

10 for TEN

ten attorneys
who raised
the bar
over the
last decade

Anita Alvarez
Robert A. Clifford
Patrick Collins
Dick Devine
Timothy C. Evans
James R. Figliulo
Michael Freeborn
Richard C. Godfrey
Jerold Solovy
Dan Webb

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The entire globe survived the catastrophe that never occurred, Y2K. On January 2nd, 2000, life was back to normal and we all went back to work. In the blink of an eye, the first decade of the current millennium has come to a close. The Illinois legal profession could not be in better shape.

Recently, Law Bulletin surveyed Illinois attorneys to determine whom they thought made extensive contributions to the profession over the last 10 years. From the courtroom, to complicated transactions, each attorney selected made an impact on the legal profession, as we know it.

The ten individuals profiled in this book are all exceptionally talented, successful and passionate about law and have raised the bar for the profession. Anyone looking to succeed in the legal field should take note of these attorneys and what they gave back to the profession and the community.

The attorneys selected were chosen from the nominations received. Going through the nominations was a monumental task. Their profiles are written based on the nominations received.

Adam Hrejsa
Law Bulletin Publishing Company

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Michael Freeborn

Freeborn & Peters LLP

Michael Freeborn didn't just build a law firm. He and a handful of very young partners built one that today is one of the most respected and successful in the city of Chicago. Not even the economic recession has slowed its growth.

To observers, the long-term success of the Chicago law firm of Freeborn & Peters LLP, which Freeborn helped found in the depths of the last major recession in 1983, is testament to the strong work ethic and legal skills of Freeborn himself.

"All of us who have practiced in corporate law firms in this last decade have had to withstand the constant barrage from law firm consultants of 'Grow! Grow! Grow!' These consultants told us for years that the only significant law firms that are going to be left at the end of the decade are very large firms and small boutique firms. The firm of Freeborn & Peters has consistently proven that this is not the only model for a successful law firm," said David Pritchard, partner at the Chicago law firm of Salvi, Schostok & Pritchard P.C.

Today, Freeborn & Peters boasts about 120 lawyers. This growth occurred without the benefit of mergers and acquisitions during a time when competition in the legal business has only increased. As observers say, Freeborn & Peters has grown its firm simply by consistently adding quality lawyers to its roster.

A big reason for this success is Freeborn himself. During his long legal career, Freeborn has established himself as one of the most successful litigators in the city. He has averaged at least one major trial every year, conducting many of these in out-of-state venues against some of the largest and most powerful law firms in the country.

Freeborn has also been a strong supporter of his community. He recently helped launch the Willow Creek Legal Aid Ministry, which provides legal services to the poor at a food pantry operated by Willow Creek Community Church in the suburb of South Barrington. Since March of 2009, more than 300 pro bono clients have been represented through this ministry.

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THE POWER OF PRINCIPLE

Legal expertise, negotiating skills, wise counsel – I expect those things from my lawyers. They're a given. But they're not enough.

I've worked my entire adult life building my business. It's a part of me. And that's something that Michael Freeborn understands, because he's done the same thing.

His team at Freeborn & Peters understands that sometimes it's about more than dollars and cents – it's about right and wrong. Beyond a matter of the law, it's a matter of principle. And there are some things you can't put a price on. Like your integrity, and your reputation.

When it's time to take a stand, these are the people I'm proud to have on my side.



Jerry Forsythe
Chairman and CEO
Indeck Power Equipment Company

Freeborn & Peters LLP

Litigation
Business Law
Real Estate
Bankruptcy
Government and Regulatory Law

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Jerry Forsythe