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THE LAWYERS BEHIND the LIMELIGHT

A BACKSTAGE PASS TO
FRASCOGNA LAW GROUP



FRASCOGNA

LEGAL + BUSINESS + CREATIVE

The LAWYERS BEHIND *the* LIMELIGHT

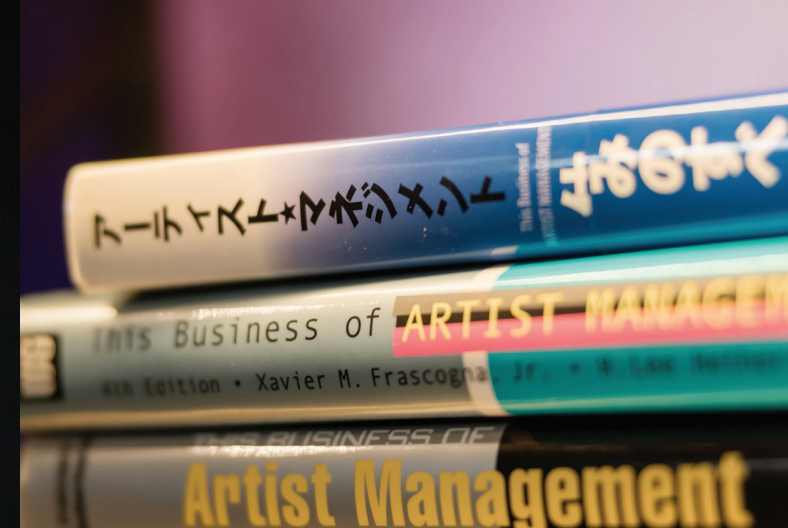
A BACKSTAGE PASS TO FRASCOGNA LAW GROUP

WHEN VISITORS STEP THROUGH THE FRASCOGNA LAW GROUP DOORS, THE FIRST THING THEY NOTICE IS THAT THESE LAW OFFICES LOOK NOTHING LIKE LAW OFFICES.

A jukebox in the lobby sets the tone with Jerry Lee Lewis' "Whole Lotta Shakin' Goin' On," followed by Elvis's "Don't Be Cruel." Framed gold records, movie and TV series posters, and floor-to-ceiling murals of singers and blues musicians cover the walls.

Books of every genre spill from the shelves, punctuated by the occasional piece of sports memorabilia. Every hallway, office, and conference room is a mini-museum of pop culture. The tour concludes in a fully equipped production studio, the perfect venue in which to record a podcast, film a music video, or stage a photo shoot.

It feels more like Los Angeles, New York, or Nashville than Jackson, Mississippi. Yet, artists, record labels, producers, filmmakers, authors, and entrepreneurs from around the world find their way here, drawn by the Mississippi law firm that built a global entertainment practice by embracing its Southern roots and assembling a team of expert attorneys as creative as their clientele.



Right: All of the partners with Frascogna Law Firm are MC Law alumni. From left: Alexis Rayford '20, Mike Frascogna III '05, Marty Frascogna '05, '09, Shownassey Brooks '99, X.M. "Mike" Frascogna '72, Founder

“TO BE A TRUE ENTERTAINMENT ATTORNEY, IT’S NOT ENOUGH TO KNOW CONTRACT LAW OR HOW TO NEGOTIATE A DEAL. YOU HAVE TO KNOW HOW TO RECORD A SONG, WRITE A BOOK, PRODUCE A FILM, AND BUILD AN AUDIENCE.”

X.M. “Mike” Frascogna



Frascogna Law Group (FLG) is the legal and business team working behind the scenes when the cameras roll, the albums drop, the books hit the shelves, and the deals get done.

FLG represents musicians, authors, content creators, entrepreneurs, and brands with audiences worldwide. Collectively, the firm’s clients have earned 51 Grammy Awards, secured 18 platinum albums, and sold more than 750 million records. FLG has worked on projects involving industry giants like Netflix, CMT, Atlantic Records, Universal Studios, and other entertainment heavyweights.

FLG attorneys do more than handle the legal work. They help clients navigate the variables that transform raw creative talent into sustainable careers.

“THE ENVIRONMENT AT FLG FOSTERS THE ENTREPRENEURIAL SPIRIT. THE ATTITUDE HERE IS THAT IF IT HELPS YOUR CLIENT, GO FOR IT.” — Alexis Rayford '20

“We create demand for our clients as artists, which allows us to negotiate more lucrative contracts on their behalf,” FLG founder X.M. “Mike” Frascogna '72 says. “In order to do that, our attorneys have to understand the business inside and out. To be a *true* entertainment attorney, it’s not enough to know contract law or how to negotiate a deal. You

have to know how to record a song, write a book, produce a film, and build an audience.”

FLG watches over its clients’ careers from both a legal *and* a strategic standpoint, helping them become bigger than when they first walked through the FLG doors.

“We look at the totality of the deal. What does the client need to be successful?” FLG Partner Mike Frascogna III '05 says. “If there’s an opportunity we need to meet in order for our client to be successful, we’ll figure out a way to do it, or in some cases, create it.”

That pursuit of the “totality of the deal” led FLG attorneys to form separate spin-off companies, including Frasco Films, a production studio that generates documentaries, music videos, and promotional trailers, and Emerald Tiger Artist Management, a talent development and booking firm. Realizing that most of their clients require branding, public relations, a digital presence, and high-impact promotional pieces, FLG attorneys invested personally to hire the team and build the facilities needed for turnkey service.

“The environment at FLG fosters the entrepreneurial spirit,” says FLG’s newest partner, Alexis Rayford '20. “The attitude here is that if it helps your client, go for it.”

Mike III takes the description of entrepreneurial spirit a step further.

“If you took our law firm and dropped us in a remote, harsh location, naked with nothing but a buck knife, not only would we survive, we would also build an entire civilization and thrive there.”

“When I was teaching as an adjunct at MC Law, the first question I asked my students was, ‘If you could practice entertainment law anywhere, where would you go?’

They would usually answer Los Angeles, New York, Nashville, or Austin. And I would tell them,

‘THE RIGHT ANSWER IS ANYWHERE IN MISSISSIPPI.

Mississippi is the best place to practice entertainment law. Don’t you want to go where all the talent is?’”

X.M. “Mike” Frascogna,
FLG Founder



SETTING A PRECEDENT IN MISSISSIPPI

An accomplished civil trial lawyer, Mike Frascogna brings deep legal experience across multiple industries, but is best known for founding Mississippi’s only sports and entertainment law firm.

As an accounting major at Mississippi State University in the late 1960s, Frascogna paid his way through college by booking bands for fraternity parties and campus events under the business name Frasco Entertainment. By the time he enrolled in the Jackson School of Law (now MC Law), Frasco Entertainment was one of the largest booking agencies in the South.

“When I graduated from law school, everyone just assumed I was an entertainment attorney,” Frascogna says.

Over the past 50 years, Frascogna has lived into that reputation, building an impressive team of attorneys who share his entrepreneurial spirit, including his sons, FLG partners Mike Frascogna III ’05 and Marty Frascogna ’09.

FLG attorneys bring experience not only as lawyers, but also as small business owners and as managers for music tours and record labels, social media stars, video gamers, and college athletes navigating the new frontier of NIL. They’ve authored multiple books and produced documentaries on Mississippi music and sports, and FLG has staged or sponsored major music and arts events in Mississippi and beyond.

“None of us are paper-pushing attorneys,” says FLG attorney Kamel King ’06. “Creatives, by and large, don’t trust the ‘suits.’ We’ve earned the trust and respect of the creative community because we’ve all been *part* of the creative community. The grassroots experience that comes from having done it ourselves makes us sharper than attorneys who have never actually *lived* the industry.”

FRASCOGNA LAW GROUP IS MISSISSIPPI’S TALENT REFINERY.



FLG attorneys are often asked, “Why base an international entertainment practice in Mississippi?”

FLG’s response is to point to the state’s talent.

“Mississippi is rich with talent across all entertainment genres. Literary, motion picture, acting, singing, athletes,” King says. “That talent is like oil here, right under the topsoil. The problem has been that Mississippi ships our talent out crude. “Then other places refine it, brand it, and decide how it’s marketed and what it should be worth. Mississippi doesn’t get the benefit of the reputation or



WHEN ASKED WHAT HE’D LIKE HIS LEGACY TO BE, MIKE FRASCOGNA PONDERES THE QUESTION FOR A MOMENT, THEN REPLIES, “I HOPE PEOPLE WILL SAY, ‘MIKE FRASCOGNA WAS PRO-MISSISSIPPI. WHETHER IT WAS ARTISTS, MUSICIANS, ATHLETES, OR ENTREPRENEURS, HE WAS ALWAYS PRO-MISSISSIPPI.’”

Kamel King ’06,
FLG attorney



the dollars. Frascogna Law Group, even though we’re a national and international firm, is pro-Mississippi. We invest in our artists. FLG is Mississippi’s talent refinery.”

FLG attorneys bring an understanding of Southern culture that can’t be learned in law school. They speak the same language, share the same backgrounds, and come from the same roots as many of the Southern artists they represent.

“I do a lot of work with attorneys in California and New York. I have a great deal of respect for them and I like them, but there are some marked differences in the way they approach things,” FLG Managing Partner Shawnassey Brooks ’99 says. “When you have a client who is an entertainer and suddenly they’re thrown into the business side at a high level, it can be hard for them. There’s a connection we have in the South that you don’t find in other places. When you’ve got a budding musician or a new author, I think they crave that connection.”

“We’re from the same soil as our Mississippi artists,” King says. “That brings a different level of accountability. Where another agency may see these artists as dollar signs, we see them as friends and family.”

Shawnassey Brooks '99,
FLG Managing Partner,
and Mike Frascogna III
'05, FLG Partner



Alexis Rayford '20,
FLG Partner, and
Marty Frascogna '05,
'09, FLG Partner



AN MC LAW TRADITION

Every partner and the majority of the attorneys at Frascogna Law Group are graduates of MC Law.

“MC Law was a very collaborative environment, and that’s the kind of law firm we have,” Shawnassey Brooks says. “That collaborative, community spirit takes away some of the pressure that causes attorneys to burn out. I’ve known people who’ve worked at other firms and compared their careers to being on an exhausting treadmill. We don’t have that environment here, and I believe that’s directly attributable to our common background at MC Law.”

Mike Frascogna taught negotiation and sports and entertainment law as an adjunct professor for 41 years before passing the torch to Kamel King. The firm is heavily involved in the law school’s new Sports, Entertainment, and Art Law Center. Mike Frascogna is also a supporter of the MC Law capital campaign.

“Ancient wisdom teaches, ‘If you add a little to a little, and then do it again, soon that little shall be much’ (Hesiod). MC Law’s thousands of alumni are in a position to accelerate the growth and national reputation of the law school by helping provide resources for student scholarships, the research and teaching efforts of faculty, and renovations of facilities,” Frascogna says. “If all alumni do ‘a little,’ we will be shocked at what MC Law will become over the next 50 years.”

One of those artists is GRAMMY Award-winning blues musician Dexter Allen, who is represented by both Frascogna Law Group and Emerald Tiger Artist Management.

“You have to have somebody fighting for you so the wolves and the vampires in this industry know now they can’t get one over on you,” Allen says. “The asset to the firm being in Mississippi means they’re right here. I ain’t got to jump on a plane to go to New York or Chicago. If I have an issue, I can drive down the street and around the corner.”

Musician and singer Chad Wesley is happy to have found a firm that shares his pro-Mississippi attitude.

“I grew up my entire life in Mississippi and I love it here,” Wesley says. “Representation in your backyard? Can’t beat that. I was told as a musician, ‘Go to Atlanta. Go to Nashville. Go to LA.’ But I want to set a precedent for a younger generation that you do not have to leave Mississippi. My life is here and I’m proud of it.”

MISSISSIPPI ADDRESS, GLOBAL REACH

Don’t let their Mississippi roots fool you; FLG attorneys can go toe-to-toe with any law firm in the world.

“We love it when people ask, ‘Where are you guys from?’ King says. “When we say, ‘Mississippi,’ a lot of times we see a smirk in response and know they’re thinking, ‘Mississippi? Already got them.’ Now, we have an advantage because you really don’t know who you’re dealing with. That underdog misperception is one of the biggest tools we have when we go to work for our clients.”

To quote the Frascogna Law Group website: “We live and work in the South. That means we know how to brawl and how to be polite while we’re doing it.”

Its Mississippi address hasn’t stopped the entertainment world from knocking on FLG’s doors. The firm represents clients from around the globe and has earned an international reputation for its expertise in the industry.

“THE FRASCOGNAS HELPED ME GO FROM A ONE-TRICK PONY AS AN EDITORIAL CARTOONIST TO A CARTOONIST, AUTHOR, AND SPEAKER, AND HELPED PREPARE ME FOR THE POSITION I HAVE NOW.

They walked me through the process of publishing my first book, then advised me on how to do other things to grow my creative career. The legal side of the creative business is very important, but there’s also a degree of handholding in this business. You need people who know the business and who encourage you and help you find the courage to take that next step. The Frascognas are fantastic at that.”

Marshall Ramsey, Author, Illustrator, Cartoonist, Speaker, and Mississippi Media Lab Director of Civic Engagement and Assistant Professor of Practice at the University of Mississippi



UNDER ONE ROOF

Several attorneys at FLG have formed independent companies to serve their clients and to support the firm's creative needs.

- **Frasco Films**, a production company producing original documentary films
- **Emerald Tiger Artist Management**, a musical artist development and booking company formed in 2025 and led by FLG attorney and Managing Director Kamel King
- **Republic Books**, a publishing company handling works by FLG clients and attorneys
- **Paraclete Mississippi**, an emerging venture developing specialized AI solutions for businesses and led by FLG Director of Innovation and Paraclete President Shane Blanton

Right: Mike Frascogna's books on the practice of law have been translated into Japanese and Chinese and serve as trusted resources for attorneys around the world.

While still a student at MC Law, Marty Frascogna '05, '09, started a music blog called "Music Globalization," sharing how what he'd learned that day in contracts or copyright classes might apply to independent musicians. *Billboard* magazine began reposting and publishing his work.

"By the time I graduated from law school, I had somehow become 'that guy who does international music law,'" Marty says. "That wasn't really even a *thing*. But there was no one else who had planted a flag in that space, so I said, 'Sure. Let's say it's me. I'm that guy.'"

Today, Marty lectures throughout the United States and Europe on international music law and serves as an adjunct professor at the prestigious Berklee College of Music's campus in Valencia, Spain. Marty's story reflects a recurring theme at FLG: When the firm sees an opportunity, it doesn't hesitate to pursue it.

Mike Frascogna and late MC Law Professor Lee Hetherington co-authored the seminal music industry book, *This Business of Artist Management*, currently in its fourth edition, and its companion Japanese edition. Frascogna and Hetherington also teamed to co-author *Negotiation Strategy for Lawyers*, as well as *The Lawyer's Guide to Negotiation*, which was published by ABA Publishing as a resource for attorneys nationwide, and its companion Chinese edition. As a voting member of the Recording Academy, Frascogna casts a vote in choosing GRAMMY winners.



But while Frascogna's reputation for entertainment law may grab the spotlight, his credentials aren't limited to show business. Over his five-decade career, Frascogna has built an international litigation and alternative dispute resolution practice that has taken him before courts and tribunals around the world. His work has included proceedings in The Hague, the United Kingdom, the Bahamas, Taiwan, and Mexico. Frascogna's recent work includes service on the American Arbitration Association's Olympic Dispute Resolution Committee and its Master Mediator Panel.

Frascogna's track record is a reminder that behind the gold records and celebrity clients stands a firm built on serious legal credentials.



"WHERE ARE YOU FROM AND WHAT'S YOUR PLAN FOR LUXEMBOURG?"

Marty Frascogna vividly recalls his first negotiation with a major record label, a milestone that had him working day and night to prepare.

The label's attorney, a graduate of Harvard and Yale, was with a large law firm in Los Angeles. Three minutes prior to what Marty felt was the most important call of his legal career, he was walking down the hall to the conference room, carrying a contract that "weighed four pounds when I got it and 18 pounds after all my redlining," when his father, Mike, stopped him.

"He asked me what my plan was, and when I showed him my folder of red lines, he *laughed*," Marty says. "So, I asked for his advice, and he said, 'Ask the other attorney where he's from, and don't let him escape from the question. Then ask him what the plan is for the Benelux countries.' I'm highly confused by this advice. I'm also sweating, because I'm scared to death."

"So, I get on the call and the other attorney is posturing, talking about his large firm and his time at Harvard and Yale. I asked him where he was from, and he kept repeating his credentials. So, I asked him again, and he finally said, 'Dallas.' So, I asked him some specific questions about Dallas. And finally, this guy just sounded defeated, and named a teeny little town in Texas two hours from Dallas."

The Benelux countries – Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg – also came in handy; when the label's counsel began talking about global rights, Marty asked, "Why would I give you rights to other territories, if you haven't even broken down what your plan is? I mean, honestly, can you tell me what the plan is for each specific Benelux country?"

"It just took down all of his armor," Marty says. "And I felt a shift. It was the realization, 'You're not going to beat me down just because you're in LA and you went to an Ivy League law school and I'm at a small firm in Mississippi and I didn't go to a big law school.' I realized this business wasn't as big and scary as I'd made it out to be. It's just human-to-human contact. You'll have way more success if you're genuine than if you try to be somebody you're not because you think that's what they're looking for in the room. People gravitate toward authenticity 100% of the time."

BEYOND THE FINE PRINT

Projects arrive at Frascogna Law Group in all kinds of forms. Sometimes it’s a musician with a song. Other times it’s an athlete with a brand. Sometimes it’s an entrepreneur with a concept scribbled on a notepad.

In fact, FLG client relationships don’t always begin with a legal issue. They begin with someone saying, “I’ve got an idea.”

“The first step is identifying an opportunity. What idea do I have that I can use to develop intellectual property?” Mike III says. “The second step is creating that intellectual property – say, a book, a film, or a podcast. Step three is to *leverage* that intellectual property, get it out into the marketplace where it can generate income or recognition for you in your field. A lot of times the legal step – protecting it with a trademark or copyright or writing a contract – comes last.”

“I tell clients, ‘Just bring us a seed,’” Rayford says. “Allow us to plant it and grow it. We’ve built long-term relationships by encouraging clients to pick up the phone and say, ‘Hey, Lex, I’ve got an idea,’ and then we help flesh that idea out. Sometimes we say, ‘You’re thinking about it like this, but we see it in a much bigger scope. Let’s help you build it out to something bigger.’”

“ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT THINGS I’VE HAD TO LEARN AS AN ENTERTAINMENT LAWYER IS PATIENCE. The thing about artists is, the more talented they are, the more right-brained they are. I’m very much a logical person, and sometimes I’m over here thinking, ‘How do you not see this?’ I keep reminding myself that if this highly creative person were a left-brained business person, they wouldn’t need me.” — Shawnassey Brooks ’99, FLG Managing Partner

BEHIND THE CURTAIN

For a firm whose clients live in the spotlight, discretion is one of FLG’s most valuable traits.

“I’m not really impressed by celebrities,” Marty Frascogna says. “I don’t have to constantly look down at my phone and announce, ‘Oh, look, So-and-So’s calling me!’ and I don’t post about my clients on socials. I’m just working in the shadows.

“That said, it is funny to see my kids mildly flex from time to time,” Marty continues. “They never ask me about my job, but they’ll overhear me talking about working with an artist, and the next time they have a friend in the car with us, they’ll say, ‘Hey, Dad, are you still working on that project with So-and-So?’”

Of course, working behind the scenes *does* have its exciting moments. FLG attorneys have attended the GRAMMY and Dove Awards ceremonies, ridden on tour buses, dined

with celebrities, negotiated with major record labels, and fielded endless requests for backstage passes. The practice also comes with its share of idiosyncrasies.

“So. Many. Quirks,” Brooks says with a wry smile. “One of the most important things I’ve had to learn as an entertainment lawyer is patience. The thing about artists is, the more talented they are, the more right-brained they are. I’m very much a logical person, and sometimes I’m over here thinking, ‘How do you not see this?’ I keep reminding myself that if this highly creative person were a left-brained business person, they wouldn’t need me.

“And honestly, there’s just something about having a celebrity in the mix that makes things different,” Brooks continues. “Perfect example, we had a multiplatinum group that was being sued by a former bandmate. We get into depositions, and the attorney on the other side goes all fanboy all over our group. *He’s suing them*, but he’s also telling them how much he loves their music. And we’re there having to remind him, ‘You’re suing these guys. You are not their friend.’

“You are also *constantly* trying to talk people out of making bad deals,” Brooks says. “They’re so anxious to get their shot at being a celebrity, so anxious for the big record deal, and you’re trying to hold them back, going, ‘No, no, *no*, you don’t want to do this.’ I can’t tell you how many people I’ve had come to me after the fact and say, ‘I signed this contract, and now I regret it.’”

While the public sees the red carpets, awards shows, sold-out venues, and streaming success stories, FLG sees the contracts, disputes, negotiations, and difficult decisions that happen behind the curtain. Brooks’ assessment of that work is, “I love it,” but she does confess to one downside.

“I can no longer listen to the radio in the car and the TV is never on in my house. That’s what 20-plus years of entertainment law has done for me – I can’t hear music without wondering what the licensing deal for it was, and I can’t see an image without wondering who holds the copyright.”

WHERE FAITH AND CHARACTER TAKE CENTER STAGE

The entertainment industry brings glamour, wealth, and fame, but the industry also has a well-publicized dark side. Power, money, and ambition have a way of testing people, often with unfortunate results. The FLG team feels a responsibility to be not only effective attorneys, but also a bright light in the industry.

“I think a major difference between Frascogna Law Group and many other firms in the country is that we have real Biblical values,” King says. “More important than our skill as attorneys, our creativity, our diversity, and even the visionary leadership of Mr. Frascogna, is that we all have a foundation in God. It keeps us grounded to know that we take our direction from above.”

That culture of faith and integrity begins with the example set by its founder. When asked what they’ve learned from Mike Frascogna, few of the attorneys mention points of law. Instead, they describe opportunity, mentorship, and trust.

Shane Blanton ’22, FLG director of innovation, was recently faced with a critical business decision.



Shane Blanton ’22,
FLG director of
innovation



THE KICK-OFF TO LAST CHANCE U

When the president of East Mississippi Community College (EMCC) came to Frascogna Law Group in search of advice to increase the school’s dwindling enrollment, FLG took the football and ran with it.

The firm suggested writing a book on EMCC’s legendary late football coach, Bob “Bull” “Cyclone” Sullivan. Mike, Mike III, and Marty Frascogna knew it was sound advice; the father and sons had previously co-authored two books on Mississippi football – *Gridiron Gold* and *Y’all vs. Us* – and knew there was a market there. When EMCC approached Sullivan’s widow with the idea, she agreed – on the condition that the Frascognas write the book. Father and sons teamed up again to author *Bull Cyclone Sullivan and the Lions of Scooba, Mississippi*.

The book clicked with EMCC alumni, many of whom were inspired to begin supporting the school financially and returning to campus for EMCC’s rough-and-tumble gridiron matchups. Following the success of the book, EMCC leaders and some of the former players interviewed for the book came back to FLG with an idea to turn the book into a documentary film – a documentary they wanted FLG to produce.

The book and documentary inspired an in-depth feature story on the EMCC football program for GQ magazine. The magazine article led to interest from Netflix. EMCC once again came to FLG, this time for help negotiating a deal with the streaming giant.

The result was *Last Chance U*. The reality series premiered in 2016, transforming the small community college in map-dot Scooba, Mississippi, into an international sensation. The EMCC website exploded, admission inquiries increased, and football fans from around the world packed the stadium to watch the Lions play. *Last Chance U* went on to become one of Netflix’s most highly rated reality shows.

For FLG, *Last Chance U* remains a textbook example of recognizing an opportunity and leveraging it into something big.

“WHEN I SEE ONE OF OUR CLIENTS PERFORM, I KNOW THERE’S A GOD, because there’s no way any person could possess such a talent without a higher being. I also believe that we’re uniquely blessed in Mississippi, where He sprinkled a little bit more of that talent on us than on the rest of the world.” — Kamel King, Attorney, Frascogna Law Group and Managing Director, Emerald Tiger Artist Management