

Top Washington Lawyers

The judging is complete and now the 2009 Top Washington Lawyers can be revealed. It's no secret that the nation's best and the brightest legal minds can be found in Washington. What is surprising is the impact that D.C.'s lawyers have on every facet of business and politics. And even more intriguing are their stories, how they got to the top and what drives them to this day.

Bankruptcy James Savin



James Savin

Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP

Age: 37

Family: Married, two children

Hometown: Doylestown, Pa.

Law school: Emory University School of Law

Memorable case: Representing the WorldCom Inc. creditors' committee and helping the company restructure with massive oversight by the Federal Communications Commission

In college, James Savin decided to pursue a career in law even though to that point, his only interaction with law was watching courtroom television shows.

Savin planned on practicing corporate law, but says he quickly learned it could be years until he would feel truly involved in cases.

Now the leader of Akin Gump's Washington office financial restructuring practice, Savin says he turned to bankruptcy law because he wanted to be an active participant in the legal process.

"I realized that with corporate law, big departments had over 300 people. I wanted to get involved right away," he says.

Savin says he enjoys the challenge of understanding a variety of industries and figuring out ways to help different companies.

And help them, he has.

Savin has represented the official committees of unsecured creditors and bondholders in numerous restructurings, including those of music programming giant Muzak, flooring manufacturer Congoleum Corp. and General Growth Properties, which owns properties such as Tysons Galleria, the Shops at Georgetown Park and White Marsh Mall.

Savin, who moved from New York to Washington in 2006, says he loves working at the country's epicenter of law and policy.

"In New York, finance rules everything, in Los Angeles, it's all about entertainment, but here, law is king," he says.

Despite his professional successes, Savin says the best thing in his life is his family. With his office right around the corner from his Dupont Circle home, Savin's favorite thing to do is spend time with his wife and children.

"I'm not one of those guys that plays golf for hours on the weekends. I love being with my family — that's what it's all about," he says.

