



BURCH & CRACCHIOLO

## Weathering a Global Pandemic: One Law Firm's Resilience Through Service and Integrity

by Wendi A. Sorensen and Brandon Drea

Five months ago, companies abandoned the traditional office setting and transitioned to working remotely in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Companies reluctantly were forced to reduce employee salaries or, in the worst-case scenarios, furlough or lay off employees. Law firms throughout the United States were similarly impacted, requiring reduced salaries for shareholders, partners, and associates. Several firms were forced to cancel their Summer Associate Programs which offer first and second year law students the opportunity to gain valuable experience working at a law firm.

Equally important, law firms often utilize these programs to recruit and evaluate future talent, often extending post-graduate employment to summer associates when the program culminates. Despite these significant economic challenges, Burch & Cracchiolo, P.A., remains resilient and continues to thrive.

CELEBRATING



SINCE 1970

BURCH & CRACCHIOLO

During the first quarter of 2020, while economic uncertainty tasked Arizona companies with difficult decisions regarding office closures, reducing salaries, or furloughing or laying off employees, Burch & Cracchiolo celebrated its 50th anniversary by relocating its offices from North-Central Phoenix to the 17th floor of the BMO building located in downtown Phoenix.

The celebration continued by diversifying the firm's already extensive practice areas by hiring veteran criminal defense attorney, Clark Derrick, and expanding Burch & Cracchiolo's service to include criminal defense. The firm also defied the national and local trend of eliminating Summer Associate Programs, hiring four summer associates, law students from the Arizona State University Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law and the University of Arizona James E. Rogers College of Law. In the midst of a global pandemic that deeply impacted—and continues to impact—national and local communities, Burch & Cracchiolo found strength and stability in a time of uncertainty by leaning on the principles established by its founding partners; principles deeply rooted in serving the Arizona community.

Founded in 1970 by Haze Burch, now deceased, and Dan Cracchiolo, Burch & Cracchiolo is one of the Southwest's premier law firms. Its attorneys are among the most highly regarded and recognized leaders in the areas of business and corporate law, construction, insurance defense, personal injury, estate and wealth preservation planning, family law, finance, labor and employment, litigation, real estate, and taxation. In 2020, in addition to expanding its practice areas to include criminal law, the firm hired veteran personal injury attorney, R.J. "Bucky" Slomski, to join an already thriving personal injury practice. Burch & Cracchiolo's success in a tumultuous climate can be distilled down to one characteristic: integrity. The firm's commitment to its clients, employees, and the Arizona community are all motivated by serving with integrity.



Dan Cracchiolo set the standard for zealously advocating with integrity. He instilled in attorneys the value of never quitting; of fighting until the very last round for every client. These valuable principles of client service have contributed to Burch & Cracchiolo's growth over the past 50 years. In 2020, the firm has positioned itself for greater success. Burch & Cracchiolo is large enough to handle clients' diverse needs, yet small enough to maintain strong, personal relationships with its clients. This personal, client-centric approach has driven the firm's success from its inception and has created a loyal, devoted client base.



BURCH & CRACCHIOLO

Regardless of whether Burch & Cracchiolo serves a client one time or has served a client for three decades, the firm's representation remains unwaveringly centered around advocating for the client's needs. In times of uncertainty, clients never question Burch & Cracchiolo's dedication and devotion to their best interests. Burch & Cracchiolo's culture is built on integrity. The firm's unparalleled dedication and devotion to the best interests of the attorneys, paralegals, legal assistants, and administrative employees is demonstrated by an exceptionally low turnover rate. Several partners have been with Burch & Cracchiolo for more than 20 years. Many attorneys have worked their entire legal career at the firm, which creates a rare comradery and collegiality that is difficult to find in the legal world.



This continuity makes Burch & Cracchiolo "practically recession proof," according to Dan Cracchiolo. Attorneys remain at Burch & Cracchiolo because the firm genuinely invests in their interests, whether that interest is related to the law or philanthropy. During the COVID-19 pandemic when companies are universally reducing salaries and laying off employees, Burch & Cracchiolo's shareholders reduced their salaries to prevent salary reductions and layoffs, and to ensure the associates, assistants, and administrative employees' salaries would remain consistent. From the top down, every person is valued. This is the glue that binds the firm together.

At the core of Burch & Cracchiolo's identity is its devotion to the Arizona community. This is consistent with the firm's dedication to its clients and employees who are members of the very same community Burch & Cracchiolo serves. Built on the principles of integrity and service instilled by Haze Burch and Dan Cracchiolo, and championed by President Andy Abrahams and current shareholders, the firm's commitment to Arizona is widely recognized. For the past 50 years, Burch & Cracchiolo has helped to strengthen and fortify the Arizona community. Haze Burch devoted his time and expertise to several causes, with a special emphasis on education and human services. Burch also served on the Board of the Phoenix Union High School District, the Maricopa Community College District, and as an Advisory Board member for the Salvation Army. Mirroring Burch's service, Dan Cracchiolo's commitment to the Arizona community includes advancing diverse initiatives in medicine, humanities, and law. He established the Steele Foundation which provides students access to education, culture and the arts, and currently serves as the Foundation's Chairman. Today, Burch & Cracchiolo's service to the community does not go unnoticed. It has been recognized as one of the "Top 25 Most Philanthropic Companies in Arizona," and champions programs like the Star Teacher Program, Local First Arizona, and supporting several major non-profit organizations in Arizona.



In the middle of a global pandemic, Burch & Cracchiolo's resilience and success is directly attributable to its integrity and service to the community. Individuals and corporations want to do business with Burch & Cracchiolo not only because of its outstanding service, but because of its dedication to supporting and uplifting Arizona communities. In difficult and challenging times, people find comfort in knowing that Burch & Cracchiolo will support their needs and protect their interests. The whole is greater than the sum of its parts. For 50 years, Burch & Cracchiolo has devoted itself to serving every aspect of the community to support a stronger Arizona. This devotion does not recede or subside during recessions or pandemics. Rather, in unprecedented times, Burch & Cracchiolo relies on its founding principles of integrity and service to provide for the greater good of Arizona.