



THE TAKEAWAY: Meet Mayer Brown's new Chicago leader. **PAGE 3**

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THE PANDEMIC APPEARS TO HAVE PERMANENTLY ALTERED the way we work, and this year's top places to work reflect those changes. Once again this year, Crain's partnered with Best Companies Group to survey employees and identify the 100 Best Places to Work. | **PAGE 17**

Kaegi targets commercial property again

North Suburban landlords get more bad news as a new round of reassessments begins

BY ALBY GALLUN

In his first three years as Cook County assessor, Fritz Kaegi angered commercial landlords by hiking their assessments—a lot. They're not going to be much happier with him in year four.

Kaegi's office has been delivering unwelcome news to owners of many commercial properties in the northern and northwestern suburbs this year. He's raising their assessments again, fueling fears of more property tax hikes in 2023 and preserving his persona non grata status among many in the Chicago business community who say he's driving away investors and killing the local economy. Kaegi has reassessed nine of



the 13 townships in northern Cook County this year. The total assessed value of all non-residential properties in the nine townships rose 43.4% from 2021, versus a 32.4% increase for homeowners, according to a preliminary analysis of data from the

See **KAEGI** on Page 37

Northern Illinois faces a power plant gap

Report says the area will need electricity from elsewhere as Pritzker shuts coal- and gas-fired generators

BY STEVE DANIELS

The elimination of carbon-emitting power plants in Illinois over the next 20 years will leave the Chicago area without enough generating capacity to meet its needs, forcing the region to import electricity from other states for the first time in modern memory.

That's the conclusion of a new report by PJM Interconnection, the power-grid manager for a

multistate region from northern Illinois to the mid-Atlantic. PJM blames the closing of fossil fuel plants—which to date has been driven by poor economics but soon will be mandated by the state's year-old Climate & Equitable Jobs Act, or CEJA—for a projected capacity gap that will force the area to look elsewhere for power by 2030 at the latest.

See **POWER** on Page 37

CRAIN'S LISTS

See what execs at area nonprofits are pulling down. **PAGES 14-15**



James Delany

FINANCE

'Slow and steady' isn't winning the race at Ariel right now. **PAGE 3**



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THE TAKEAWAY

Debra Boggo-Ernst

Boggo-Ernst, **who became head of Mayer Brown's Chicago office in July**, has spent her entire career at the law firm after growing up in the northwest suburbs. She also co-leads the firm's consumer and class-action (defense) practice and plans to spend about three-quarters of her time lawyering, the rest administering. Boggo-Ernst, 47, starts her latest job at a time when the legal industry, like others, is wrestling with return-to-work issues, and big law firms are competing to poach high-performing lawyers while struggling with an exodus of women frustrated by slow promotions. Mayer Brown and other big firms tend to hire more women than men but remain 60% male on average because women leave at higher rates. | By Steven R. Strahler

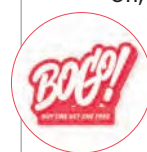


You're the third consecutive woman to head the office. So, old news in a good way?

It's a great thing. I like to think I am a good role model for the associates who are coming up—somebody who made partner at both (income and equity) levels while I was out on maternity leave. I didn't go on an alternative work schedule, which I think is great for folks to consider. Seeing somebody with a family who's been able to succeed at Mayer Brown is just a great thing for women coming up and, frankly, the men, too, because men take paternity leave here.



I see your name everywhere: BOGO Free, BOGO 50% off.



Oh, buy one, get one! My maiden name is Bogosavljevic. My dad's from Yugoslavia; he came here as a boy when his mother died. When I was growing up, when we made reservations at restaurants, we wouldn't use the whole name, as you might imagine. We were the Bogos, and when I got married, I picked a compromise.



What do you say about polls citing workplace culture and lack of career opportunities as bigger factors than child care issues for women who leave Big Law?

I haven't heard culture and lack of career opportunities as complaints here at Mayer Brown. Would I love that (gender-balance) number to be 50-50? I think that's challenging to get those numbers to 50-50, but we are highly focused on that.



How is your own work-life balance?

Mine is really good. When I was coming up in the ranks, I would say I'm going to go home and eat dinner with my kids (two sons) and hop back on the computer. There was no stigmatism with that. That kind of philosophy has continued. I still get to go home at a reasonable hour, which is important to me.



Did you work with your former partner Lori Lightfoot before she left to do something else?



I did not work directly with Lori. I knew her very well. We got along great when she was here. She is a very charismatic person.



Do you expect her back someday?

I don't know. We can never predict these things.

