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By: Virginia Lawyers Weekly December 29, 2020

Kirk Schroder

Schroder Brooks Law Firm PLC
Alexandria – Richmond – Charlottesville

Education / Certifications

JD, University of Richmond School of Law

Ph.D, University of Virginia
Chair, American Bar Association
Entertainment & Sports Law section,
2009-2011

Co-Editor of The Essential Guide To
Entertainment Law (Juris Publishing 2019)

Former lecturer in Entertainment Law, University of Virginia Law School and University of Richmond Law School

Former president, Virginia Board of Education
Admitted in New York, DC, Virginia and Georgia.



What is the field or practice area for which you are best known?

Entertainment and art law, specifically, film, television, music, literary publishing, theater, performing arts, digital media and technology, visual arts, art galleries, talent representation, branded entertainment, public speakers and live performances.

Please describe a signature case, deal or transaction.

Notable clients have been and are: Universal Pictures in numerous film productions; New York Times best-selling authors David Baldacci (Wish You Well), Margot Shetterly (Hidden Figures) and Beth Macy (Dopesick); MTV reality television stars Catelynn and Tyler Baltierra; television documentary company Lone Wolf Media; nationally acclaimed game designer Bruce Glassco; astrologer Susan Hughes; the Amazon Aid Foundation; the International Baptist Mission Board; the

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Please briefly mention up to three additional important cases, deals or transactions.

Representing Charlie Baxter, the key witness in the "Midnight Rider" film production incident in Georgia, through the various government agency investigations and the Hollywood media.

Getting a used battleship from the mothball fleet of the U.S. Navy for use in a major studio film.

I negotiated all of the production matters and found the distribution deal for the documentary film "The Judge" about the life of the late U.S. District Judge Robert R. Merhige Jr.

Describe your approach to working with clients.

Working with artistic and creative individuals is the joy in my work. I am a people person and I have the pleasure of working with some amazing individuals. Being a good listener and communicator are critical. Understanding client objectives, developing strategies and fostering good judgement are key to my work with clients. Entertainment law draws from many legal disciplines from various business customs and practices in the entertainment industry. Bringing all of that together for clients is essential to being a good entertainment lawyer. "Thinking out of the box" to structure a deal or to find a creative solution or simply asking a client "how are you going to make money from that movie or television show"? are not uncommon occurrences in my daily work. I feel very blessed to do what I do.

What is the best career advice you've received?

That I never bothered to listen to the many lawyers, early in my legal career, who told me that an entertainment lawyer would never make it in Virginia.

What developments in business law do you expect to see in 2021?

The way we see "first-run" movies will change as movie chain theaters are fighting for survival. This past August, the longstanding Paramount anti-trust consent decrees were terminated and now, major studios can exert more control over theater houses and streaming first run movie will become more common. The entertainment industry's ability to "tailor" your entertainment experience will continue to advance and content will remain king regardless of what platform you are viewing. And for all of the hype of how electronic books would take over the literary world, holding a good book in your hand will still be just as important as it ever was.

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Ashley S. Brooks
Managing Partner

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Joan B. Davis
Of Counsel

Practice Areas:

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- Intellectual Property/Trademarks
- Modeling Contracts



Will Lewis
Of Counsel

Practice Areas:

- Music Publishing and Recording Contracts
- Digital Media & Technology
- Music Venues and Concert Production

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Virginia Lawyers Weekly is pleased to announce the first group of honorees in our new program recognizing the leading lawyers in a particular field of law.

The first field of practice for "Virginia's Go To Lawyers" is business law.



A "Go To Lawyer" is:

- A lawyer who is an expert in his or her field, well-versed in the nuances of the case law, statutes and regulations clients will encounter.
- A lawyer who is experienced and enjoys a record of success, with many cases and/or transactions that give testimony to the quality advice he or she can provide.
- A lawyer to whom other lawyers make referrals because of his or her expertise and accomplishments.
- A lawyer who can think creatively and identify all options for a client.
- A lawyer you would name when a friend from another state calls and says she has a client who needs some legal help in a given part of our state.
- A lawyer you might call yourself if you needed legal help in his or her field.

Below are the names of 17 outstanding business lawyers. Click on each name for biographical information in response to our questionnaire, including credentials, signature cases, approach to clients and predictions for business law in 2021.

- [Mark R. Baumgartner, Pender & Coward, Virginia Beach](#)
- [Joel M. Birken, Rees Broome, Tysons Corner](#)

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