

Press Release

Akerman Litigation Partner Sowmya Bharathi Elected to Florida Justice Institute Board

July 27, 2023

National law firm Akerman today announced Litigation Practice Group partner [Sowmya Bharathi](#) has been elected to the governing board of the Florida Justice Institute (FJI), a nonprofit public interest law firm that uses impact litigation and advocacy to improve the lives of Florida’s poor and disenfranchised. FJI is focused on criminal justice reform, homelessness and poverty, disability access, and civil rights.

Bharathi and her fellow board members are responsible for overseeing FJI’s mission to improve the lives of disadvantaged residents across the state and for ensuring that it is doing so in an effective and financially sound manner.

Before joining Akerman in 2021, Bharathi served as a federal public defender in the Southern District of Florida for more than 15 years. She earned her J.D. at Chicago-Kent College of Law and a B.A. from the University of Chicago.

Roderick Petrey, FJI’s co-founder and board chair said, “We’re thrilled to welcome Sowmya to FJI’s board. Her accomplishments as an attorney, both in private practice and as a public defender, as well as her service to the legal community, make her uniquely suited to this role. We look forward to her sound guidance for many years to come.”

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Bharathi is a first-chair trial lawyer with extensive federal court experience. She has tried 24 federal cases to jury verdict. Bharathi is also a seasoned appellate advocate, who has written more than 20 federal appeals and argued before the Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals. Most recently, she argued before Florida's First District Court of Appeals and secured a major appellate win for a national company.

About Akerman

Akerman LLP is a top 100 U.S. law firm recognized among the most forward-thinking firms in the industry by *Financial Times*. Its more than 700 lawyers and business professionals collaborate with the world's most successful enterprises and entrepreneurs to navigate change, seize opportunities and help drive innovation and growth.