Knox McLaughlin Gornall & Sennett, P.C.
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Michael J. Musone

Shareholder

Mike is a full-time litigator who focuses his practice representing commercial enterprises. He also represents municipalities in tax assessment appeals and practices Orphan's Court litigation, including will contests, trusts and estate matters. Mike is a cum laude graduate of Cleveland Marshall College of Law, where he was a member of the Employment Law Clinic.



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Practice Areas

- Litigation

Education

- Cleveland-Marshall College of Law, J.D.; *cum laude*
- Colgate University, B.A

Admissions

- Pennsylvania
- U.S. District Court, Western District of Pennsylvania
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit

Representative Experience

- Obtained favorable decision in a non-jury trial on behalf of the City of Meadville against Crawford County. The City filed a lawsuit against the County seeking an order compelling Crawford County to undertake a comprehensive countywide reassessment of all real property within the County. Following a two day trial, the court found that Crawford County's property tax system violates the uniformity clause of the Pennsylvania Constitution, requiring a countywide reassessment by 2030
- Obtained summary judgment on behalf of the Erie-Western Pennsylvania Port Authority and its former executive director related to a public works contract that displaced a tenant. The tenant was suing for breach of contract and promissory estoppel seeking damages exceeding $1.2 million claiming the tenant's lease was wrongfully terminated. Following discovery, the court entered summary judgment in our client's favor dismissing the case.
- Successfully defended a claim brought by an estate administrator and the Attorney General seeking repayment of a $2.2 million gift made by a decedent during her life. The matter was tried before the Crawford County Court of Common Pleas, Orphan's Court Division, and affirmed on appeal by the Superior Court

- Successfully defended claim brought by estate executor and the Attorney General regarding over $2 million in gifts to our client. The Crawford County Orphan's Court dismissed the claim
- Successfully defended school district against claims related to consolidation plan. Following bench trial in the Warren County Court of Common Pleas, the Court dismissed the claims
- Won a tax assessment valuation case on behalf of Erie area taxing bodies, resulting in additional past due taxes of nearly $1.2 million
- Successfully defended a tax assessment appeal on behalf of the Warren County Board of Assessment Appeals, in which the property owner sought to decrease the tax assessment on a multi-million-dollar manufacturing facility by half. The decision saved the taxing bodies from losing over $30,000 of annual tax revenue
- Obtained a favorable decision from the Erie County Court of Common Pleas on behalf of Erie's Public Schools regarding a medical office building's property value, resulting in increased property tax revenue for the district
- Obtained a favorable decision from the Commonwealth Court on behalf of a school district client, reversing a trial court decision in a tax assessment case involving commercial property valuation
- Successfully challenged a tax exemption case in Warren County on behalf of the taxing bodies. Following the hearing, the Court denied the property owner's request for a tax exemption, finding it was not an "institution of purely public charity" under the Pennsylvania Constitution
- Obtained a unanimous decision from the Pennsylvania Supreme Court in favor of a developer. The case involved the attempt of union employee benefit trust funds to assert mechanics lien claims against the developer's property when contractors on the project failed to make benefit contributions
- Successfully challenged an ordinance in a Commonwealth Court case on behalf of a landlord, involving an alleged violation of the construction code in a property that was built prior to adoption of the code

Honors

- Included in Pennsylvania Super Lawyers® Rising Stars, 2022-2023



Community and Professional Service

Community and Professional Service

- Erie Regional Chamber, *Erie Ambassador*
- Colgate University's Maroon Mentors Program, *Member*
- Colgate University's Alumni Admission Program, *Member*

Professional Affiliations

- Erie County Bar Association
- Pennsylvania Bar Association

Presentations

Speaking Engagements

- Firm's Municipal Law Symposium, 2019, 2021, 2023, 2024, and 2026
- Firm's 2016 Professional Advisor Symposium, *"It Depends" - The Answer to All Simple Yes or No Questions*
- Patrick J. DiPaolo Memorial Sponsorship Banquet, 2015
- Firm's Next Generation Happy Hour Series
- Firm's Litigation & Workers' Compensation Seminar
- HVA Senior Living Alliance Law Seminar, 2010

Articles and Publications

- Guardianships: What, Why, How, and Comparison to Power of Attorney

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About Knox Law

Knox McLaughlin Gornall & Sennett, P.C. is a full service law firm that has provided practical solutions to businesses, families, public entities, and nonprofits for over 65 years. Our practice areas include ADR Services, Bankruptcy & Creditors' Rights, Business & Tax, Business Succession, Construction Law, Elder Law, Employee Benefits, Environmental Law, Estate Planning & Administration, Governmental Practice, Health Law, Intellectual Property & Technology, Labor & Employment, Litigation, Mergers & Acquisitions, Public Finance & Bonds, Real Estate, and Workers' Compensation.