

Freeborn Partners Shelly DeRousse and Todd Ohlms Named Crain's Chicago 2019 Gen X Leaders in Law

CHICAGO – June 4, 2019 – [Freeborn & Peters LLP](#) is pleased to announce that [Shelly A. DeRousse](#) and [Todd J. Ohlms](#), Partners in the firm's Chicago office, have been named by *Crain's Chicago Business* as 2019 Gen X Leaders in Law.

"The firm congratulates Shelly and Todd on being selected among *Crain's Chicago's* 2019 Gen X Leaders in Law," said Freeborn Co-Managing Partner [Joseph L. Fogel](#). "Both Shelly and Todd are highly regarded as accomplished lawyers who also serve valuable leadership roles in the firm and in the community."

The Gen X Leaders in Law recognizes 120 Chicago area lawyers between the ages of 40 and 55 for their success and accomplishments during the previous 12 to 18 months. All honorees serve in senior leadership roles at their firms. The recognition also considered nominees' demonstrated ability or power to effect change in their role and/or area of practice, service as role models or mentors to other attorneys, and leadership outside their own firm or organization, including professional groups and community service initiatives. The Gen X Leaders in Law are featured in a special section of the June 3 print issue of *Crain's Chicago Business* and on chicagobusiness.com.

Ms. DeRousse is Co-Leader of Freeborn's Bankruptcy and Financial Restructuring Practice Group and Partner Chair of the firm's Women's Leadership Council. Ms. DeRousse has extensive experience in the areas of bankruptcy, reorganization, litigation, and asset sales. As lead counsel, she has represented official creditors' committees throughout the country in chapter 11 bankruptcy cases. Additionally, she represents companies and high earning individuals in their restructurings or workout negotiations with their lenders and other creditors. She is known among banks and other financial institutions as a leading attorney for lenders in bankruptcy cases, out-of-court workouts of borrowers' loans, and assignments for the benefit of creditors.

As lead trial attorney, Ms. DeRousse has litigated to judgment many trials and hearings on issues including mismanagement and fraud, fraudulent transfers, relief from the automatic stay, use of cash collateral, commercial contract disputes, assessment of lease value, benefit to a bankruptcy estate, and breach of fiduciary duty.

Ms. DeRousse also is very active in professional organizations. She is President of the Women's Bar Foundation of Illinois and serves as the co-chair of the Turnaround Management Association's Breakfast Programs Committee for the Midwest Region. In 2018, Ms. DeRousse was elected as a Fellow of the American Bar Foundation and was one of six women in the nation named as a finalist for a distinguished Chambers award for "Inspiring Role Model in Promoting Gender Diversity in the Legal Profession." In 2010, Ms. DeRousse was named by the suburban Chicago *Daily Herald Business Ledger* and the National Association of Women Business Owners of Chicago as one of the most "Influential Women in

Business.” In addition, Ms. DeRousse has served for many years on the executive board of directors of the Women’s Bar Foundation.

A member of Freeborn’s Litigation Practice Group, Mr. Ohlms serves as Co-Leader of both the firm’s Commercial Litigation Team and Private Equity and Venture Capital Industry Group. In addition, he is a member of Freeborn’s Emerging Industries Team and the firm’s Executive Committee. Mr. Ohlms also has extensive experience in creating and implementing electronic discovery strategies and protocol for clients; since 2006, he has actively participated in the development of Freeborn’s in-house E-Discovery Lab.

Mr. Ohlms advises and represents clients on their business-critical litigation matters. He has substantial experience in actions involving temporary restraining orders and preliminary injunctions, and in the practice areas of intellectual property, fiduciary litigation, securities and shareholder litigation, antitrust and trade regulation, and complex/multi-jurisdictional disputes.

Mr. Ohlms is often retained by private equity firms to counsel their portfolio companies on a wide range of matters and is frequently selected to serve as outside general counsel to their portfolio companies. During the past 18 months, he has successfully tried four cases to verdict, argued before the Sixth Circuit and resolved a contentious dispute among the founders of a private equity firm, without litigation.

In support of the nomination of Mr. Ohlms as a Gen X Leader in Law, McNally Capital Founder and Managing Partner Ward McNally praised Mr. Ohlms’ “intensity, approach and concern” and his “unusual ability to advise a client instead of telling them what to do.” In a separate letter of nomination, Robert A. Clifford, founder of Clifford Law Offices in Chicago, referenced Mr. Ohlms as “a leader in Chicago’s leader community” whose “leadership in the courtroom speaks for itself.”

Mr. Clifford added that Mr. Ohlms’ service as a member of the board of Bunker Labs “is truly to be admired and should not go unnoticed.” Bunker Labs is a national, not-for-profit business incubator for military veterans.

ABOUT FREEBORN & PETERS

Freeborn & Peters LLP is a full-service law firm, headquartered in Chicago, with international capabilities and offices in New York City; Richmond, Va.; Springfield, Ill.; 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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