



DON G. LENTS

**Senior Counsel and Chair Emeritus
St. Louis**

E: don.lents@bcplaw.com

T: [+1 314 259 2119](tel:+13142592119)

BIOGRAPHY

Don Lents serves as Chair Emeritus of the firm. His practice focuses on corporate governance, mergers and acquisitions, securities law and general corporate matters with particular emphasis upon responsibilities of boards of directors, multinational and domestic mergers, acquisitions and divestitures, anti-takeover planning, and related matters. He is co-author of a treatise on *Missouri Corporation Law and Practice* and of articles on various corporate law issues. He has been an adjunct professor at the Washington University Law School.

Mr. Lents served for a number of years as a member of the firm's Executive Committee and was the Chair of the Firm from 2004 through 2014. He previously served as head of the firm's Transactions Practice and chair of the Corporate Department. He also was the partner in charge of the firm's London office from its opening in 1982 through 1984.

CIVIC INVOLVEMENT & HONORS

- *Chambers USA*, Corporate/M&A (2005 - 2020)
- *The Best Lawyers in America*® (Listed since 1993, with recognition in the areas of Corporate Law, Mergers & Acquisitions, Corporate Governance, Securities/Capital Markets, International Mergers & Acquisitions and International Trade and Finance)
- Commissioner, St. Louis Lambert International Airport Commission
- Chair of the Board of Directors, Greater St. Louis, Inc. Foundation
- Prior involvements include serving as the Chair of the Board of Directors and on the Executive Committee of Grand Center Inc, on the Board of Directors of the St. Louis Regional Chamber of Commerce (Executive Committee, Treasurer and Chair of Finance Committee), United Way of Greater St. Louis (Executive Committee), Leadership St. Louis (Chair of the Board), Volunteer Lawyers and Accountants for the Arts (Chair of the Board), Coro Foundation (St. Louis), Harvard Alumni Association and the National Council of the Library System of Washington University in St. Louis, among others.

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

- American Bar Association (Senior Fellow)
- American Law Institute (Life Member)

ADMISSIONS

- England & Wales (Registered Foreign Lawyer), 2004
- Missouri, 1974
- United States Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit
United States District Court for the Eastern District of Missouri

EDUCATION

Harvard University, J.D., *magna cum laude*, 1974

Harvard University, A.B., *magna cum laude*, 1971

RELATED PRACTICE AREAS

- M&A & Corporate Finance
- Corporate

EXPERIENCE

Among the matters in which Mr. Lents has played a principal role are representation of:

- Anheuser-Busch in connection with its \$1+ billion investment in Grupo Modelo of Mexico and its \$300+ million investment in CCU of Chile
- William S. Barnickle & Company, a 47% shareholder of Petrolite Corporation, in connection with its accomplishment of the sale of Petrolite to Baker Hughes Incorporated for approximately \$720 million
- Emerson Electric Co. in connection with its \$450 million acquisition of Vermont American Corporation, its \$200 million acquisition of Hazeltine Corporation, its spin-off of ESCO Electronics Corporation, its divestitures of BI Technologies, Chromalox and Xomox, and a number of other transactions during the past 30+ years
- Furniture Brands International, Inc., in connection with its bankruptcy restructuring, the \$400+ million redemption and sale of Furniture Brands stock owned by Apollo Investment Funds, L.P. and Lion Advisor, L.P. and its spin-offs of the Converse and Florsheim shoe companies
- Ralston Purina Co. in connection with its \$500 million sale of Continental Baking Company to Interstate Baking Company, subsequent negotiations relating to Ralston's holdings of 40+% of the stock of Interstate, and its spin-offs of Agribands International, Inc., and Energizer Holdings, Inc. Mr. Lents also served as co-counsel to Ralston Purina in connection with its \$10+ billion sale to Nestlé S.A.
- Stifel, Nicolaus & Company, Incorporated, as financial advisor to Union Planters Corporation with respect to its \$1+ billion acquisition of Magna Group and a number of other transactions
- WorldCom, Inc., in connection with its \$14.4 billion acquisition of MFS Communications Company, Inc., its \$1.2 billion acquisition of CompuServe Corporation, and its \$475 million exchange of assets with America On Line
- Sigma-Aldrich Corp. in connection with its \$425 million sale of its B-Line Systems business to Cooper Industries, Inc.

- Sverdrup Corporation in connection with its approximately \$200 million sale to Jacobs Engineering Group, Inc.
- Agribands International, Inc., Brown Group, Inc., Centerre Bancorporation, Emerson Electric Co., Energizer Holdings, Inc., ESCO Electronics Corp., Harmon Industries, Laclede Gas Company, Leggett & Platt, Incorporated, McDonnell Douglas Corporation, NS Group, Inc., Ralston Purina Co., Sigma-Aldrich Co., Stifel Financial Corp., Wetterau Incorporated, WorldCom, Inc., and others in connection with their adoption of Shareholder Rights Plans (or "poison pills")
- Representation of the independent directors of CPI Corporation, DT Industries, LaBarge, Inc., Maritz Inc., McCarthy Construction Company and Thermadyne Holdings Corporation, among others, with respect to various matters.

RELATED INSIGHTS

Awards

Aug 17, 2023

The Best Lawyers in America® 2024

Awards

Aug 31, 2022

Chair Emeritus Don Lents honored with lifetime achievement award from Grand Center Inc.

Awards

Aug 18, 2022

The Best Lawyers in America© 2023

News

Jul 21, 2022

Firm's Sports & Entertainment Group Featured in 'St. Louis Business Journal'

Awards

Aug 19, 2021

The Best Lawyers in America© 2022

Awards

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Chambers USA 2020

Awards

Aug 15, 2019

The Best Lawyers in America© 2020

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Apr 26, 2019

Chambers USA 2019