

# Seven Plunkett Cooney attorneys named industry 'Rising Stars'

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Attorneys Paul J. Dwaihy; Gary W. Francis; Jeffrey S. Hengeveld; Chiara Mattieson, Megan P. McKnight; George A. Netschke, IV; and Nicole E. Wilinski of Plunkett Cooney, one of the oldest and largest law firms in Michigan, were recently named "Rising Stars" in the 2010 issue of *Michigan Super Lawyers* magazine.

Published by Thomson Reuters, *Michigan Super Lawyers & Rising Stars* compiled its lists of rising stars based upon a rigorous selection process that combines a statewide survey of practicing attorneys and independent research by the publisher's attorney-led research staff. To be eligible for inclusion in Rising Stars, a candidate must be either 40-years old or younger or in practice for 10 years or less. No more than 2.5 percent of eligible attorneys are named to the Rising Stars list.

Factors considered in evaluating candidates include, but are not limited to: verdicts and settlements, representative clients, experience, honors and awards, special licenses and certifications, bar and or other professional activity, *pro bono* and community service, scholarly lectures and writings, and other achievements.

In the area of personal injury defense: medical malpractice, Paul J. Dwaihy was acknowledged for his work. A member of the firm's Mount Clemens office and Medical Liability Practice Group, Dwaihy concentrates his practice on defending medical malpractice litigation with a particular emphasis on birth trauma cases. A *cum laude* graduate from Michigan State University College of Law in 2003, he received his undergraduate degree from University of Michigan in 2000.

Gary W. Francis, a member of Plunkett Cooney's Labor and Employment Practice Group, has also been recognized as a rising star. Francis focuses his practice primarily on traditional labor law, employment law and employee benefits (ERISA). A member of the firm's Bloomfield Hills office, Francis received his master's degree in Labor Law from Wayne State University Law School in 2007 and both his undergraduate and law degrees from Michigan State University.

SEVEN PLUNKETT COONEY ATTORNEYS NAMED INDUSTRY 'RISING STARS' Cont.

A member of the firm's Bloomfield Hills office and recognized as a rising star in professional liability: defense, Jeffrey S. Hengeveld practices exclusively in the area of professional liability with an emphasis on claims against attorneys, accountants and real estate professionals. Hengeveld defends clients in malpractice actions with various types of underlying cases ranging from bankruptcy to motor vehicle no-fault law. Hengeveld is a 2003 *magna cum laude* graduate of Michigan State University College of Law, and he received his undergraduate degree from James Madison College at Michigan State University in 2000.

Chiara Mattieson, a member of the firm's Litigation and Commercial Litigation practice groups, was selected as a rising star for her expertise in business litigation and bankruptcy & creditor/debtor rights. Mattieson concentrates her practice on litigation defense in the areas of retail law, business law, and premises, motor vehicle and general liability. Her clients include insurance companies, national retail chains, financial institutions and other businesses involved in litigation. Mattieson received her law and undergraduate degrees from Wayne State University in 2003 and 2000 respectively.

Megan P. McKnight, an attorney in Plunkett Cooney's Banking, Bankruptcy and Creditors' Rights and Commercial Litigation practice groups, was recognized for her work in business litigation. McKnight focuses her practice primarily in the area of business litigation with emphasis on banking and lender liability disputes. She has extensive experience representing financial institutions and corporate clients in disputes ranging from loan defaults and workouts to complex collection actions and real estate disputes. Admitted to practice in the state, federal and bankruptcy courts in Michigan, as well as in the state and federal courts in Illinois, McKnight received her law degree, *cum laude*, from University of Michigan Law School in 2003. She received her undergraduate degree from Kalamazoo College, *cum laude* and with honors, in 1999.

Also included on the 2010 Michigan Super Lawyers Rising Stars list is Plunkett Cooney attorney George A. Netschke, IV, who is a member of the firm's Construction Law and Banking, Bankruptcy and Creditors' Rights practice groups. Netschke, who was recognized for his expertise in construction litigation, represents design professionals, general contractors, construction managers, subcontractors and owners in both commercial and personal injury litigation. Another of his primary practice areas is banking law where he has particular expertise with commercial real estate loan workouts, including mortgage foreclosures, deed in lieu transactions, receiverships, sales through receivers, REO sales and resulting litigation. Netschke received his law degree from Wayne State University Law School in 2001 and his undergraduate degree from James Madison College at Michigan State University in 1996.

Rounding out the list of Plunkett Cooney's "Rising Stars" for 2010 is Nicole E. Wilinski, a member of the firm's Bloomfield Hills office, who focuses her practice in the area of insurance coverage litigation. Wilinski represents insurance providers in coverage cases throughout Michigan and the Midwest. Her experience includes the defense of complex disputes in the areas of environmental and construction law. Wilinski received her law degree from Wayne State University Law School, *cum laude*, in 2000,

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she received her undergraduate degree from University of Michigan in 1997.

Established in 1913, Plunkett Cooney employs approximately 160 attorneys in nine Michigan cities, Columbus, Ohio and Indianapolis, Indiana. The firm has achieved the highest rating (AV) awarded by Martindale-Hubbell, a leading, international directory of law firms and is listed as one of the country's "Best Law Firms" by U.S. News – Best Lawyers. Plunkett Cooney has also received several awards naming the firm as a top place to work in the legal industry.

*For more information regarding Plunkett Cooney's "Rising Stars," contact the firm's Practice Development Manager John Cornwell, at (248) 901-4008.*

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