

## Press Release

### **Freeborn Partner Shelly DeRousse Among Winners of 2019 Women, Influence & Power in Law Awards**

**CHICAGO – Aug. 27, 2019** – [Freeborn & Peters LLP](#) is pleased to announce that [Shelly A. DeRousse](#), a Chicago Partner and Co-Leader of the firm’s Bankruptcy and Financial Restructuring Practice Group, is among the honorees of the 2019 Women, Influence & Power in Law (WIPL) Awards presented by *Corporate Counsel* and *InsideCounsel* magazines.

“We congratulate Shelly on this tremendous honor and recognition from the Women, Influence & Power in Law Awards,” said Freeborn Co-Managing Partner [William E. Russell](#). “We are extremely proud of Shelly’s achievements at Freeborn and in the bankruptcy and restructuring arena, and for her unwavering commitment to and support for the advancement of women in the law profession.”

Formerly known as the National Women in Law Awards, the WIPL Awards honor general counsel, in-house leaders and law firm partners who have demonstrated a commitment to advancing the empowerment of women in law. According to *Corporate Counsel* and *InsideCounsel*, “These women are business strategists, complex problem-solvers, and of course, great lawyers. But what particularly makes these women stand out is their personal dedication to the promotion of diversity in the legal industry. These are women championing women.”

The honorees will be formally recognized at an awards dinner Oct. 16 as part of the Women, Influence & Power in Law Conference in Washington, D.C. Profiles of the honorees will be published in the December issue of *Corporate Counsel* magazine.

Ms. DeRousse is a prominent restructuring attorney and commercial litigator and one of a handful of women in the United States to lead a bankruptcy and financial restructuring practice group at a law firm. With extensive experience in the areas of bankruptcy, restructuring, litigation and asset sales, Ms. DeRousse is one of the most experienced attorneys in the Midwest in representing official committees of unsecured creditors in middle market chapter 11 cases. She is also 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. Additionally, she regularly represents companies and high earning individuals in their bankruptcies or workout negotiations with their lenders and other creditors.

Since 2016, Ms. DeRousse has served as president of the Women’s Bar Foundation (WBF) of Illinois, a non-profit organization that supports the advancement of women in the legal profession by raising money and awarding scholarships to women in each of the nine law schools in Illinois. During her tenure as president, the WBF has awarded hundreds of thousands of dollars in scholarships to women law students. She also has served on the WBF board for about 15 years.

In addition, Ms. DeRousse serves as co-chair of the Breakfast Program Committee and serves on the Network of Women Committee for the Turnaround Management Association for the Midwest Region. In this role, she plans and runs events designed to create connections among professionals in turnaround management. In 2018, she was elected as a Fellow of the American Bar Foundation and was one of six U.S. women finalists for the distinguished Chambers award for “Inspiring Role Model in Promoting Gender Diversity in the Legal Profession.” Shelly has also been recognized by Crain’s Business Chicago on its lists of Notable Women Lawyers and Notable Gen X Leaders in Law.

At Freeborn, Ms. DeRousse is the Partner Chair of the firm’s Women’s Leadership Counsel, through which she organizes mentoring, educational and social programs and events for the women attorneys at the firm. She also supervises and mentors the women attorneys who belong to the Bankruptcy and Financial Restructuring Practice Group and advocates for women at the firm as a whole and for policies that support women. Ms. DeRousse’s Bankruptcy and Financial Restructuring team has the highest percentage of women of all of Freeborn’s practice groups.

Ms. DeRousse received her J.D. from DePaul University College of Law and her Bachelor of Science from Illinois State University.

## **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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