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Akerman Bolsters Strengths in Real Estate and Financial Services Industries with Team of Five Lawyers

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Akerman LLP, a top 100 U.S. law firm serving clients across the Americas, today welcomed a team of five lawyers who complement the firm's core strengths in the real estate and financial services industries. The new lawyers include partners Joseph Rebak, Brian Tague, Bryan West, and Maria Priovolos Gonzalez, as well as associate Lorayane Perez. They join Akerman's Miami office from Tew Cardenas LLP. Collectively they strengthen the work of Akerman's trial and transaction teams and expand the firm's reach in Latin America.

"We are pleased to welcome our new colleagues to Akerman," said James Miller, chair of Akerman's Litigation Practice Group. "This group includes lawyers with practices that mirror Akerman's core strengths in the real estate industry as well as in corporate and financial litigation, and Latin American disputes."

"The blend of their experience will enhance our ability to serve investors and REITs, as well as lenders, developers, and other real estate interests involved in complex financial transactions and large-scale development projects," said Richard Bezold, chair of Akerman's Real Estate Practice Group.

Rebak has more than 30 years of experience in complex commercial litigation. He frequently

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represents developers, investors, and property owners in all aspects of commercial disputes, including contracts, business torts, real estate, fiduciary duty, fraud, class action and unfair competition claims. He also has experience in professional liability defense in assertions of malpractice. He joins as a member of Akerman's Litigation Practice Group.

Tague focuses his practice primarily on complex real estate transactions. He has more than 30 years of experience with acquisitions, sales, debt and equity financing and restructuring, and joint ventures of office, multifamily, retail, and condominium properties. Tague represents prominent investors and REITs, as well as lenders, developers, and other industry stakeholders throughout the U.S. He joins as a member of Akerman's Real Estate Practice Group.

West brings experience in international litigation and arbitration, with a focus on disputes arising from cross border business transactions. West has litigated and arbitrated (in both English and Spanish) numerous multi-million dollar matters involving various countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, including Argentina, Colombia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Honduras, and Venezuela. He joins as a member of Akerman's Latin America & the Caribbean Practice.

Gonzalez focuses her practice on complex commercial litigation. She has litigated corporate and commercial matters in federal and state courts, focusing primarily on class actions, contract related litigation, legal and accounting malpractice, fraud related litigation, bankruptcy litigation, land use litigation, real estate litigation, director and officer liability litigation, and receiverships.

Perez also will bring commercial litigation focus to the firm. She has experience in trust and estates, labor and employment, defense of securities

investigations before the SEC, eminent domain, among other areas.

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 (2013). Akerman also is ranked among the top 50 law firms for diversity in *The American Lawyer's* Diversity Scorecard (2013). More information can be found at akerman.com or twitter.com/akerman_law.