

Services

Human Trafficking
Compliance

White Collar, Internal
Investigations &
Compliance

Industries

Manufacturing

Technology

Transportation

Professional

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Cynthia Cordes Named *Missouri Lawyers Weekly* 2014 "Lawyer of the Year"

Given as part of the Missouri Lawyer Awards program, the Lawyer of the Year is awarded to "the Missouri lawyer or judge who (has) made a substantial impact on the law or the Missouri legal community." It is *Missouri Lawyers Weekly's* highest honor. An awards ceremony will be held in St. Louis on Jan. 24, 2014. Cordes is the first Husch Blackwell lawyer to be selected as "Lawyer of the Year."

As a nationally recognized federal prosecutor and a leader in complex criminal litigation, Cordes' pioneering work involved some of the most complex and contested criminal litigation cases in the history of the U.S. Department of Justice. Today, Cordes represents companies and individuals for government compliance issues and also those who find themselves under criminal and civil investigation by the federal and state governments.

Cordes is well known for her innovative strategies, aggressive advocacy on behalf of clients and victims, and ability to creatively reach unprecedented results. She has in-depth and vast experience in fraud, labor, racketeering, organized crime, money laundering, human trafficking, civil rights, tax, immigration, cyber and international law.

Cordes has received bi-partisan praise from the U.S. Congress for her groundbreaking efforts to thwart human trafficking. She has prosecuted more human trafficking cases than any assistant U.S. attorney in the country.

During her years of service with the U.S. Department of Justice, Cordes spearheaded and led a multiagency task force on human trafficking of more than 20 federal and state law enforcement agencies, which included the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the U.S. Department of State, the U.S.

Department of Labor, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, and the Internal Revenue Service. Her task force also consisted of more than 60 nonprofit agencies and three different federal districts. The U.S. Attorney General's Office honored her work by selecting her task force as one of the top in the nation and it now serves as a model across the country.

Cordes has continued her innovative work by spearheading the development of Husch Blackwell's Human Trafficking Legal Clinic, the first of its kind in the country. In addition to her government investigations and litigation work, Cordes will lead the firm's pro bono clinic for human trafficking victims. Husch Blackwell has made an unprecedented commitment of pro bono resources to represent all victims — international and domestic, adults and children — of commercial sex and forced labor trafficking cases referred by all prosecutors, law enforcement and partnering victim service providers.

Past honorees selected as "Lawyer of the Year," include:

- 2013: Kent Syverud – Washington University School of Law dean
- 2012: Attorneys Mark Bronson and Steve Bronson, Newman Bronson & Wallis; James Dowd; Joseph Yeckel – plaintiffs' attorneys who won the largest jury verdict in St. Louis history
- 2011: Amy Lorenz-Moser – Armstrong Teasdale, St. Louis
- 2010: John Mulligan Jr. – University City attorney
- 2009: Judge Richard Callahan – U.S. Attorney for Eastern District of Missouri

In November 2013, Shared Hope International recognized Cordes as a national leader in the fight against sex trafficking by presenting her one of its three Pathbreaker Awards in Washington, D.C.

Cordes is a member of Husch Blackwell's Government Compliance, Investigations & Litigation team and began her legal career as a trial attorney with the prestigious U.S. Attorney General Honors Program. She was the youngest assistant U.S. attorney in the country at the time she was hired by the U.S. Attorney's Office, Western District of Missouri. She earned her J.D. from the University of Notre Dame Law School (2004) and her B.S. in journalism from Boston University (2001). Cordes was born and raised in Springfield, Missouri.