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Becker '01 Named One of Billboard Magazine's Top Music Lawyers

Sept. 26, 2019

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. — Jeff Becker, a 2001 Illinois Wesleyan University alum, is one of Billboard Magazine's [2019 Top Music Lawyers](#) for his commitment to providing comprehensive representation to musicians, producers and songwriters, publishers, record labels and other artists.

Becker graduated from Illinois Wesleyan with a Bachelor of Arts in [Psychology](#). He went on to earn a Juris Doctor in 2004 from the DePaul University College of Law, where he currently serves as an adjunct professor of music law.

"During most of my time at IWU, I was a psychology major," Becker explained. "I had seriously considered going to grad school in some discipline of psychology, but then I took [business law](#), which opened my eyes to what a fun and intellectually stimulating path law would be. From that point forward, I knew law school was coming next."

In addition to teaching, Becker is Chair of Swanson, Martin & Bell, LLP's Entertainment and Media Law Practice Group. Among his clients are Grammy-awarding winning musicians, producers, songwriters, publishers, record labels, professional athletes, authors, independent filmmakers and other creative individuals and entertainment-related businesses.

As a young lawyer, with a passion for the arts, in a small commercial litigation firm, Becker had a client whose song was being used in a video game without permission. He helped the client secure a retroactive license from the video game company.

"I realized that I could merge my love of the arts with my chosen career path," Becker said. "From that point on, I dedicated my efforts to develop a practice where I could use my legal education to help artists. Since that time, I have been fortunate enough to have built a practice group focused entirely on the legal needs of musicians, filmmakers, authors and creative businesses."

Becker's deep ties to Chicago have landed him major clients such as Chance the Rapper and Valee, an up and coming Def Jam artist. Becker is committed to ensuring his clients are treated fairly and find success in their creative field. For instance, ahead of Chance the Rapper's Magnificent Coloring Day festival in 2016, Becker secured temporary restraining orders that pulled all of the counterfeit merchandise off of the streets, preventing it from being sold around the festival and tour sites across the country.

Becker proudly volunteers his free time to Lawyers for the Creative Arts, a non-profit organization that provides free legal services to eligible clients in all areas of the arts.

"Having Billboard acknowledge my achievements is affirmation of the fact that the time and effort I invested in developing an entertainment practice in the Midwest was time well spent," Becker said. "It feels incredible to be included among so many of the top attorneys in the music industry, especially given how few attorneys from the Midwest were included on this list."

Billboard Magazine recognized Becker alongside 113 other note-worthy music lawyers at the front lines of the music industry's legal battles and deals.

"The path I took was not easy, and it was not quick," Becker said. "I had to keep my eye on the ball for a really long time, and remind myself that playing the long game would pay off in the end. But if you have a vision, and you are willing to roll up your sleeves and work hard to make it reality, it can be done."



Jeff Becker '01