



Atty Michael J. Zink

Michael J. Zink grew up in Elmwood Park only blocks from the City of Chicago. His mother was a schoolteacher and his father worked for nearly 50 years at WBBM-TV Chicago. Michael's early career began as a union stock clerk at Osco Drug (UFCW-Local 880) and as a clerk at the Oak Park Chamber of Commerce.

During the summer after his first year of law school, Michael demonstrated an exceptional work ethic that would define his career, juggling three jobs to finance his legal education. That summer he served an internship at the Office of U.S. Senator Richard J. Durbin, served an additional internship as a government watchdog at the Citizen Advocacy Center, and continued to work as a member of UFCW-Local 880 as a stock clerk at Osco Drug. Michael later clerked at Asher, Gittler, Greenfield & D'Alba, one of America's leading law firms representing unions and workers, clerked at Romanucci & Blandin, among the nation's top law firms in representing the catastrophically injured, and interned at the Illinois Department of Labor. These experiences provided him with invaluable insights into government, advocacy, and labor policy.

Zink went on to graduate from the DePaul University College of Law, having previously earned an undergraduate degree *cum laude* in economics from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign as an Edmund James Scholar. As an attorney he has conducted more than 100 bench trials and has litigated hundreds of Circuit Court cases throughout Cook County. Michael also earned prominent leadership roles in the Illinois State Bar Association, the Chicago Bar Association, and the Advocates Society.

His contributions extend beyond the courtroom, publishing many legal articles, teaching and moderating many Minimum Continuing Legal Education courses, and conducting many media interviews to educate the public about new and existing laws. Michael also is an established community leader, serving as President of East LakeView Neighbors for over 5 years and connecting neighbors with their elected officials to foster a more transparent and accountable system of government through one of Lakeview's largest neighborhood organizations. Among many other community leadership roles, he also serves on a Subcommittee for the Illinois Supreme Court Commission on Access to Justice and also serves as a regular coordinator and preparer of meals for homeless individuals at Lincoln Park Community Services. Michael also maintained an unwavering commitment to progressive activism, serving on the Housing Policy Committee for President Obama's 2008 campaign.

Currently as a Partner at Starr, Bejgiert, Zink & Rowells, Michael directs his practice towards tenants' rights and independent landlord support. He also assists first-time property owners, nearly all of whom are people of color, aiding them in preserving their homes and establishing generational wealth in historically underserved communities. Each interaction with Zink begins with a simple yet powerful question: "How can we keep people housed?"

Encouraged by colleagues in the judiciary, Michael has seized a unique opportunity to continue his passion for public service by running for Judge in the 20th Subcircuit of Cook County. Not only does Michael have significantly more experience litigating in Circuit Court than his opponents, but he also serves as a uniquely progressive voice in his community and in this race. He is the only candidate to declare boldly his dedication to rejecting the implicit bias that is rooted in our judicial system. His understanding of the disproportionate impact of the judicial system on people of color, LGBTQ+ individuals, and those facing poverty, addiction, and mental health issues sets him apart. Michael advocates for a legal system that operates equally for all, delivering justice and offering the opportunity for rehabilitation.

A longtime resident of Lakeview, Michael shares his life with his wife Amanda and daughter Emaline. He dedicates his free time to community leadership and spending time with his family and friends. For Michael, happiness is sipping an old-fashioned and listening to an account of his wife's and daughter's days while the Beatles play in the background (deep cuts only!).