

My name is Michael S. McKnight and I am a partner in Boyce Law Firm LLP. I have practiced with this firm for over thirty-one years. My practice during that time has focused on employment law related issues.

I have been blessed with many professional accomplishments but several stand out in my mind. I am an “AV Preeminent” rated lawyer by Martindale Hubbell. I have been recognized by Best Lawyers, Chambers and Great Plains Super Lawyers. Our Firm was selected to be the South Dakota representative of the National Workers’ Compensation Defense Network and I was the first South Dakota lawyer to be inducted into the College of Workers’ Compensation Lawyers. I have been named Sioux Falls Best employment lawyer multiple years in a row and have been inducted into the National Academy of Distinguished Neutrals. Perhaps my most cherished accomplishment is forming the South Dakota Chapter of Kids’ Chance, a nonprofit that provides scholarships to young men and women whose lives have been negatively impacted by the work related injury or death of a parent.

In March of 2016 I completed my 30-Hour Civil Mediation Training through Mitchell Hamline Law School and the Mediation Center of Minnesota. In May of 2017 I completed the American Arbitration Association (AAA) training and am on the AAA Panel of Arbitrators for employment matters. In August of 2018 I completed 7 hours of Advanced Mediation Skills training through the Iowa Mediation Service. I have also participated in numerous webinars dealing with mediation training and lectured to employers and HR groups about the benefits of workplace dispute resolution.

At this stage of my professional and personal life my practice is focused on alternative dispute resolution - mediation and arbitration. While the lawyers involved in ADR are familiar with the process most of their clients are not. I view it to be a large part of my job as a mediator/arbitrator to ensure that the participant’s questions are answered and that they understand and feel comfortable with the process. One of the most rewarding aspects of my mediation practice is interacting with the participants, actively listening to their issues and complaints and helping guide them to a solution to their particular problem. As a wise mediator once wrote, “while I am neutral I am not passive” and I believe it is an important part of my job to point out to the participants issues they may never have thought of or perhaps simply wish to ignore. I truly enjoy and have a passion for the people I meet in mediations and get great satisfaction out of helping those participants resolve their disputes.

I was born and raised in a small town in northeastern Minnesota along the north shore of Lake Superior. After playing college football and graduating from South Dakota State University (and after a short stint working on a master’s degree) I attended the University of South Dakota School of Law, graduating with honors in 1986. My wife and I were married in 1981 (Nancy is the best thing that ever happened to me) and have four children and (thus far) one grandchild. In my spare time I am an avid outdoorsman focusing mainly on traditional bowhunting and fly fishing. I am also involved in many conservation related causes and am an active public land supporter. Few people know this about me but I played high school hockey against several members of the 1980 Olympic hockey team that won the gold medal and of “Miracle on Ice” fame.

I love helping people resolve disputes probably because I spent over thirty years helping one side or the other perpetuate disputes. I grew tired mentally and physically of the fighting and find my new role in ADR much more rewarding to me personally. Mediation works so well in my opinion because the participants have control over the outcome of the dispute. I am happy to be able to play a part in that success.