

Buschmann Carr & Shanks, P. C.

Founded: 1875

Location: Talbott Block, between 11th & 12th Streets, Indianapolis (1875–); Suite 307, Odd Fellows Building, 11 North Pennsylvania Street (1919, 1929); 919 Circle Tower, 5 West Market Street (1933, 1943); 901 Circle Tower (1948); 111 Monument Circle, Room 1120 (1965); 1015 Merchants Plaza East Tower (1979); 1020 Market Tower, 10 West Market Street (1989, 1999)

The legal firm of Buschmann Carr & Shanks can trace its history to 1875 when Aquilla Q. Jones, Jr., opened an office with W. S. Ryan in the Talbott Block. Jones's father was a powerful member of the state's Democratic party, serving as postmaster of Indianapolis, state treasurer, and a state legislator. After graduating from the department of law at Columbia College in New York, Jones moved back to Indianapolis where he had worked previously in the law office of Rand & Taylor. Jones's partnership with Ryan did not last long, and by 1879 he and Charles B. Rockwood had begun to practice together. This venture did not succeed, and Rockwood left the organization within a year.

In 1880 Jones began a long association with Thomas L. Sullivan. Sullivan served as mayor of Indianapolis, a judge of the circuit court, and the Democratic party's boss for a time. Both men were members of St. Paul's Episcopal Church, fervent Democrats, and graduates of Racine College. The partnership with Sullivan proved fruitful. The business grew, and after Sullivan became mayor he appointed Jones the city's attorney. After Sullivan was elected mayor in 1891, Alexander C. Ayres replaced him at the firm. Ayres had been a circuit court judge for three years in the early- to mid-1880s and again in 1890. As with all of Jones's former colleagues, Ayres was a staunch Democrat who

helped the firm become what one commentator described as “among the strongest in the state.”

Sullivan was a native of Indianapolis and came from a long line of the city’s most prominent attorneys. When he returned from Racine to the Circle City in 1869 he began “reading” law at Rand & Hall, while at the same time taking course work at Indiana Law School of Indianapolis. Shortly after being admitted to the Bar in 1872 he was appointed the judge of the circuit court of Marion County. Before stepping down as mayor in 1893 Sullivan introduced John E. Hollett, his son-in-law and fellow communicant at St. Paul’s, to his old firm. Hollett was a graduate of what would later be known as Butler University and the Indiana Law School. After he graduated with his law degree in 1897 he became a partner at Ayres & Jones, where he had been a clerk since the early 1890s. In 1910 Hollett left the firm where he had worked for almost twenty years and became a partner with Merle N. A. Walker.

In 1911 Jones teamed with his son, Walter D. Jones, and William W. Hammond. Walter Jones graduated from Kenyon College and briefly attended Indiana University Law School before receiving his LL. B. (Bachelor of Laws) from the University of Michigan. Walter continued to work under his father until he died in 1920. The elder Jones kept his son’s name as part of the firm’s designation until his own death a few years later. Hammond did not go into practice immediately after receiving his professional degree. After graduating from the Cincinnati Law School in 1887, he became a headmaster at the Ohio Military Institute and was later hired as the first headmaster of Culver Military Academy. In fact he only used his law degree on a part-time basis while earning a master’s degree from Harvard (1894) and spending five years

after that as the headmaster of another private school. Going against the political grain of his firm, he became the Republican party's nominee for state senate in 1912, a race he lost.

In 1921 Hammond and Jones welcomed Charles Severin Buschmann to the firm. Buschmann remained with the practice throughout his career. He had graduated from Indiana University before enlisting in the United States Army. While in Europe he attended some classes at the University of Paris. After he was honorably discharged he entered Yale Law School, graduating in 1921. Buschmann came from one of Indianapolis's most influential families and unlike his predecessors in the firm, was independent in his politics. While a member of the practice he was an instructor at Indiana University Law School and contributed to the school's journal. Buschmann's son, C. Severin, Jr., eventually joined his father at the firm. After Hammond left the partnership in 1946, Buschmann became the senior attorney, a post he continued to hold until his death in 1980.

In the midst of the Great Depression Hammond and Buschmann accepted Leo M. Gardner as a partner. Gardner balanced the firm's politics. A Murphysboro, Illinois, native, Gardner had matriculated at the University of Illinois, earning his legal degree in 1928. After being hired as a Marion County deputy prosecutor in 1928, he was elected to the Indiana House of Representatives in 1933. After his term expired he became the legal adviser to Paul V. McNutt, former governor and the United States High Commissioner to the Philippines. He returned to the United States in 1938 and joined Hammond and Buschmann, but only remained with the partners for two years.

In 1941 Paul J. DeVault and William H. Krieg replaced Gardner. Krieg graduated from Harvard Law School and continued to be tied to DeVault throughout his career. DeVault attended Indiana University Law School and had been Herman B Wells's legal research assistant during his last year of law school. Throughout the 1930s he served as the general counsel to the Federal Home Loan Bank of Indianapolis, developing a specialty in banking law. The two newest partners remained with the company two years before striking out on their own. They rejoined Buschmann five years later and remained a part of the firm until 1960.

Curtis W. Roll, a member of the Indiana State Supreme Court for twelve years beginning in 1931 and a staunch Democrat, and John A. Alexander became partners with Buschmann and Hammond in 1943. Roll remained as a partner for only two years. Alexander left with Hammond in 1946 but returned two years later. After the departure of Krieg, DeVault and Alexander in 1960, John R. Carr, Jr., and Donald A. Schabel filled the void. Carr and Schabel had both graduated from Harvard University Law School. Schabel joined the firm as an associate in 1954 and rose to partner in 1957. Donald A. Tabbert was moved up to partner in 1961. Carr participated in the Indiana State Bar Association as the chair of the Corporate Banking and Business Law Section in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Tabbert left the firm in the 1970s to pursue his interests in white-collar crime and was named one of Indianapolis's best defense attorneys in 1985. A. David Meyer, a partner from 1977 through the mid-1980s, held three degrees from Indiana University, receiving his law degree from Bloomington in 1970.

The firm's leadership has been relatively stable since the mid-1970s, in part through the inclusion of the partners' children in the business. C. Severin Buschmann,

Jr., graduated from the University of Southern California in 1946 and joined the partnership after a three-year stint as an attorney with the United States Tax Court. Naturally, tax law became his specialty, and because of his reputation he was made a member of the Commission on Uniform State Laws from 1971 to 1978. Carr's son, John R. Carr III, joined his father's office after completing the requirements for his law degree from Indiana University in 1974. The younger Carr had been active in the Indiana State Bar Association, serving in the house of delegates in the 1970s and 1980s, and was named an Indiana Bar Foundation Fellow. He brought an expertise in commercial, business, and bankruptcy law to the operation. Stephen R. Buschmann followed his grandfather and father in the practice of law. After graduating from Bloomington in 1974, he served as the deputy attorney general for the state of Indiana, accepting the post of senior legislative analyst for the Indiana Legislative Council in 1976. John N. Shanks II, a native of Missouri and a graduate of Indiana University Law School, had been a member of the United States Air Force Judge Advocate General's office while taking classes. After an honorable discharge in 1972 he became a lawyer with Indiana's Attorney General's office and was eventually chosen deputy attorney general in the mid-1970s. He specialized in workers' compensation legislation.

Stephen R. Buschmann, John R. Carr III, and John N. Shanks II make up the active partners in the one hundred and twenty-five-year-old law firm, and John Carr, Jr., serves as the firm's senior counselor. The professional corporation specializes in bankruptcy, estate planning, real estate, taxation, corporation, and banking law.