Freeborn Partner Among Winners of 2019 Women, Influence & Power in Law Awards

Freeborn & Peters LLP announced that Shelly A. DeRousse, a Chicago partner and co-leader of the firm's Bankruptcy and Financial Restructuring Practice Group, is among the honorees of the 2019 Women, Influence & Power in Law (WIPL) Awards presented by Corporate Counsel and InsideCounsel magazines.

Formerly known as the National Women in Law Awards, the WIPL Awards honor general counsel, in-house leaders and law firm partners who have demonstrated a commitment to advancing the empowerment of women in law. According to Corporate Counsel and InsideCounsel, "These women are business strategists, complex problem-solvers, and of course, great lawyers. But what particularly makes these women stand out is their personal dedication to the promotion of diversity in the legal industry. These are women championing women."

The honorees will be formally recognized at an awards dinner Oct. 16 as part of the Women, Influence & Power in Law Conference in Washington, D.C. Profiles of the honorees will be published in the December issue of Corporate Counsel magazine.

DeRousse is a restructuring attorney and commercial litigator and one of a handful of women in the United States to lead a bankruptcy and financial restructuring practice group at a law firm. DeRousse has experience representing official committees of unsecured creditors in middle market chapter 11 cases.

Since 2016, DeRousse has served as president of the Women's Bar Foundation (WBF) of Illinois, a non-profit organization

that supports the advancement of women in the legal profession by raising money and awarding scholarships to women in each of the nine law schools in Illinois. During her tenure as president, the WBF has awarded hundreds of thousands of dollars in scholarships to women law students. She also has served on the WBF board for about 15 years.

In addition, DeRousse serves as co-chair of the Breakfast Program Committee and serves on the Network of Women Committee for the Turnaround Management Association for the Midwest Region. In this role, she plans and runs events designed to create connections among professionals in turnaround management. In 2018, she was elected as a Fellow of the American Bar Foundation and was one of six U.S. women finalists for the distinguished Chambers award for "Inspiring Role Model in Promoting Gender Diversity in the Legal Profession." She has also been recognized by Crain's Business Chicago on its lists of Notable Women Lawyers and Notable Gen X Leaders in Law.

At Freeborn, DeRousse is the partner chair of the firm's Women's Leadership Counsel, through which she organizes mentoring, educational and social programs and events for the women attorneys at the firm. She also supervises and mentors the women attorneys who belong to the Bankruptcy and Financial Restructuring Practice Group and advocates for women at the firm as a whole and for policies that support women. DeRousse's Bankruptcy and Financial Restructuring team has the highest percentage of women of all of Freeborn's practice groups.

DeRousse received her J.D. from DePaul University College of Law and her Bachelor of Science from Illinois State University.