

# PHOENIX BUSINESS JOURNAL

## Playing to Arizona's strengths

ATTORNEY DEVOTES HIMSELF TO BETTERING COMMUNITY THROUGH LEGAL WORK



BY CORINA VANEK  
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Andy Abraham first started working with Burch & Cracchiolo PA when he was in law school. He fit in so perfectly that he took a job right after college and has risen to be the firm's president.

Abraham has practiced real estate law his entire career, including commercial litigation, real estate-related litigation and real estate transactions.

"This firm has all Arizona roots," said Abraham, who was born and raised in the state. He attended Arizona State University's law school, where his father was a professor. The Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law is still a major part of his life. He volunteers along with law students at a free real estate legal clinic the school holds.

"It's always sad," he said. "Most people who come in are homeless or close to homeless, and it always morphs from that into family law, abuse and drugs. But I love it, I love being downtown with the law students."

In addition to his work with law students, Abraham is involved in many philanthropic causes and is active in the Valley's Jewish community. His parents and a few other families were the founders of Temple Solel, which is now in Paradise Valley, in 1967. Abraham was recently honored by the Arizona

Jewish Historical Society for donating his time and legal skills to help the local Jewish community.

**You're very involved in various community causes. To what other organizations do you like to volunteer your time?** Dan Cracchiolo (co-founder of Burch & Cracchiolo) started the Steele Foundation in the late '70s with Horace Steele, whose estate went to the foundation, which focuses on supporting children and education. Dan asked me to get involved on the Steele Foundation board about 10 or 12 years ago. He's all about planning for the future, so I'm on the board there, and volunteer to help in a non-religious setting. The mission of the foundation is leaning toward early childhood education, and the board oversees the finances and assets of the foundation.

**What do you like to do in your free time?** I like hanging out with my grandkids, I like being outside, and touching a little of the legal stuff when everybody's asleep. I have two daughters who both live in the Phoenix area. I love Phoenix, I don't care how hot it is.

**You have been at the same firm all your professional life and now you're the president. What's it like to grow up as the firm has grown?** When all the partners interviewed me, it was all about the fit.



BURCH & CRACCHIOLO

They knew you went to a good law school, but they cared about the character. And that is the same today. The firm is family-oriented, and it feels like family. People here care about your family. It's a good place to work. It's a roll-up-your-sleeves kind of law firm. Our goal when we get new clerks is to hire them as lawyers. The culture is here, it's deep-rooted and all about setting up the culture for the future.

**What's the best part of your job?** The people around me, my fellow employees, clients and most of the lawyers I deal with.

**What makes an effective business leader?** Listening skills and then clear decision making and prompt implementation.

**What do people think about you as a leader?** Hopefully that I'm kind, thoughtful and lead by example. I have very little patience for spin.

**Aside from your parents, who is the most influential person in your life?** My high school guidance counselor. She pointed me in the right direction when I most needed it.

**What is the best conversation piece in your house?** A Greek athlete crawling up the wall.

### ANDY ABRAHAM

**Title:** President

**Company:** Burch & Cracchiolo PA

**Age:** 61

**Favorite book:** Any Grisham book

**Favorite way to relax:** Running and hiking

**Your "a-ha" moment:** Realizing that taking one thing at a time is the key to success

**Title of your autobiography:** Work is only a small part of happiness

**Wish you knew 20 years ago:** That time does fly and time can be made if you're efficient