

NEWS RELEASES

PUBLISHED: JULY 2, 2012

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# Husch Blackwell Expands Talent, Capabilities in Lincoln

## **Law firm adds Nebraska natives and agribusiness experience in capital city**

To further meet the needs of current and future clients, Husch Blackwell has expanded its presence and capabilities in Nebraska with two new attorneys offering 30 years of combined experience. Today, the law firm added Gene Summerlin as a Partner and Andrew Weeks as an Associate, both working primarily out of the firm's Lincoln office.

With a wealth of business litigation experience, especially in the agribusiness industry, these additions are a result of the firm's calculated strategic growth, explains Todd Richardson, Husch Blackwell's Office Managing Partner in Nebraska. "We are looking to build even more strength and depth in several key areas — across Nebraska and throughout the Midwest," he said. "So getting the chance to add Gene and Andrew's valuable expertise to the team *and* have a more significant presence in Lincoln is a tremendous opportunity."

Summerlin has served clients in Lincoln, greater Nebraska and nationally for more than two decades, with deep experience in agriculture and civil litigation. He serves as general counsel to a number of state and national agricultural and livestock organizations, genetics entities, and food producers. He also represents a diverse array of clients in business litigation and has served as special counsel to the Department of Justice's U.S. Trustee in a complex cattle investment-fraud case involving \$3 billion in assets. Since 1995 he has practiced at a boutique business litigation firm, serving as a shareholder and the managing attorney of its Nebraska office.

Summerlin earned his B.S., *cum laude*, in 1988 from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, majoring in animal science and minoring in agricultural economics. He went on to earn his J.D. with high distinction in 1991 from the

University of Nebraska College of Law where he was executive editor of the *Nebraska Law Review*. He also received the Roscoe Pound Memorial Award, American Jurisprudence Award for Trial Advocacy, American Jurisprudence Award for Advanced Trial Advocacy, Thomas Stinson Allen Award for Oral Advocacy, Arthur E. Perry Scholarship and Kutak Rock & Campbell Scholarship; was on the National Trial Team; and named to Order of the Coif. He has served as an adjunct professor at the University of Nebraska College of Law, teaching courses in appellate advocacy, trial advocacy, legal research and legal writing.

Weeks has recently focused his practice on civil litigation, primarily in the areas of agricultural, commercial, constitutional and trademark law. He also has extensive criminal litigation experience, having handled hundreds of cases in his former capacity as a public defender in both Pierce and Lancaster counties in Nebraska. While serving in general practice in Norfolk, Neb., he participated in a capital murder case and filed a motion to test the DNA of a client, who was ultimately cleared of a first-degree murder conviction, after serving 19 years of a life sentence in prison. Previously, he was a law clerk for the Nebraska Attorney General in 2001 and 2002.

Weeks received his B.S. in 1999 from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, with a major in criminal justice and an emphasis in Spanish. He received his J.D. from the University of Nebraska College of Law in 2003.

Summerlin and Weeks join Ronald Sedlacek in Husch Blackwell's Lincoln office, located at 610 J St., Suite 200, Lincoln, Neb., 68508. Serving as Of Counsel in the firm's Governmental Affairs Department, Sedlacek has many years of experience as an effective advocate, political consultant and lobbyist engaging directly with elected and appointed officials. Sedlacek formerly served as counsel to the Nebraska Legislature, Banking, Commerce and Insurance Committee.