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Contact: Christine Nelson

651-690-3358

[Christine@ingenuitymarketing.com](mailto:Christine@ingenuitymarketing.com)

**50 Years of Messerli & Kramer P.A.  
Minnesota Law Firm Stays Independent With Diverse Practices,  
Entrepreneurial Approach**

**MINNEAPOLIS, MN**, April 2015 — What do shopping, flying and baseball have to do with a law firm in downtown Minneapolis? They are just a few industries that support Minnesota's diverse economy when legislation, business transactions and profits are properly aligned.

Fifty years ago, partners Bill Messerli and Tom Roe founded their own law firm after serving in the military together. The law firm went by various iterations of partner names over the years, but the owners finally settled on Messerli & Kramer. What hasn't changed is a fiercely independent culture with local ownership that encourages expansion of new practices and grooming of new leaders.

What happened outside the firm has touched just about every recognizable Twin Cities landmark — and the quiet underpinnings of industry that make it possible. With the lasting legacy of its founders in business transactions, family law, litigation, government relations and collections, Messerli & Kramer has evolved 50 years later to add banking and real estate niches, corporate securities, intellectual property, mediation and private equity representation. Its ties reach back to representation of Northwest Airlines. In recent years, the firm was instrumental in statewide grassroots lobbying support for passing the Minnesota Marriage Equality Act and for sending pyramid scammer Trevor Cook to prison.

This year, the firm also celebrates 10 years of giving from its private foundation — making a difference in the lives of low-income and underprivileged Minnesotans with a focus on healthcare and education. It originated with seed money from partners Bill Messerli and Ross Kramer. The firm's shareholders, associates and employees continue the tradition of support.

"We've always been known as deal makers rather than deal killers," said John Lang, firm president who parlayed his CPA experience into a successful real estate law practice more than 30 years ago. "We focus on 'how can we make this work?' Solutions in all our practice groups and our firm come out of that."

Lang leads a new firm board in 2015 that includes steadfast leaders and rising stars in their respective practices. It reflects the transition that is happening across the firm as younger leaders chair practice groups and committees to build leadership depth.

"Back when our firm started, there were a lot of granddaddies leading law firms and many of those firms have now broken up or were bought out," said attorney and co-founder Ross Kramer. Kramer was a pilot in Vietnam and later a captain for Northwest Airlines for many

years before shifting gears into law. His lobbying, connections to clients and causes at the State Capitol read like a who's who of Minnesota history.

"When Tom and Jim [Balogh] left, Bill and I were sitting there with the law firm, and we agreed we were going to go ahead and grow," Kramer said. "We moved downtown to the Fifth Street Towers. There were moments I had my doubts, so this stands as one of the things I'm most proud of — helping to build this firm from scratch."

Messerli & Kramer was built by lateral hires who came from other firms and industries. They brought public and private industry experience and government experience to their practices, notes attorney Mark Larson. He has served in the corporate and business law practice since 1977, one of the firm's first lateral hires.

"We have so many big accomplishments for our clients and residents of Minnesota that it's hard to name them all. We are definitely Minnesota born and bred. Even though our collections practice is national in scope, we are very much a Minnesota firm," Larson said.

In April, Messerli & Kramer will host a celebration to mark 50 years of service to Minnesota as well as the 10-year anniversary of the Foundation. The following are just a few of its highlights and key accomplishments:

#### **Firm Highlights and Accomplishments**

- One of Messerli & Kramer's early growth areas was aircraft crash litigation. The firm now focuses on business litigation and provides general counsel to Midwest companies that draw on its experience in real estate, M&A, employment, banking, trademark and securities law.
- The firm's collections practice evolved out of representing student loan work in the eighties, which developed into representing many of the larger national financial institutions. Now based in Plymouth with offices in Wisconsin, Nebraska and the Dakotas, the practice group continues to expand into new jurisdictions.
- Government relations has also been a staple of the firm that now includes a full team of attorneys, lobbyists and staff in the firm's St. Paul office. The practice group lobbied successfully for new stadiums on behalf of the Minnesota Twins and Saint Paul Saints.
- Bill Messerli introduced family law and estate planning to the firm. Today, the firm sustains a strong team of attorneys for complex or disputed divorces, and is expanding its estate planning practice.
- Attorneys, staff and lobbyists at Messerli & Kramer have earned both professional and public acknowledgement of their accomplishments through peer rankings and client nominations, including Super Lawyer and Rising Star, Martindale Hubbell, Attorney of the Year, Lobbyist of the Year, Up & Coming Attorneys, Unsung Legal Heroes, Top Women in Finance, Athena Awards, the Chamber President's Award and many others.