



R. Culver Schmid

Shareholder

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Culver Schmid, office managing shareholder in the Firm's Knoxville office, is a member of the Real Estate/Finance Group.

Mr. Schmid's practice focuses on commercial transactions including real estate development and finance, business acquisitions, secured lending, commercial condominium law, municipal corporations and administrative law. He represents banks, commercial real estate developers, manufacturing concerns and acts as legal counsel to The Industrial Development Board of the City of Knoxville. Mr. Schmid also has substantial experience representing political candidates and campaign committees on election law matters including campaign finance issues.

By appointment of The Supreme Court of Tennessee, Mr. Schmid serves as a member and chairman of The Board of Professional Responsibility of the Supreme Court of Tennessee which administers the disciplinary process for lawyers in Tennessee. He has served as chairman of The Episcopal School of Knoxville Board of Trustees. He also previously served by appointment of the Governor of Tennessee as a member of The Governor's Council for Judicial Appointments. He currently serves as a member of the Board of Advisors of the University of Virginia Center for Politics.

He previously served on several community boards of directors including The United Way, The Webb School of Knoxville, East Tennessee Historical Society and as chairman of the Board of Commissioners of Knoxville's Community Development Corporation.

Representative Matters

- Represented a private corporation in connection with the development of a Tennessee technology center. This project involved structuring a payment in lieu of tax lease with a city industrial development board (IDB), a sublease from Tennessee Technology University Foundation and a personal property payment in lieu of tax lease between the IDB and the client. The project also involved economic development grants from the State of Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development and Tennessee Valley Authority.
- Represented a pet product supplier in acquisitions of several of its distributors. The transactions included purchase of all the outstanding stock of the seller, assignment of numerous commercial leases and due diligence review of corporate assets.
- Advised Tennessee political candidates on election law and campaign finance, including serving as legal counsel for state-wide gubernatorial campaign committee, in addition to helping convicted felons restore their voting rights.
- Represented a developer in connection with the acquisition, development and sale of a hotel project involving the purchase of a surplus state property office building, which was converted into a boutique hotel with twelve residential condominium units. The project was structured as a commercial condominium in connection with an adjoining hotel and involved substantial real estate issues, including cross easements among the condominium units and the financing of each segment of the project.
- Represented the developer in the creation and financing of a theater in downtown Knoxville which included the use of empowerment zone bonds, new market tax credit financing, and tax increment financing.

- Formed and represented a U.S. subsidiary of a Chilean corporation in the acquisition of a U.S. plastics manufacturer.
- Served as landlord's counsel to the municipal corporation in payment in lieu of tax lease projects (PILOT).
- Served as legal counsel and state of Tennessee lobbyist to the Tennessee Oil and Gas Association in connection with the development of fracking regulations for the oil and gas industry in Tennessee.
- Completed review of more than 3,000 product Harmonized Tariff Schedule classifications and submitted Voluntary-Self Disclosure to U.S. Customs and Border Protection to identify nearly \$2 million in unpaid duties in order to avoid up to \$14 million in penalties on behalf of a U.S. corporation.
- Provided strategic business advice and developed a political plan for a U.S. publicly traded corporation and its foreign subsidiary in response to foreign government threats to legislate a forced sale of the subsidiary and the precipitated withdrawal of a substantial government fine for political reporting unfavorable to the foreign government.



Professional Honors & Activities

- Named a 2025 Thomson Reuters Stand-out Lawyer
- Recipient – The Justice Joseph Henry Award for Outstanding Legal Writing, *Tennessee Bar Journal* (2022)
- Recipient – Baker Donelson's 2021 Knoxville Office Pro Bono Award
- Member – Knoxville, Tennessee and American (Section of Business Law) Bar Associations.
- Member – Knoxville Bar Foundation
- Member – Rocky Mountain Mineral Law Foundation
- Listed in *The Best Lawyers in America*® for Banking and Finance Law and Commercial Finance Law, 2013 – 2025; Business Organizations (including LLCs and Partnerships), 2014 – 2025; Real Estate Law, 2015 – 2025; Economic Development Law, 2017 – 2025
- Named the Best Lawyers® 2025, 2023 and 2020 Business Organizations (including LLCs and Partnerships) "Lawyer of the Year" in Knoxville
- Named the Best Lawyers® 2023 Real Estate Law "Lawyer of the Year" in Knoxville
- Named a "2012 Top Attorney" in Banking and Business/Commercial Law by Knoxville *Cityview* magazine
- Named a Tennessee Supreme Court Attorney for Justice, 2017



Publications

- "Baker's Dozen: Honoring Moms Everywhere," *Women's Initiative Newsletter* (May 2021)
- "Restoring Rights of Individuals Convicted of a Felony Crime: A Manual," *Tennessee Bar Journal* (May 2021)
- "Key Takeaways from Knoxville and Knox County Phased Reopening Plan" (April 28, 2020)
- "Raid on the Mountain: A 1963 Trial in Blount County Portrays the Turbulence of the Civil Rights Movement," *Tennessee Bar Journal* (January 2002)



Speaking Engagements

- "It Pays to Export: Success Stories from Tennessee Businesses," 61st Governor's Conference, Nashville, Tennessee (November 2014)



Education

- University of Tennessee School of Law, J.D., 1984
- University of Virginia, B.A., with distinction, 1981
- The Webb School of Knoxville, 1977



Admissions

- Tennessee, 1984
- U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Tennessee, 1984
- U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Tennessee, 2023
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit, 1984