as a framework for the Award Committee's analysis.

### **The successful nominee should demonstrate:**

1. Professionalism and integrity by all of the following:
  - a. Promoting the honor, dignity and professionalism of lawyers.
  - b. Promoting ethical conduct and collegiality within the practice.
  - c. Being held in high regard in the profession.
2. Superior legal service by one or more of the following:
  - a. Demonstrating superior knowledge of the businesses he or she represents.
  - b. Demonstrating superior knowledge in his or her practice of business law.
  - c. Reviewing and promoting improvements to New Mexico's business legislation and regulations.
  - d. Providing excellence in client counsel and care.
  - e. Building an in-house legal team through leadership skills and in-depth knowledge of the business enterprise.
  - f. Contributing to the development, enhancement or success of the individuals, businesses, or corporate or government employer he or she represents, including pro bono work or innovative practice measures.
  - g. Creating and adopting innovative approaches to the practice.
3. Exemplary service to the section by one or more of the following:
  - a. Making significant contributions to the section or to business law generally in the state of New Mexico.
  - b. Expanding the resources of business lawyers by providing educational, networking and mentoring opportunities.
  - c. Serving in section leadership posts or on special projects and committees.
  - d. Assisting the section in evaluating legislation and regulations.
  - e. Assisting the section in evaluating jurisprudence.
  - f. Advancing the knowledge, skills and interests of section members.
  - g. Demonstrating innovative thinking or leadership skills.
4. Service to the public by one or more of the following:
  - a. Supporting the public interest in a fair and effective system of justice.
  - b. Demonstrating outstanding community or pro bono contributions.

