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Husch Blackwell Names 12 Attorneys to Partnership, Effective January 1, 2013

Husch Blackwell is pleased to announce 12 attorneys have been named to partnership, effective Jan. 1, 2013. The attorneys being named reside in seven different cities where the firm has offices.

Chicago, Ill.

Laura A. Labeots, Ph.D., joined Husch Blackwell in 2008 as a result of the firm's combination with Chicago intellectual property firm Welsh & Katz, Ltd., where she had practiced since 2003. Labeots practices in all areas of Intellectual Property, including prosecution, Litigation and Counseling. She collaborates with inventors to draft patent applications and to protect their inventions worldwide. Labeots also provides legal opinions as to the invalidity and non-infringement of patent claims. In addition, she advises companies on how to best protect their rights regarding business contracts such as licenses, joint development agreements and nondisclosure agreements. Labeots received her J.D. from John Marshall Law School – Chicago (2003), where she was Staff Editor of *The John Marshall Review of Intellectual Property Law*. Prior to attending law school, Labeots spent several years as a National Institute of Health postdoctoral fellow at The University of Chicago, where she then continued on as a member of the research faculty. She earned a Ph.D. and M.S. in Organic Chemistry from Northwestern University in Evanston, Ill. (1992, 1989). She received her B.A. in Chemistry from Indiana University (1984).

Denver, Colo.

Jeffrey D. Whitney joined the firm in 2008 and has focused his practice in Business Litigation matters since beginning his legal career in 2004. He

represents private and public companies, their officers and directors, broker-dealers, investment advisors, financial planners, real estate brokers, contractors and others in litigation, arbitration and disciplinary proceedings. In addition, Whitney handles Securities Litigation matters and represents securities industry clients in investigations and enforcement proceedings before government agencies and self-regulatory organizations such as the Securities and Exchange Commission, the Colorado Division of Securities, the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority and the Certified Financial Planner Board of Standards. He also advises commercial real estate brokers and securities industry companies and professionals regarding compliance with applicable regulations, regulators' examination priorities and areas of emphasis, and practices designed to avoid litigation and arbitration. Whitney has represented companies and individuals in state and federal court in cases involving claims of breach of contract, fraud, breach of fiduciary duty, negligence, breach of software license agreements, unlawful detainer and unfair trade practices. Whitney received his J.D. from the University of Colorado School of Law (2004), where he was Associate Editor of the *University of Colorado Law Review* and graduated Order of the Coif. He received his B.S., with highest distinction, from the University of Nebraska (2000).

Jefferson City, Mo.

Ryan Harding joined the firm in 2008 and maintains an active Litigation practice with an emphasis on Governmental Compliance, Investigations & Litigation and Healthcare Litigation. He counsels businesses, individuals, municipalities and professional associations regarding a full range of state and federal laws, including healthcare law, election and voting law, land use and competitive bidding challenges. Harding also represents healthcare providers and other clients in disputes with federal, state and local government agencies and in hearings before state licensing boards. In addition to serving as lead counsel in numerous federal, state and administrative bench trials, Harding has successfully first-chaired multiple jury trials in federal and state court. He also has argued cases in the Missouri Court of Appeals for the Eastern, Western and Southern Districts and in the U.S. Court of Appeals, Eighth Circuit. Harding was named a 2012 *Missouri Lawyers Weekly* "Up & Coming Lawyer." He has also dedicated a number of hours to pro bono work, and was named to the Missouri Pro Bono Wall of Fame in 2011. Harding previously worked as a Senior Staff Attorney within the Special Litigation Division of the Missouri Attorney General's office. He received his J.D. from the University of Missouri-Columbia School of Law (2002) and his B.B.A. from Baylor University in Waco, Texas (1998).

Kansas City, Mo.

David M. Buffo joined the firm in 2005 after beginning his career at the Kansas City-based Miller Law Firm, P.C. A Business Litigation attorney, Buffo represents clients in all phases of litigation and frequently handles matters involving premise liability issues, contract disputes and collections.

Buffo's work primarily focuses in the areas of Construction & Design and Transportation. He acts as national counsel for a *Fortune* 500 transportation service provider, coordinating and directing litigation across the U.S. and Canada, with extensive experience handling cargo loss and damage claims for motor carriers. Additionally, Buffo represents owners, contractors and subcontractors in all aspects of construction litigation ranging from filing mechanic's liens and making bond claims to litigating claims for defective work. In addition to his demanding practice, Buffo contributes to pro bono efforts and was named to the Missouri Bar Pro Bono Wall of Fame in 2011 for his commitment to help those who cannot afford legal counsel. Buffo received his J.D. from the University of Missouri-Kansas City School of Law (2003), where he was Managing Editor of *UMKC Law Review* and graduated Order of the Barristers. He received his M.B.A. from Northern Illinois University in DeKalb, Ill. (1997), and his B.S.B.A. from Creighton University in Omaha, Neb. (1990).

Kathryn Goldsmith Lee joined the firm in 2004 upon completing law school. Concentrating her practice in Appellate, Business Litigation and Insurance Litigation law, Lee represents companies, insurers and individuals in state and federal courts across the country. She handles commercial disputes and contract claims, and has also worked on malpractice defense, insurance coverage disputes and probate litigation matters. Lee has served as co-counsel in trial proceedings in Missouri and Kansas state courts, and in the U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the District of Kansas. She has also prepared appellate briefs in the Eighth and Tenth Circuits, the Missouri and Kansas Courts of Appeals, and has argued before the Kansas Court of Appeals. Lee received her J.D., with highest distinction, from the University of Iowa College of Law (2004), where she graduated Order of the Coif. She received her B.A., with honors and distinction, from Iowa State University (2001).

Aaron J. Mann joined the firm in 2005 after beginning his career as a federal law clerk and subsequently working in-house for a consulting firm. Approximately 18 months ago, he returned to the firm's Kansas City office after spending four years in Husch Blackwell's London office. Mann focuses his practice on Business Litigation, specializing in complex commercial disputes as well as intellectual property litigation. Mann has handled numerous jury trials and arbitration hearings in disputes throughout the U.S. Many of these disputes contained an International component. He has coordinated the prosecution and defense of numerous cross-border disputes, including assisting foreign clients with U.S. litigation needs and U.S. clients who have commercial disputes in foreign jurisdictions. For several years, Mann has been a key part of Husch Blackwell's International Services Team, focusing primarily on the firm's dealings throughout Europe, the Middle East and Africa. Initially upon completing law school, he clerked for the Hon. Gary A. Fenner in the U.S. District Court, Western District of Missouri (2001-2003). Mann earned his J.D., *magna cum laude*, from Creighton University School of Law in Omaha, Neb. (2001), where he was Lead Articles Editor for *Creighton Law Review*. He received his B.A. from Graceland University in Lamoni, Iowa (1998).

Fang Shen joined the firm in 2005 and practices Commercial Contracting, Mergers & Acquisitions, Securities & Corporate Governance and International law. Also part of the Asia Client Services team, Shen's China-related experience includes counseling U.S. companies on new operations in China; project financing; acquisitions; joint education programs; sourcing and distribution; and joint ventures and related regulatory matters in China. She also routinely assists Chinese businesses with their legal needs in the United States. In 2008, Shen was named a *Missouri Lawyers Weekly* "Up & Coming Lawyer" for her influence within the profession of law and the community. Currently, Shen sits on the Boards of Directors for the Asian Chamber of Commerce of Greater Kansas City, the International Relations Council of Kansas City and the Society for Friendship with China. Shen began her legal career at a Kansas City-based international law firm (2003-2005). A bilingual and bicultural attorney, Shen received her legal education in the United States and China. She received her J.D. from the University of Missouri-Kansas City School of Law (2003), where she was Note and Comment Editor of *UMKC Law Review* and graduated with distinction. She received her LL.B., with distinction and an emphasis in business law, from the People's University of China in Beijing (1998).

Omaha, Neb.

David K. Lutz joined Husch Blackwell in 2009. Since beginning his legal career, Lutz has concentrated his practice in Banking & Finance and Tax law. He advises investors, community development entities and qualified businesses in connection with New Markets Tax Credit transactions and represents clients in connection with federal and state historic rehabilitation tax credit programs and renewable energy tax credit programs. Lutz has particular expertise in state New Markets Tax Credits and advises clients on state New Markets Tax Credit programs throughout the country. He also has significant experience structuring and documenting the syndication of federal and state tax credits. Previously, Lutz practiced with Debevoise & Plimpton LLP (2007-2009) and Cadwalader, Wickersham & Taft LLP (2005-2007) in New York. He earned his LL.M. from New York University (2005) and his J.D., with honors, from Chicago-Kent College of Law (2004). He earned his B.A. from Creighton University in Omaha, Neb. (2001).

Victoria H. Sitz joined the firm as Senior Counsel in the firm's Corporate group in 2011. She previously worked at the international payment systems company ACI Worldwide, Inc., most recently as Vice President and Assistant General Counsel (2004-2011). She handles Securities & Corporate Governance matters, counseling clients on public and private securities matters, including regulatory and disclosure obligations under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 and stock exchange listing requirements, primary and secondary securities offerings, private placements of debt and equity securities and other capital markets transactions. Sitz also advises companies, their officers and boards of directors on corporate governance compliance and best practices. In addition, she assists public and private clients in connection with structuring, negotiating and completing domestic and international mergers, acquisitions, divestitures and strategic alliances. Upon completing law school,

she began her legal practice at an Omaha-based law firm, practicing corporate, banking, securities, technology and intellectual property law (1997-2004). Sitz received her J.D., with high distinction, from the University of Nebraska College of Law (1997), where she graduated Order of the Coif and was Articles Editor for *Nebraska Law Review*. She received her B.A. from the University of Nebraska (1994).

Springfield, Mo.

Richard A. Russell joined Husch Blackwell in 2005. His practice focuses in Trusts & Estates, Tax law, and gift and charitable planning for individuals and businesses, including; preparation of tax-exempt, gift, trust, estate and partnership tax returns, and the creation and operation of charitable and other tax-exempt entities. Russell also advises on Employee Benefits plans including qualified plan design, ERISA and IRS plan document compliance and plan administration with a focus on employee stock ownership plans (ESOPs). Russell is a member of The Missouri Bar's 2011 Pro Bono Wall of Fame and Leadership Springfield Class XXIII. In 2008, he was named to *Springfield Business Journal's* "40 Under 40" and was the Springfield Sunrise Rotarian of the Year. In 2007, he received the Springfield Metropolitan Bar Association President's Award. Russell received his J.D. from Rutgers University School of Law-Camden in Camden, N.J. (2004), where he was Articles Editor for *Rutgers Law Journal*. He received a B.S. in Accountancy from Arizona State University (1996). Prior to entering law school, Russell worked in public accounting, gaining experience in tax, accounting and auditing. He is also a Certified Public Accountant in the State of Missouri.

St. Louis, Mo.

Elizabeth P. Feldmeir joined the firm in 2005 and her practice is concentrated in Tax, Real Estate and Banking & Finance. Feldmeir has extensive experience with matters involving New Markets Tax Credits, federal and state historic rehabilitation tax credits, federal and state low-income housing tax credits, Brownfield tax credits and other types of incentivized financing. She represents investors, lenders, developers, community development entities and intermediary entities in traditional real estate and finance transactions as well as transactions that include tax incentives in order to finance the expansion of operating businesses and/or the development of residential, commercial or mixed-use real estate. In addition, Feldmeir is a frequent speaker at national conferences regarding tax credits. Prior to joining Husch Blackwell, Feldmeir practiced law at a St. Louis firm specializing in the areas of real estate and finance (2004-2005). She received her LL.M. in Taxation from Washington University (2005), as well as her J.D. from Washington University School of Law in St. Louis, Mo. (2004). She received her B.A., *magna cum laude*, and a Certificate of Business Administration from Saint Louis University (2001).

Laura B. Staley joined the firm in 2008 and concentrates her practice exclusively in the area of Labor & Employment law. She routinely represents employers in both federal and state forums across the

United States. Staley has been successful at trial and obtaining summary judgments for employers in lawsuits alleging employment discrimination and breach of employment contract. She provides counsel to employers of all sizes pertaining to various issues including discrimination laws, policies and handbooks, hiring, discipline, leave and discharge issues, and wage and hour issues. In the past four years she has also gained extensive experience in navigating clients through reductions in force. In addition, Staley sits on the employment law committees of The Missouri Bar and the Bar Association of Metropolitan St. Louis. Prior to joining Husch Blackwell, Staley practiced employment law at a boutique employment law firm in St. Louis. Staley received her J.D. from the University of Missouri-Columbia School of Law (2002), where she was on the Dean's List. She earned her B.A., with Departmental Honors, from the University of Missouri-Columbia (1999).