

Charles Calvin

2018 CBA Award of Merit Recipient

BY BRENDAN BAKER

Charles “Chuck” Calvin is the 2018 recipient of the CBA’s Award of Merit, in recognition of his outstanding and distinctive service to the CBA. Calvin is senior counsel at Faegre Baker Daniels and has built a stellar reputation as a real estate attorney over more than 45 years of practice in Colorado. He has counseled clients in all aspects of commercial property law, as well as represented clients engaging in non-real estate commercial financing transactions, all while maintaining consistent involvement in the Bar, the development of the legal community, and the training of new attorneys.

Calvin grew up in New Mexico and then headed to the West Coast to attend Pomona College in Southern California. He switched coasts to attend Yale Law School, where he was heavily involved in legal aid services in New Haven. Although Calvin contemplated pursuing legal aid as a career path, the political realities of the time were not favorable to that option. So, Calvin settled on commercial real estate law, an area where he could zealously advocate for his clients without compromising on his concern for the disadvantaged.

Initially, Calvin planned on beginning his career back in California. But on a stopover in Denver he squeezed in an interview with Davis Graham & Stubbs (DGS), and quickly realized he would have to adjust his plans. Denver struck him as a much more human place to live and practice law, and he says he has never regretted his change of course.

While at DGS, Calvin worked with several attorneys who were involved with the CBA in various capacities, including Frank Robinson and Bruce Johnson (then with Fairfield and Woods), who would later become founding



members of Otten Johnson Robinson Neff + Ragonetti. They introduced Calvin to other highly regarded real estate lawyers, such as Royal Rubright and Charlie Rhyne. Through these associations, Calvin helped write an amicus brief on a case involving the real estate foreclosure process. He eventually became formally involved with the CBA Uniform Law Committee. Calvin says that working with other active bar members during his years at DGS showed him the myriad benefits and values of bar membership and involvement.

Calvin maintained a presence in the Bar as he built his practice and reputation after leaving DGS for a small firm in 1996, and stayed involved after he switched firms to Faegre Baker Daniels. Several times over the years, he had expressed interest in becoming a member of the CBA Real Estate Section Council, and in 2012 he was accepted to the Council. After three years on the Council, he was selected as secretary of the Real Estate Section. Under the section’s bylaws,

he served for a year as secretary, for a second year as vice chair, and finally, in 2017–18, as section chair.

Calvin says that one of his favorite aspects of his work with the Bar has been efforts to improve the law, mostly through legislation. He enjoys working with other sections and outside groups in drafting proposed legislation, and has especially appreciated opportunities to testify at legislative committee hearings on pending bills. “It’s a momentous responsibility, and you have to take it very seriously.” Through his career and work with the CBA, Calvin has had significant involvement in the drafting of several Colorado laws.

In addition to his full-time law practice, Calvin is a fellow of the American College of Real Estate Lawyers and has become a co-chair of POETS, an informal association of experienced real estate practitioners that was founded in the 1970s by Willis Carpenter (the 1993 Award of Merit recipient), Jack Kellogg, and other distinguished real estate lawyers. He has taught continuing legal education lectures and mentored numerous rising attorneys over the years, and in 2017 he presided over the Colorado Real Estate Symposium.

Calvin will be retiring from Faegre Baker within a year, but he intends to continue practicing law. He is married and has an adult daughter, and his hobbies include riding motorcycles and learning new things. Between his legal career, his service to the Bar, and his community involvement, Chuck Calvin exemplifies the highest ideals of a Colorado attorney, and we are delighted to recognize him with the 2018 CBA Award of Merit. **CL**

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