

THE 2020 D.C. RISING STARS

WE ARE PLEASED TO PRESENT OUR 2020 D.C. RISING STARS. SELECTED FROM A COMPETITIVE POOL, OUR 40 HONOREES REPRESENT A CROSS-SECTION OF PRACTICE AREAS.



CALEB HAYES-DEATS, 36

EMPLOYER: MOLOLAMKEN

**TITLE AND PRACTICE AREA:
COUNSEL, COMMERCIAL
LITIGATION**

■ **DESCRIBE YOUR BIGGEST WIN OR ACCOMPLISHMENT IN PRACTICE.**

In 2016, I litigated a five-week mortgage-fraud trial that resulted in a \$298.5 million verdict in my client's favor. I gave part of our side's closing argument. The opportunity to look the jury in the eye, explain the fraud, and ask them to correct it was unforgettable.

■ **WHAT WAS THE MOST VALUABLE LESSON YOU LEARNED IN YOUR FIRST YEAR PRACTICING LAW?** Never be intimidated. The bigger the challenge, the greater the opportunity to prove yourself. All of the most rewarding cases seem overwhelming at the start. Finding your footing often takes weeks or months, so keep pushing forward. You can learn from your mistakes, but only after making them.

■ **WHO IS YOUR GREATEST LAWYER MENTOR AND WHAT HAS HE OR SHE TAUGHT YOU?** I clerked for Judge Robert Katzmann, and he taught me to approach every case with dedication, humility, and kindness. Litigation is often hard-fought. But attorneys can achieve success for their clients only by appealing to others. The foundation of any such appeal is respect and decency.

■ **PLEASE SHARE A BRIEF KEY TO YOUR SUCCESS.** You are only as successful as those around you. Litigation is a team effort. The best attorneys not only produce great work, but also build up their teammates. I have benefited greatly from colleagues' guidance and encouragement. I try to do the same for others whenever I can.