

Press Release

One Year Later, Four Times Bigger: Akerman Continues Chicago Expansion with Group of Seasoned Litigators

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Firm Bolsters National Platform of Trial Lawyers with Four Commercial Litigators Experienced in Intellectual Property, Real Estate and Restaurant Sectors

Akerman LLP, a top 100 U.S. law firm serving clients across the Americas, today announced the Chicago office increased fourfold to 32 lawyers in 14 months, following the addition of four commercial litigators: National trial lawyer [Dean Dickie](#), a partner in the Litigation Practice Group, along with commercial litigators and partners [Jeffrey Mayer](#) and [Catherine Miller](#), who are also members of Akerman's Restaurant Industry Group. [Ryan Williams](#) also joined Akerman's deep bench of trial lawyers as an associate. Together, they complement Akerman's strengths in commercial and real estate litigation, as well as the firm's capabilities for restaurant industry and intellectual property clients involved in business disputes.

"Akerman's Litigation Practice Group has seen tremendous growth within the last year and our presence in Chicago is four times greater," said [Lawrence Rochefort](#), chair of the national Litigation Practice Group. "Our new litigators bring a new dimension of experience to the Chicago team and further our ability to serve clients nationally in a combination of complex disputes across

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the intellectual property, real estate and restaurant sectors.”

Dean Dickie

Dickie is a partner in the Litigation Practice Group. A veteran trial lawyer, he focuses his practice on business and commercial litigation matters involving intellectual property, securities and professional liability claims. He has tried cases in federal and state courts throughout the United States, representing officers, directors and corporations in securities fraud, insider trading, breach of fiduciary duty, accounting malpractice, Securities Exchange arbitration, product liability, antitrust and civil rights claims. His jury trial experience includes patent infringement, trademark, trade dress, breach of fiduciary duty claims, breach of contract and tortious interference with contracts, usurpation of corporate opportunity, and director and officer liability claims.

Dickie previously taught a course on trial advocacy as an adjunct professor at Northwestern University Law School as well as a course on constitutional law at DePaul University.

Jeffrey Mayer

Mayer is a partner in the Litigation Practice Group and a member of the firm’s Restaurant Industry Group. His practice focuses on complex business litigation, employment litigation and general corporate matters. He represents clients in numerous industries, including restaurant, real estate, automotive, telecommunications and public education. He has tried business cases throughout the U.S. and has obtained multi-million dollar verdicts for his business clients. Mayer offers a unique skill to clients with an interest in supply chain and purchasing matters. In this area, Mayer has significant experience litigating disputes with vendors, and advising companies on properly constructing their contracts. As a result of his long-standing representation of restaurant companies, he has handled hundreds of employment disputes in

multiple jurisdictions, including some of the nation's largest class and collective actions.

In addition to his practice, Mayer teaches real estate litigation at The John Marshall Law School. Prior to private practice, he clerked for the Hon. Jack D.H. Hays and the Hon. James Moeller of the Arizona Supreme Court.

Catherine Miller

Miller is a partner in the Litigation Practice Group and works closely with Akerman's Restaurant Industry Group. She focuses her practice on business litigation, representing both plaintiffs and defendants in federal and state court and arbitration. Her experience includes representing clients in TCPA and class action matters, real estate litigation and routinely handling commercial breach of contract, tortious interference and restrictive covenant disputes. A significant portion of her practice involves handling employment litigation disputes on behalf of restaurant companies. Miller has defended multiple labor charges before the NLRB. Miller has been ranked by Illinois' *Super Lawyers* in the Business Litigation and Employment Litigation: Defense categories.

A former law firm chair of a Women's Leadership Council, Miller also has had active roles as a member of the pro bono and diversity committees. She served as delegate and former board member of the Coalition of Women's Initiatives in Law. Miller was also a member of the board of directors for Step Up Women's Network, for which she also served as assistant vice chair.

Ryan Williams

Williams is an associate in the Litigation Practice Group. He focuses his practice on complex commercial litigation matters including patent infringement cases, LLC member disputes, licensing agreement disputes and class action defense. Williams has experience handling all aspects of litigation, trial and appellate work.

Chicago is one of the fastest-growing Akerman offices in a rapidly growing firm. The firm achieved its fourth consecutive year of record growth with the largest percentage increase of total partnership during the 2014 fiscal year. The firm's lawyer headcount grew by 4 percent, reaching a record 620 lawyers and government affairs professionals across 20 U.S. offices. Following such significant growth, *The American Lawyer* named Akerman as the top law firm in the United States for lateral partner hires. The firm also was noted for its explosive growth in New York, Chicago, Washington, D.C., and for expanding strengths in real estate and financial services.

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 American Lawyer* (2015) and *The National Law Journal NLJ* 350 (2015). Akerman also is ranked among the top 50 law firms for diversity in *The American Lawyer's* Diversity Scorecard (2015).

Akerman's Litigation Practice Group is recognized nationally by *U.S. News - Best Lawyers* in the Commercial Litigation category. The firm's team has vast experience in a wide range of civil and criminal litigation, including actions involving banking, securities, healthcare, insurance, real estate and construction.