

## Press Release

### **Freeborn Partner Gia Colunga Named LBPC '40 Under Forty Attorney to Watch' A Freeborn Lawyer Has Been Selected Each Year Since 2000**

**CHICAGO – Oct. 18, 2017** – [Freeborn & Peters LLP](#) is pleased to announce that [Gia F. Colunga](#), a Partner in the firm's Litigation Practice Group, has been named one of the 2017 "40 Illinois Attorneys Under Forty to Watch" by the Law Bulletin Publishing Company (LBPC), publisher of the Chicago Daily Law Bulletin and Chicago Lawyer magazine. A Freeborn attorney has earned the distinction each of the last 17 years.

LBPC reviewed more than 1,500 nominations for this year's "40 Under Forty," which recognizes the 40 "most talented young attorneys practicing in Illinois." In evaluating candidates, LBPC looks for attorneys who exhibit intelligence, passion, success, a desire to help the community and a willingness to work hard at their profession. This year's recipients all were under age 40 prior to May 1, 2017.

"We are extremely proud of the work that Gia does for our clients as a skilled litigator and counselor, as well as her commitment to serving the community through numerous pro bono and non-profit endeavors," said Freeborn Partner and founding member [Michael D. Freeborn](#), who has worked closely with Ms. Colunga on behalf of one of the firm's major clients. "Freeborn congratulates Gia on this well-deserved recognition from Law Bulletin Publishing Company as an outstanding young attorney in Illinois."

One of Ms. Colunga's clients, for whom she worked on a restrictive covenant case, praised Ms. Colunga's litigation skills in nominating her for the award.

"I have been litigating cases for over 27 years and evaluating other litigators for 15. Ms. Colunga is simply an outstanding attorney...," the client said.

Another client similarly said, "I can say [Ms. Colunga] is one of the select few who has the natural talent, the drive and the quintessential professionalism to lead the bar in the years ahead."

Megan Kokontis, an attorney with Chicago law firm Akerman, also praised Ms. Colunga for the results that she has achieved at trial. After a federal bench trial, Ms. Colunga's client was awarded \$1.9 million in attorneys' fees, and the court imposed a permanent injunction in favor of her client.

"Gia is an exceptional attorney," Ms. Kokontis explained. "She is a wonderful mentor and teacher, and she is a skilled litigator. She is calm under pressure and does not back down."

John Hammerle, an attorney with True Value Company and former Freeborn colleague of Ms. Colunga, said, "Gia is a smart and confident attorney who understands how to obtain the desired results. She is not afraid to take risks and consistently exhibits an admirable dedication to the law. She is an exemplary litigator who can find common ground with the most bullheaded of opponents."

Ms. Colunga has extensive trial experience and has handled significant matters for clients in state and federal courts across the country, including large-scale discovery disputes, dispositive motion practice and appeals. She has represented plaintiffs and defendants in a wide range of commercial cases, including litigation relating to breach of contract, franchising, trade secrets, restrictive covenants and other employment matters.

Ms. Colunga devotes a significant amount of time to working on pro bono matters and for non-profit organizations. Additionally, she was named by the Illinois Legal Aid Online non-profit organization as the “Pro Bono Attorney of the Month” in recognition of her pro bono work. Ms. Colunga currently serves on the board of directors for Girls on the Run Chicago, a non-profit organization dedicated to preparing girls for a lifetime of self-respect and health.

Ms. Colunga earned her J.D. (*cum laude*) from Loyola University Chicago School of Law and her Bachelor of Arts (*cum laude*) from Tulane University.

#### **ABOUT FREEBORN & PETERS**

Freeborn & Peters LLP is a full-service law firm, headquartered in Chicago, with international capabilities and offices in Springfield, Ill.; Richmond, Va.; New York City; and Tampa, Fla. Freeborn is always looking ahead and seeking to find better ways to serve its clients. It takes a proactive approach to ensure its clients are more informed, prepared and able to achieve greater success – not just now, but also in the future. While the firm serves clients across a very broad range of sectors, it has also pioneered an interdisciplinary approach that serves the specific needs of targeted industries.

Freeborn is a firm that genuinely lives up to its core values of integrity, effectiveness, teamwork, caring and commitment, and embodies them through high standards of client service and responsive action. Its lawyers build close and lasting relationships with clients and are driven to help them achieve their legal and business objectives.

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