

## In The News

# *Law360* Once Again Names Akerman a Powerhouse Law Firm

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Akerman was once again named a dominant Florida law firm in *Law360*'s Regional Powerhouses series, which ranks U.S. law firms that have a sizable footprint in Florida and that have made significant accomplishments in the state and beyond. As the largest law firm in Florida, Akerman maintains its dominant position by not only its physical presence, but also its leading strengths in middle market M&A, within the real estate and financial services industries, as well as in cross-border transactions and disputes throughout the United States, Latin America and the Caribbean.

*Law360* reported that Akerman's involvement in legacy projects and transformational deals across Florida and beyond state boundaries has earned the firm a name on the national stage as one of the top 100 U.S. law firms. Akerman lawyers have been at the center of foundational state matters from the funding of the first public rail system, SunRail, in Central Florida, to the largest IPO in Florida's history for Republic Services, to the formation of SunTrust Bank, which has grown to become one of the largest bank holding companies in the country. That tradition continues strong today, according to *Law360*, which highlighted some of Akerman's current work: representing Florida East Coast Industries LLC in All Aboard Florida, the nation's first privately funded high-speed rail system; Navarro Discount Pharmacies Inc.'s asset-sale to CVS Health Corp.; Simply Healthcare Holdings Inc.'s sale

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to Anthem Inc.; a Raytheon subsidiary in a successful arbitration award challenge involving navigation equipment on two Venezuelan submarines; and Brickell City Centre, an innovative \$1.05 billion project developed by Swire Properties Inc. at the epicenter of one of the largest financial districts in the United States, among others.

“I think the many years of having a deep bench in Florida has led us to a position of being a known go-to firm in complex real estate transactions, complex middle-market mergers and acquisitions transactions, and complex litigation,” said Eric Rapkin, a transactional real estate lawyer and Akerman’s Fort Lauderdale Office Managing Partner. “We’ve built up our reputation over the past several decades, and that has allowed us to expand outside of Florida.”

The article also highlighted Akerman’s entrepreneurial spirit and forward-thinking approach that have been central to the success of the firm and its clients. Akerman’s long-established Cuba Practice serves as a strong example, according to *Law360*. The firm represented Airbnb in a pioneering deal that expands its offerings for U.S. travelers to Cuba, making Airbnb one of the first American companies to capitalize on the improving diplomatic relations between the neighboring countries.

“But the now two-time Florida Powerhouse proved to be better prepared than most, having established a Cuba practice group 12 years ago,” wrote *Law360*.

*Law360* also noted that Akerman “has built upon a well-established base, carrying over its own collaborative goals into its relationships with clients.” As an example, *Law360* pointed to the firm’s work with long-standing client Parmenter Realty, a national real estate investment and management company, and an Akerman relationship that has grown with the company since it was founded more than two decades ago.

“We try to get the right team together for the deal in place,” said Akerman Corporate Partner Jonathan Awner. “We’re just very driven to meet whatever the clients’ needs are on their timetable. We just get deals closed.”

“The collegial atmosphere at Akerman also extends to the communities where its lawyers practice,” *Law360* wrote. “It increased its charitable giving programs last year, launching the Akerman Give Back Campaign on a national level. As part of those efforts, the firm partnered with the national Court Appointed Special Advocates Association and its local CASA and guardian ad litem programs, to promote volunteer advocacy for abused and neglected children.”

*Law360’s* Florida Powerhouse report is below:

*Law360*: “Florida Powerhouse: Akerman”

*Law360*: “Fla. Powerhouses Stand Out as Legal World Flocks to State”