

American College of Bankruptcy

WASHINGTON, D.C.
MARCH 22, 2024

Whereas, James H.M. Sprayregen is an active Fellow of the American College of Bankruptcy, having been inducted as a member of Class XV in 2005, and having served on its Board of Regents and as Chair of its Seventh Circuit Admissions Council;

Whereas, after receiving his Bachelor of Arts in History cum laude from the University of Michigan, he graduated cum laude from the University of Illinois College of Law, and found his calling as a bankruptcy attorney, first at Lord, Bissell & Brock and then at Rudnick & Wolfe;

Whereas, he has had a long and distinguished career at Kirkland & Ellis, founding and building to global prominence its restructuring group, serving on its worldwide management committee and as partner in its Chicago and New York offices;

Whereas, he has practiced as a preeminent company-side attorney for over forty years in some of the largest and most complex cases in history, representing such clients as Energy Future Holdings Corp., United Airlines, Conseqo, GGPLP L.L.C., Seadrill Limited, Caesars Entertainment Operating Co., Japan Airlines Corp., iHeart Media, Zenith Electronics Corp., Harnischfeger Industries, Chiquita Brands, and Toys “R” Us;

Whereas, he is committed to sharing his experience and wisdom locally, nationally, and internationally and is a prolific writer and speaker, including hundreds of presentations across multiple continents;

Whereas, he has led and contributed to the activities of key insolvency organizations, including the National Bankruptcy Conference, the American Bankruptcy Institute, the Turnaround Management Association, INSOL International, the International Insolvency Institute, and the World Bank Insolvency and Creditors Rights Task Force;

Whereas, he is a champion of bankruptcy education – he is an Adjunct Full Professor of Finance at the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, has lectured at numerous other schools and universities, and endowed a Chaired Professorship at the University of Illinois College of Law;

Whereas, his international engagements and efforts have moved insolvency systems world-wide towards the “chapter 11 model”;

Whereas, he has received numerous accolades, including being inducted into the Turnaround Management Association’s Hall of Fame, named one of “The Decade’s Most Influential Lawyers” by The National Law Journal and recognized as “Global Insolvency Lawyer of the Year” by Who’s Who Legal Awards, receiving more votes from clients and peers than any other individual worldwide;

Whereas, his contributions extend beyond the bankruptcy world, having served in various roles for charitable and non-profit organizations, including the Chicago Council on Global Affairs, the American Jewish Committee, and the American Israel Public Affairs Committee;

Whereas, many have benefited from his mentoring, having guided and coached numerous attorneys and professionals;

Whereas, he is widely respected and admired, having been referred to as a “legend in the bankruptcy space”, the “rock star – the Mick Jagger of the bankruptcy bar”, the “inventor of ideas” and “designer of case strategies,” the “opportunity-maker”, the “generous giver of time and thoughts” and – importantly – “friend”;

Therefore, be it resolved unanimously by the Board of Directors of the American College of Bankruptcy that James H.M. Sprayregen be awarded the 2024 Distinguished Service Award of the American College of Bankruptcy.

Done at Washington, DC, this 22nd day of March 2024.