



BASSFORD REMELE

Andrew T James

COUNSEL



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PRACTICE GROUPS

Appellate
Class Action/Multidistrict Litigation
Business and Commercial
Litigation
Employment
Organizational Liability for Sexual
Misconduct/Abuse

INDUSTRY GROUPS

Financial Services
Non-Profits Organizations

OVERVIEW

Andrew James is an accomplished trial lawyer and litigator who has won cases big and small from coast to coast. Drew harnesses substantial courtroom and litigation experience, as well as experience as in-house counsel, to resolve his clients' thorniest issues. He also proactively advises clients to avoid disputes altogether.

Drew passionately represents his clients in all varieties of civil and business litigation, employment (both litigation and advice and counsel), education, and civil rights matters in federal and state courts nationwide. Drew's clients include individuals, non-profit organizations, small businesses, Fortune 500 companies, and everything in between. Drew has tried and won cases to juries and judges, and his knack for identifying winning issues has resulted in many conclusive victories via motion practice without need for trial.

Before joining Bassford Remele, Drew practiced in the employment group of one of the 100 largest firms in the country. Drew regularly advises his clients on employment-related issues such as hiring and firing, non-competition and non-solicitation provisions and agreements, confidentiality and non-disclosure agreements, trade-secrets and confidential information, behavioral and disciplinary issues, paid and unpaid leave (including under the ADA, FMLA, Minnesota ESSL, and other state laws), employee-classification issues, employee drug testing, and more. Drew has also served as an investigator when sensitive personnel issues arise.

When a dispute is avoidable, clients praise Drew's common-sense approach and practicality. He taps into his background as in-house counsel and works collaboratively with his clients to address issues before they erupt.

Drew also regularly advises educational institutions (including colleges, universities, high schools, and companies and organizations providing education-related services) on education-specific issues such as Title IX, FERPA, sexual assault and harassment matters, student privacy matters, state education laws, and other student and faculty issues. Drew is one of the rare lawyers to have tried and won a Title IX athletics case – and he has done it multiple times. Drew also began his career as a criminal defense attorney.

EDUCATION & ADMISSIONS

Education

University of Minnesota Law School, J.D., 2010
Marquette University, B.A., 2007

Bar Admissions

- U.S. Court of Appeals, Second Circuit
- U.S. Court of Appeals, Eighth Circuit
- U.S. Court of Appeals, Tenth Circuit
- U.S. District Court, District of Minnesota
- U.S. District Court, Western District of Michigan
- Minnesota
- Wisconsin
- Utah

Judicial Clerkships

- Second Judicial District, Ramsey County District Court, The Honorable Robert A. Awsumb, Judicial Externship, 2009

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EXPERIENCE

Drew has drafted numerous successful motions to dismiss and motions for summary judgment, including on complex factual and jurisdictional issues, that led to dismissal of all claims without need for trial.

Representative Litigation

- After a seven-day trial, the Court found St. Cloud State University violated Title IX and granted a permanent injunction that benefits a class of female student-athletes. The Court ordered immediate improvements to SCSU's athletics department, including, but not limited to, maintaining women's sports teams, renovating practice and competition facilities, making improvements to women's locker rooms, and the Court also awarded \$1.2 million in attorneys' fees. *Portz, et al. v. St. Cloud State Univ., et al.*, Case No. 16-CV-01115 (JRT/LIB) (D. Minn. Aug. 1, 2019). Media coverage of this case includes: <http://www.startribune.com/federal-judge-st-cloud-state-athletics-fails-to-provide-equal-opportunity-to-women/513523522/>.
- After a high profile eight-day jury trial on behalf of legendary former UMD women's hockey coach Shannon Miller, the jury found that UMD retaliated against Miller in violation of Title IX and Title VII and awarded her over \$3.74 million in damages (later reduced). The judge later awarded Miller an additional over \$460,000 in front pay and \$2.33 million in attorneys' fees, and the case ultimately settled for \$4.53 million. *Miller v. The Bd. of Regents of the Univ. of Minnesota*, Case No. 15-CV-03740 (PJS/LIB) (D. Minn. Mar. 15, 2018). Media coverage of this case includes: <https://www.duluthnewstribune.com/news/crime-and-courts/4418059-big-day-women-jury-sides-miller-orders-umd-pay-374-million>.
- In a decision described as "groundbreaking," the Minnesota Supreme Court concludes that Nathan McGuire, the former girls' basketball coach at Woodbury High School, is not a "public official" or "public figure," and allows his defamation claim against the parent of a student-athlete to proceed to trial. Drew represented Nathan at the district court and Minnesota Court of Appeals levels before joining Bassford. *McGuire v. Bowlins, et al.*, Case No. A18-0167 (Minn. Sept. 4, 2019). Media coverage of this case includes: <http://www.startribune.com/minnesota-supreme-court-ruling-limits-criticism-of-public-high-school-coaches/559406292/>.

Employment Litigation

- Drafted successful motion for summary judgment on behalf of software company in lawsuit involving Title VII sex discrimination and retaliation claims. (D. Utah. 2024.)
- Drafted successful motion for summary judgment on behalf of national railroad company in lawsuit involving Title VII race and age discrimination, harassment, and retaliation claims. (N.D. Ill. 2024.)
- Drafted successful motion to dismiss with prejudice on behalf of national financial services company on Rule 12(b)(6) grounds. (D. Idaho 2024.)
- Drafted successful motion to dismiss on personal-jurisdiction grounds on behalf of international medical-software company. (M.D. Fla. 2023.)
- Drew has a diverse practical background in the law. He worked at an AmLaw 100 firm, where he handled employment litigation, employment advice-and counsel, commercial litigation (in particular, litigation related to misappropriation of trade secrets or confidential information and violations of non-competition and non-solicitation agreements), and civil rights matters. Before that, Drew was in-house counsel with a broker/dealer and registered investment adviser. He also has experience as a criminal defense attorney. The representative litigation mentioned includes results from his work before joining Bassford Remele.

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EXPERIENCE

Employment Advice and Counsel

- Drew counsels clients on a range of workplace issues including difficult performance issues and terminations, managing medical and disability leaves, drafting and implementing practical employment policies and procedures, and advising on day-to-day employment issues that could escalate into serious employment problems.

Publications

Drew has been quoted in:

- [*UMD Discrimination Lawsuit Set to Return to Court*](#), Duluth News Tribune, November 12, 2016
- [*Hearing Set on SCSU Tennis Team Lawsuit*](#), St. Cloud Times, May 4, 2016
- *Supreme Court Grants Review of Three Title VII Cases Concerning Protections for LGBTQ Workers*, author, April 22, 2019

The Work Week with Bassford Remele

- *Three Critical Employment Lessons for Your Executive Contracts to Be Learned From the Lane Kiffin Departure*, author, December 1, 2025
- “You Might Have a Point There”: *How Poor RIF Documentation Can Backfire in Litigation*, author, October 13, 2025
- *A Hard Lesson on Undue Hardship: What Employers Can Learn from the Eighth Circuit’s Drivers Management Ruling*, author, September 2, 2025
- *Minnesota Unemployment Claims: What Employers Need to Know (And Why It Matters)*, author, August 4, 2025
- *New OSHA Rules Could Drastically Cut Your Company’s Fines*, author, July 21, 2025
- *Minnesota’s First Wage-Theft Conviction and Sentence: How to Avoid Becoming the Next Headline*, author, June 23, 2025
- *The \$500,000 Question: Will Minnesota Reinstate Non-Competes for High Earners and Those Entrusted with Trade Secrets?*, author, May 12, 2025
- *Think Outside the Bun: What Employers Can Learn from the EEOC’s Hostile Work Environment Lawsuit Against Taco Bell*, author, March 24, 2025
- *New and Recent Laws that Every Employer in Minnesota Should Know for 2025*, author, January 6, 2025

Seminars

- *Text Rx: Navigating Risks & Best Practices in Healthcare Communications*, presenter, Bassford Remele Health Care Seminar, June 19, 2025
- *FMLA Basics – Navigating Eligibility, Covered Conditions and Compliance in 2025*, presenter, Minnesota Continuing Legal Education 2025 Upper Midwest Employment Law Institute, May 19, 2025
- *Employment and Labor Market Trends: What’s Next for Construction?*, co-presenter, Bassford Remele 2025 Annual Construction Law Summit, February 6, 2025
- *Labor and Employment Symposium*, presenter, 2024, 2022, 2021, and 2020

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Seminars

- *OSHA's COVID-19 "Vaccine or Testing" Requirement: Understanding the New Rule and How to Navigate It*, presenter, November 11, 2011
- *President Biden's Mandatory Vaccination Executive Order: What We Know and What We Don't*, presenter, September 14, 2021

PROFESSIONAL & CIVIC

Bar Associations

- Minnesota State Bar Association
 - Employment Law Section
- Utah State Bar Association
- State Bar of Wisconsin
- Hennepin County Bar Association

Professional Associations

- Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM)

Civic Involvement

- Legal Rights Center, Board of Directors
- Varsity Policy Debate Coach (various schools)
- The Leadership Emergence and Development ("LEAD") Project, Past President

ACCOLADES

Honors & Awards

- Top Lawyer list, *Minnesota Monthly*, Labor Employment Benefits Litigation, 2025
- Best Lawyers: Ones to Watch, Labor and Employment Litigation, 2021-2025
- Up & Coming Attorney, *Minnesota Lawyer*, 2020
- Minnesota Rising Stars list, *Super Lawyers*, 2019-present
- North Star Lawyer, Minnesota State Bar Association, 2021-2024