

Press Release

Akerman Continues Rapid Growth in Chicago with Addition of Three Partners Experienced in the Financial Services and Healthcare Sectors

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Firm Doubles in Size in Chicago as it Expands National Reach

Akerman LLP, a top 100 U.S. law firm serving clients across the Americas, today announced the addition of three partners to its Chicago office, and has now more than doubled the size of its Chicago team since opening the office five months ago with eight lawyers. The new partners, litigator Christine Bautista, healthcare lawyer Carolyn Metnick and bankruptcy lawyer [Michael Molinaro](#), bolster Akerman's national strengths in the financial services and healthcare industries, particularly in financial and securities litigation. They also expand the firm's capabilities in white collar crime and government investigation matters.

"We are pleased to welcome Christine, Carolyn and Michael to Akerman's Chicago office," said [Scott Meyers](#), the firm's Chicago Office Managing Partner. "Our clients continue to seek counsel in complex transactional, regulatory enforcement and litigation matters, and in Chicago, we remain focused on thoughtful growth, assembling a team of lawyers who mirror Akerman's strengths in these areas and who share our commitment to the Akerman Client Experience."

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Bautista joins Akerman's Litigation Practice Group, concentrating her practice in white collar criminal defense and internal investigations, complex commercial litigation and Bank Secrecy Act compliance issues. As a former assistant U.S. attorney in the Central District of California, she is an accomplished trial lawyer with experience in criminal and civil investigations and prosecutions by the federal government and its enforcement agencies. She has worked with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission and tax authorities in various parallel investigations and has experience prosecuting white collar crimes, including securities fraud, tax fraud, money laundering, bank fraud and public corruption. A native of Chicago, Bautista is active in numerous professional and community organizations including the Federal Bar Association and Trial Bar, the Chicago Asian American Bar Association and the Filipino American Lawyers Association of Chicago.

A member of Akerman's Healthcare Practice Group, Metnick focuses her practice on transactional and business issues affecting healthcare providers, including health systems, hospitals, multi-specialty clinics, IDTFs, FQHCs, surgery centers and physician organizations. She guides her healthcare clients through various transactions including joint ventures, mergers and acquisitions and reorganizations. She also counsels clients on governance matters, regulatory issues and federal fraud and abuse laws, including the Anti-Kickback Statute and the Stark Law. In addition, Metnick counsels her clients on HIPAA compliance, healthcare technology (mData), clinical trial research issues, disputes and litigation with an emphasis in contract law, covenants not to compete and business torts. Metnick serves as a board member for Ballet Chicago and the Illinois Association of Healthcare Attorneys, and as a vice chair for the American Health Lawyers Association's Business Law & Governance Practice Group. She is recognized by *Super Lawyers* and was ranked in *The National Law Journal's* "Chicago's 40 Under 40" survey in 2013.

Molinaro brings more than 30 years of experience to Akerman's Bankruptcy & Reorganization Practice Group, representing many of the country's largest banks, financial institutions and insurance companies in loan financing transactions, loan workouts, complex bankruptcy, reorganization and commercial law matters and commercial litigation. Molinaro's nationwide practice includes buying and selling distressed businesses, advising lenders in connection with lender liability issues, and representing secured and unsecured creditors on a wide variety of commercial finance transactions, including healthcare, real estate, credit card, intellectual property, leasing, hedge fund and derivative transactions. Molinaro is a Fellow of the Litigation Counsel of America and is recognized by *Chambers USA* and *Super Lawyers*.

The combined experience of these new lawyers further strengthens Akerman's financial litigation practice on behalf of lenders, broker-dealers and hedge funds. They also expand the national footprint of Akerman's creditors' rights teams, which has handled some of the largest bankruptcies in U.S. history. The new additions also enhance Akerman's capabilities in regulatory compliance, government investigations and white-collar defense in a wide range of industries. Bautista is the second former assistant U.S. attorney to join Akerman's Chicago office in recent weeks, following the arrival of Paul Lillios who most recently served as a federal administrative law judge in Chicago for the last 20 years.

Akerman's Chicago office now includes 18 lawyers, making Chicago one of Akerman's fastest-growing offices along with its New York, Miami, and Washington, D.C., locations.

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.