McBRAYER



KATHERINE K. YUNKER

Of Counsel

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HONORS & AWARDS

- The Best Lawyers in America®, 2024-2027, Energy Regulatory Law

PRIMARY PRACTICE

Appellate Advocacy

Internet & Media Law

Regulatory & Licensing Issues

Telecommunications

Utilities

ADDITIONAL PRACTICE EXPERIENCE

Commercial and Business Litigation

Energy Law

Estate and Trust Litigation

Permitting and Regulatory Compliance

Product Liability Litigation

ADMISSIONS

Kentucky, 1982

U.S. Supreme Court, 1999

What Katie Yunker enjoys most about being part of the McBrayer team is the opportunity to work with so many talented, dedicated lawyers, adding her 30+ years of experience to theirs to get down to the core of an issue for our clients. Katie's job, in its simplest form, is to be a problem-solver, but the “how” is different each time. She unravels complexity and considers basic structures, or advocates for what the law should be, or uses her practice experience as a guide to whether a path-breaking legal theory or a new application of long-held principles is the better strategy.

Every case is a challenge, and Katie approaches each one as a chance to improve the client’s position or odds, by really digging into the facts and legal principles. Briefs are the central component of an appeal, and give her the opportunity to focus on substantive issues over a wide range of the law. Putting complicated ideas across in a simple way is often the most difficult part of briefing a matter, but application of the law to concrete situations is the essence of legal practice, and she always learns something from it.

The substantive briefing that Katie does takes place at both the trial and appellate level — but always represents a critical point in the development of the case. Because her focus is on appellate advocacy, Katie usually has primary responsibility for

U.S. Tax Court, 1988

U.S. Court of Appeals 1st Circuit, 1990

U.S. Court of Appeals 3rd Circuit, 2005

U.S. Court of Appeals 5th Circuit, 2004

U.S. Court of Appeals 6th Circuit, 1983

U.S. Court of Appeals 9th Circuit, 1990

U.S. District Court Eastern District of Kentucky, 1984

U.S. District Court Western District of Kentucky, 2004

CLERKSHIPS

Judge Pierce Lively, U.S. Court of Appeals for the 6th Circuit, 1982-1983

EDUCATION

Yale Law School, New Haven, Connecticut, J.D., 1982

Yale Law School, New Haven, Connecticut, MPhil in Economics, 1983

Duke University, Durham, North Carolina, B.A., 1978

- Major: Economics (with distinction)
- Phi Beta Kappa

each stage of the appellate process, and relishes the opportunity to consider every possible advantage for the client in procedural, jurisdictional, and substantive aspects of an appeal. She builds on the efforts of the other McBrayer team members to either protect the verdict and nail down the victory a client already has or to petition for a different outcome if it is not a full vindication of the client's interests. Katie takes the time to prepare, to know the case thoroughly, and to fully understand what a client wants to accomplish. Katie wants to win, but knows that a win is defined by the client.

Katie joined McBrayer after practicing law for over 20 years in her own Lexington boutique litigation firm. Prior to starting that firm, she worked for Brown, Todd & Heyburn in its litigation section and as a visiting assistant professor for two years at Ohio Northern University (1991-1993), where she taught contracts, property, civil procedure, criminal law and antitrust. Katie also taught in the legal writing program at the University of Kentucky College of Law for several years in the 1980s and 1990s, and taught a course on business regulation for the University of Kentucky College of Business.

Katie is a longtime member of Phyllis Jenness's "Be a Better Singer" Saturday class, the BlueGrass Runners, and an eclectic book club.

CAPABILITIES, SUCCESSES, AND ASSIGNMENTS

- Reviews initial court decisions for administrative appeals.
- Helps clients to obtain construction certificates (certificates of public convenience and necessity) for solar projects, cell towers, and other utilities.
- Assists clients with ratemaking and gaining approval for financing.
- Represents suppliers to utilities, including lessors and landowners, in utility easement disputes.
- Represents clients in appeals before Public Service Commission.

- Helps users negotiate contracts for utility services.
- Drafts and reviews contracts and arrangements for entities that work with utility companies.
- Assists those seeking franchises from city utilities.
- Prepares contracts for pole attachments and conduit space.
- Assists clients with establishing gas-gathering systems, or "farm taps."
- Assists property developers with installation of utilities and extension from municipalities.
- Negotiated the first agreement with natural gas distributors in Kentucky.

Kentucky Leader

- Appointed to regional and diocesan Peace and Justice Commissions.
- Active in the Franciscan Peace Center.
- Commitment to B.U.I.L.D. (Building a United Interfaith Lexington through Direct action).
- Serves on Parish Council at Holy Spirit Parish / the Newman Center at the University of Kentucky, and has received so much from the community life there for over 30 years, as a lector, altar server, music minister, liturgy committee member, RCIA sponsor, and parishioner.

Professional Activities

Fayette County Bar Association

Kentucky Bar Association
Education Law Section, Treasurer, 2006-2007

American Bar Association
Exemptions and Immunities Committee, Antitrust Section,
Vice-Chair, 1998-2001

News

IN THE MEDIA - Fifty McBrayer Attorneys Recognized by *Best Lawyers® for 2027*
August 20, 2026

McBrayer PLLC Achieves Record-Breaking Recognition in *Best Lawyers in America® 2026*
August 21, 2025

New Record Set: 51 McBrayer Attorneys Honored in Best Lawyers 2025
August 15, 2024

Another Record! 49 McBrayer Attorneys Named to Best Lawyers® 2024
August 17, 2023

Burley Tobacco Growers Cooperative Association Class-Action Lawsuit Settlement: An Initial and Partial Distribution Has Been Made to a 2nd Group – A Statement from Class Counsel on Distribution and Dissolution
February 28, 2022

Burley Tobacco Growers Cooperative Association Class-Action Lawsuit Settlement: An Initial and Partial Distribution Has Been Made – A Statement from Class Counsel on Distribution and Dissolution
December 20, 2021

McBrayer and MML&K Government Solutions Go Red for Women
April 23, 2021

Settlement Proposed in Burley Tobacco Growers Cooperative Association Lawsuit Concerning Certain Tobacco Growers in Kentucky, West Virginia, Ohio, Indiana or Missouri; Class Members Urged to Take Action
December 21, 2020

Seminars & Speaking Engagements

McBrayer Attorney Katie Yunker Guest Speaker at Commerce Lexington, Inc. @330 Series
Commerce Lexington, Inc., 330 E. Main Street, December 11, 2018

Articles

Contributor, The State Action Practice Manual
American Bar Association, Section of Antitrust Law, 2000

"Addressing the Real Problems for Law and Economics of Factoring Interest Rates, Earnings Growth and Inflation into Awards for Lost Future Earnings," 56 U. Pitt. L. Rev. 1 (1994).
April 12, 1995