

ATTORNEY PROFILE » MICHAEL DENNING



AGE

36

LAW SCHOOL

Northern Illinois University College of Law

AREA OF PRACTICE

Medical Negligence

FIRM

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**A NONSTOP WORKER
WITH A HIGH LEVEL OF
SKILL AND INTEGRITY**

Whether he's in the midst of a multi-week jury trial, involved in a mediation or giving back through the Red Cross, attorney **MICHAEL DENNING** keeps busy.

A partner at Heyl Royster at age 36, Denning concentrates his practice on defending medical malpractice, nursing home, trucking, and toxic tort and asbestos claims.

Those who have witnessed Denning in action consider him a nonstop worker with a high level of skill and integrity.

Robert H. Shultz, Jr., Vice President and Counsel for State Farm Mutual Automobile Company, worked with Denning at Heyl Royster on a number of asbestos personal injury matters. Shultz recalled one matter in particular where they represented a component manufacturer who was repeatedly sued in Madison and Cook counties.

"He managed the client relationship with great skill, largely based upon the superior results he obtained for it in these two challenging jurisdictions," Shultz said.

Denning has tried several multi-week jury trials with his partners over the past few years—nearly all of which resulted in defense verdicts, Shultz added. "These were often medical malpractice cases. In addition to trial work, he also represents his clients at mediation and settlement conferences in multiparty, catastrophic injury cases," Shultz said.

Denning served as law clerk to Justice Tom Lytton of the Illinois Appellate Court, Third District following his graduation from Northern Illinois University College of Law in 2002. In addition to his trial experience, Denning also plays a significant role in appellate matters, including in the successful appeal of a trial court decision that limited the liability of a landowner for fallen trees on an adjacent highway. He also handled the trial court proceedings and assisted with appellate arguments in a case that established the proper venue for suing a sheriff.

William Ranard, of Cassidy Schade, LLP has represented parties in cases in which Denning has also been involved. Ranard said Denning is always prepared for every aspect of the case, and identifies and discusses key issues and goals before the matters are heard in court.

"He has tried several cases that few lawyers of his vintage have had the opportunity to litigate. Obviously his clients and his firm are confident in his abilities even at such a young age. He has always achieved excellent results," Ranard said. "I have found that he has a wonderful command of the courtroom for motion hearings. He has impressed judges with his knowledge of the issues and law relating to motion practice."

Gregory P. Guth, of Guth Mediations, Inc., has witnessed Denning (a certified arbitrator for the 17th Judicial Circuit), represent clients in the course of numerous mediations. Guth called Denning "persuading yet personable."

"His is serious and demanding work, yet he makes everyone smile with his offhand wit," Guth said. "His opponents are respectful of his abilities. Mike is a smart, reliable, friendly and kind man."

Denning, who is Chair of the Board of Directors of the Rock River Chapter of the American Red Cross, has worked with Timothy Leake, of Hinshaw & Culbertson, LLP on community events. Leake said that what sets Denning apart is his strong commitment to the Rockford region. Leake, who is the current Chair of the March of Dimes Northern Division in Illinois, said Denning has a fun and outgoing personality, and is a natural leader.

"He is able to clearly articulate the American Red Cross mission and values, and be very persuasive in gathering community support and involvement," Leake said.

Denning has written scholarly articles, including a recent article on arbitration agreements in nursing home litigation. He is active with the Winnebago County Bar Association, ISBA, IDC, DRI, The Federation of Defense & Corporate Counsel, the ABA, and the State Bar of Wisconsin. Denning has served on the Alumni Council at Northern Illinois University College of Law and previously taught several law classes in the paralegal program at Rockford Career College.

Mike lives in Belvidere, Illinois, with his wife and two young sons.