

Labor and Employment Partner Gray Mateo-Harris Joins Barnes & Thornburg

Barnes & Thornburg LLP has added Gray Mateo-Harris as a partner in the Labor & Employment Law Department. Joining from Ogletree Deakins, Mateo-Harris will reside in the firm's Chicago office, which has added five partners this year.

Mateo-Harris, a native Spanish speaker from the Dominican Republic, has clients including employers in the manufacturing, retail, technology and real estate industries.

In a release, the firm said Mateo-Harris has experience defending employers in litigation at both the state and federal court level through trial and appeal, including in restrictive covenant and contract- and tort-based actions, as well as with respect to alleged violations of wage payment and equal employment opportunity laws. She represents clients in arbitrations, mediations and administrative proceedings, including before the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the Illinois Department of Human Rights, the Illinois Department of Labor and the National Labor Relations Board. Her traditional labor practice includes assisting clients with union-avoidance issues, election proceedings, collective bargaining, grievance and contract arbitrations, and unfair labor practice charges.

"We're off to an incredibly strong start with recruiting this year and the pipeline remains full of exceptional and diverse talent who are attracted to an ascendant practice in a full-service firm," said Ken Yerkes, chair of the firm's Labor & Employment Law Department, which has added partners Amy Zdravecky, Dawn Collins and Tae Kim in recent weeks. "Gray's sophisticated experience in employment litigation and

traditional labor law and commitment to excellent client service make her a true asset for our practice.”

Mateo-Harris provides pro bono representation to several nonprofit organizations on employment matters, and has represented indigent clients as part of the Circuit Court of Cook County Domestic Violence Clinic and the Northern District of Illinois Judicial Settlement Assistance Program. She is actively involved with the National Bar Association, the Black Women Lawyers Association, the Women’s Coalition, the Hispanic National Bar Association, the Hispanic Lawyers Association of Illinois and the Illinois Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. She routinely mentors underrepresented students and attorneys through the Chicago Committee and the University of Illinois. Mateo-Harris also serves as a hearing officer and board member of the Cook County Sheriff’s Merit Board.

“Gray is the ‘complete package’ when it comes to tackling the most complex employment issues and offering proactive counseling to clients,” said Mark Rust, managing partner of Barnes & Thornburg’s Chicago office. “We’re thrilled to have her aboard.”

Mateo-Harris received her J.D. from the University of Illinois College of Law and a B.S from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, both cum laude.