



Press Release

Akerman Names Eric Rapkin Office Managing Partner of Fort Lauderdale Office

September 11, 2014

Akerman LLP, a top 100 U.S. law firm serving clients across the Americas, today announced that **Eric Rapkin**, a partner with the firm's Real Estate Practice Group, will assume the role of office managing partner of the Fort Lauderdale office.

"Eric is a leading lawyer in his field and a selfless advocate for our clients and our people," said **Andrew Smulian**, Akerman Chairman and CEO. "We look forward to Akerman's continued success in Fort Lauderdale under Eric's able direction."

As office managing partner, Rapkin will work to further strengthen the firm's relationships with civic and business leaders in Fort Lauderdale and throughout Broward County. He also will collaborate with the firm's management team on lateral recruiting and play an important role locally in the firm's coordinated philanthropic and pro bono efforts in support of education and youth development programs. Rapkin will continue to serve clients in major commercial real estate transactions, including the leasing, financing, acquisition, and disposition of office buildings, shopping centers, hotels, and industrial properties for developers and institutions.

Rapkin succeeds David Ristaino who has served as the office managing partner of the Fort Lauderdale office since 2007. Ristaino will join longtime firm client, Independent Living Systems, on September 15 as vice president and general counsel. Independent Living Systems is one of the ten fastest growing healthcare companies in the United States.

"It is a great honor and privilege to assume the role of office managing partner of Akerman's Fort Lauderdale office," said Rapkin. "This is an exciting time for our law firm, with the people of Akerman intensely focused on serving our clients and our communities in new and even more meaningful ways. I look forward to continuing our leadership and impact in Fort Lauderdale."

Earlier this year, Akerman intensified its philanthropic commitment to its many communities with the first Akerman Give Back campaign. The firm worked alongside the National Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) Association and its local CASA and guardian ad litem programs across the United States, including Voices for Children of

Broward County, to promote volunteer advocacy for abused and neglected children in the foster care system. As the first law firm to partner nationally with CASA, Akerman lawyers and staff in Fort Lauderdale and across the United States collectively pledged more than 14,000 volunteer and pro bono hours, and raised more than \$100,000, with the pledged time and contributions having the potential to improve the lives of more than 200 foster children.

Rapkin is recognized as one of the leading real estate lawyers in Florida by *Chambers USA*, *The Best Lawyers in America*, *Super Lawyers*, and *The Legal 500*. He is a past president of the NAIOP (Commercial Real Estate Development Association) South Florida Chapter and has served as chair of the South Florida Idea Exchange Committee for the International Council of Shopping Centers (ICSC), and will be the co-chair of the 2015 ICSC Florida Conference.

Rapkin earned his B.A. degree from the University of Florida and his J.D. degree from the Georgetown University Law Center.

About Akerman LLP

Akerman LLP is a leading transactions and trial law firm known for its core strengths in middle market M&A, within the financial services and real estate industries, and for a diverse Latin America practice. With more than 600 lawyers and government affairs professionals and a network of 20 offices, it is ranked among the top 100 law firms in the United States by *The National Law Journal NLJ* 350 (2014). Akerman also is ranked among the top 50 law firms for diversity in *The American Lawyer's* Diversity Scorecard (2014).

More information can be found at akerman.com or twitter.com/akerman_law.

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