

## BRIEFS

# SETTING THE BAR

Anthony "Tony" Lathrop is a conservative foil to his flamboyant clients

Charlotte attorney Anthony "Tony" Lathrop's demeanor is the antithesis of the high-profile, raucous band Kiss. But Lathrop, of Moore & Van Allen, represented the rock heavyweights over bootleg concert DVDs. He eventually won the intellectual property case and put the bootleggers out of business.

Lathrop, president of the Mecklenburg County Bar, ensures that his words hit the mark. "I think it makes me better in everything I do—not just as a lawyer." Greg Murphy, also of Moore & Van Allen, says, "That's part of what makes him a good lawyer—a good trial lawyer in particular."

Lathrop moved to Charlotte in 1991 to practice law. "I saw how lawyers had made such a big difference in this country and I was drawn to it," he says. Lathrop's longtime friend David Keesler, U. S. magistrate judge for the Western District of North Carolina, says Lathrop is idealistic, but also motivated by an abiding interest in public affairs and government. "Tony believes government is there to do good things for people," Keesler says.

Murphy says Lathrop has "a particular knack for complex cases with political ramifications or social overtones" and that Lathrop's ability to combine elements of a case is one of the keys to his success. "You can know the facts and the law, but if you don't know the context in which they should be considered you will be left behind," Murphy says. "Tony's good at putting all these critical components together."

Lathrop has been an unyielding advocate for individuals of color in the legal profession, making diversity a priority for his tenure at the helm of the Mecklenburg County Bar.

Soft-hearted toward his wife, Sarah, and their three children,



PHOTOGRAPH BY JON SILLA

Lathrop can be stern stuff in court, and lawyers who don't live up to the high standards of the legal profession elicit his scorn. To be a successful litigator, Lathrop believes understanding and identifying with the client's personal stake in the issue is critical. Keesler says Lathrop should never be underestimated—he doesn't give up.

"Nobody outworks Tony," Keesler says.

— Carole Moore