



FEBRUARY 2012 - VOLUME 1

Robinson & Cole Adds New Associate in Hartford

Robinson and Cole LLP welcomed associate Nicolas F. Perry to the firm's Hartford office in November. Mr. Perry joins the Business Litigation Practice Group, focusing on all matters of business litigation, including antitrust litigation, employment litigation, and white-collar criminal investigation. Mr. Perry received his J.D. from the University of Connecticut School of Law and his B.A., *cum laude*, in political science from Central Connecticut State University. While attending the law school, he served as an editor of the *Connecticut Law Review* and was president of the Connecticut Unemployment Action Center, where he argued at Department of Labor hearings and wrote motions for claimants.

Prior to joining the firm, Mr. Perry was a residential instructor at Alternative Services of Connecticut, Inc., a nonprofit organization dedicated to providing support for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. He was a summer associate at Robinson & Cole in 2009 and 2010. Mr. Perry is admitted to practice in Connecticut.

Robinson & Cole Adds New Human Resources Officer in Hartford

Bali K. Samra joined the firm as human resources officer. In addition to extensive human resources management experience, Ms. Samra comes to Robinson & Cole with experience in international business, merger and acquisition integration, and organization design. Prior to joining the firm, Ms. Samra was assistant vice president of Human Resources in International Wealth Management at The Hartford Financial Services Group.

Message from Pamela K. Elkow Diversity Partner



The Diversity Committee is excited to announce a series of monthly events beginning in January to celebrate diversity and to bring all of us together in each of the offices. Most event themes are based on the generally recognized "heritage months," and if there isn't a recognized theme, we've come up with a topic (see below). Members of the Diversity Committee have taken responsibility for planning the various months' events, but we welcome input and assistance from anyone and everyone. If you are interested, please contact me or one of the members of the Diversity Committee. Looking forward to a rewarding 2012! [CLICK HERE](#) for Events Calendar.

R&C Offices Celebrate Diversity Potluck Meals

Robinson & Cole kicked off January 2012 with "Celebrate Diversity Month" and an outstanding array of pot luck dishes from around the globe. On Friday, January 20th, employees in each office were asked to contribute a food dish (baked or bought) that reflected personal heritage, background, or family tradition. [CLICK HERE](#) for photos.

Cynthia Blumenthal and Mary Scott Himes Attend Robinson & Cole- Sponsored First Ladies Build Event for Habitat for Humanity in Stamford

Utilities Partner David Bogan Elected to Board of Directors for Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence

The Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence has elected environmental and utilities partner David W. Bogan to its board of directors. The coalition honored Mr. Bogan in September 2011 as one of the First 100 male leaders in Connecticut to make a commitment to ending domestic violence in the state. It also presented Mr. Bogan with its President's Award in 1995 for his work on behalf of the coalition.

Tax Attorneys Present at UCONN Income Tax School

Tax counsel Felicia S. Hoeniger and tax associate Scott E. Sebastian presented "A Practitioner's Perspective on CT Taxes" before approximately 185 people at the 2011 University of Connecticut Income Tax School in November. Ms. Hoeniger and Mr. Sebastian discussed positives and negatives in dealing with the Connecticut Department of Revenue Services.

The University of Connecticut Income Tax School is a two-day program on federal and state taxes. The program provides updates on the latest tax law for the upcoming tax season for tax practitioners, accountants, consultants, attorneys, and others who professionally prepare taxes.

Tax Attorneys Discuss Nonprofit Governance at CBA Seminar

Tax attorneys Susan E. Roberts and Scott E. Sebastian participated on a panel discussion for a continuing legal education seminar, "A Primer for Attorneys Serving on Nonprofit Boards," presented by the Connecticut Bar Association's Young Lawyers Section. The discussion was held at the Connecticut Bar Association Law Center in New Britain, Connecticut, in November.

Mr. Sebastian moderated the discussion and Ms. Roberts served on the panel. Mr. Sebastian also serves on the Executive Committee of the Young Lawyers Section.

Robinson & Cole sponsored First Ladies Build for Habitat for Humanity of Coastal Fairfield County at its construction site on West Main Street in Stamford. Mary Scott Himes, wife of U.S. Representative Jim Himes, and Cynthia Blumenthal, wife of U.S. Senator Richard Blumenthal, hosted the event to help build an eight-unit townhouse complex.

The event was part of Women Build, a national Habitat for Humanity program that encourages women to make a difference by building affordable homes and stable communities. Women Build members raise funds, learn construction skills, and use those skills to help move families out of poverty by building simple and safe homes. The program promotes using more women in the construction field so that they can help the cause of affordable housing.

R&C Honors Firm Veterans

In honor and recognition of Veterans Day 2011, the Diversity Committee thanked all veterans and their families for their service and sacrifice. The firm also recognized colleagues who served in the armed forces:

Frank Baker, Army
Joseph A. Barra, Army Corps of Engineers
David J. Burke, Army
Joseph Carey, Army
Hiram B. Carey III, Navy
John P. Casey, Navy
Ronald Domin, Navy
Thomas J. Donlon, Coast Guard
Tamara C. Grant-King, Marines
Eric R. Greenberg, Army
David M. Heck, Army
Kathy A. Holland, Navy
Eric Lukingbeal, Army
Dwight H. Merriam, Navy
Ted V. O'Hanlan, Navy
Norman H. Roos, Army National Guard and Reserve
John R. Shaughnessy Jr., Air Force
Peter E. Strniste Jr., Army Reserve
Karen M. Thompson, Canadian Naval Reserve
Richard W. Tomeo, Army
James A. Wade, Navy

Virginia E. McGarrity Hosts Hispanic Bar Association Event

Finance Attorneys Discuss Dodd-Frank and SAFE Acts at Affordable Housing Conference

Finance partner Norman H. Roos and public finance associate Keisha S. Palmer presented "The Changing Regulatory Environment" at Housing 2011, the annual conference of the Connecticut Housing Coalition at the Connecticut Convention Center in Hartford.

The presentation discussed the effects of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act and the Secure and Fair Enforcement for Mortgage Licensing Act on affordable housing.

Labor and Employment Attorney Britt-Marie Cole-Johnson Appointed to Grant Panel

The Greater Hartford Arts Council has appointed labor and employment attorney Britt-Marie K. Cole-Johnson to its general operating support grant panel for the second consecutive year. The general operating support grant program is the council's largest grant program and provides Greater Hartford's top arts organizations with critical unrestricted funding. Ms. Cole-Johnson will review grant applications and make recommendations regarding which organizations should receive grants. The council promotes, funds, and coordinates arts and heritage programs that help celebrate diverse cultures and enrich the economy of Connecticut's capital region.

R&C Sponsors Hartford Stage Production of *The Whipping Man*

On March 7, Robinson & Cole will recognize its commitment to diversity, education, and local community at a private reception prior to the Hartford Stage performance of Matthew Lopez's *The Whipping Man*. A longtime supporter of Hartford Stage, the firm is also a production sponsor and has named Achieve Hartford! as its charity partner for the event. Achieve Hartford! comprises business and community leaders that focus on student achievement and sustained school reform in the Hartford Public Schools. The

Robinson & Cole was a proud and prominent sponsor of the Connecticut Hispanic Bar Association's 18th Annual Awards Celebration. Virginia E. McGarrity, employee benefits lawyer at R&C, serves as president of the CHBA and had a highly visible speaking role while hosting the 200 assembled guests. Other R&C attorneys in attendance included Managing Partner John B. Lynch, Jr.; Richard W. Smith, Jr.; Pamela K. Elkow; Joshua S. Mirer; Pamela H. Del Negro; and Britt-Marie K. Cole-Johnson.

The CHBA was founded in 1993 to enhance the visibility of Hispanic lawyers throughout the state. [CLICK HERE](#) for photo.

Connecticut Law Tribune Recognizes Four Robinson & Cole Attorneys

Labor and employment lawyer Britt-Marie K. Cole-Johnson, employee benefits lawyer Virginia E. McGarrity, public finance lawyer Keisha S. Palmer, and tax lawyer Scott E. Sebastian were 4 of 53 lawyers recognized in the fall issue of the *Connecticut Law Tribune's* special section "Lawyers of Color: High Achievers." The publication received nominations to showcase successful lawyers of color from different areas of the law and from different generations.

Robinson & Cole Lawyers Participating in Lawyers Collaborative for Diversity's Mentoring Program

Ten Robinson & Cole lawyers will mentor students of color attending law school in Connecticut and at Western New England University School of Law as part of the 2011-2012 Lawyers Collaborative for Diversity's mentoring program. The lawyers participating are Nicole A. Bernabo, Britt-Marie Cole-Johnson, Pamela H. Del Negro, Edward J. Heath, Keisha S. Palmer, Scott E. Sebastian, Evan J. Seeman, Matthew S. Spaeder, and George W. Watson. Robinson & Cole has more lawyers participating than any other partnering organization.

The Lawyers Collaborative for Diversity was formed in 2003 by concerned lawyers to increase the recruitment, retention, and advancement of lawyers of color.

organization will receive a donation from R&C at the reception to help support its community engagement efforts.

Asylum Case Victories in Hartford Office

Robinson & Cole litigation associate Meghana D. Shah successfully represented a student in the United States from Libya who dared to oppose Muammar Gaddafi, late ruler of the Libyan Arab Republic. The student publicly voiced his support for those seeking to overthrow the Gaddafi regime. Over many months, attorney Shah created a solid case from little available evidence and convinced immigration officials in Newark, New Jersey, that her client should be granted asylum. Her client can now remain in the United States without fear of being removed and sent back to Libya, where his family remains a target for pro-Gaddafi rebels.

In November 2011, Robinson & Cole attorneys Laura A. Torchio and Megan R. Naughton had the merits hearing for their asylum seeker, a diplomat from an African country who dared to voice his antigovernment opinions and was ultimately ordered arrested by his government for doing so. The case began over a year ago and involved an interview in Newark, New Jersey, and then a referral to immigration court, culminating in a hearing. After almost five hours, the judge granted asylum from the bench, which rarely happens. He praised the applicant's credibility, the quality and volume of the evidence, and the excellent work of attorneys Torchio and Naughton. When the judge favorably decided the case, the client fell to the floor and wept. According to attorney Naughton, "There was not a dry eye in the house, including the judge. This is what being a lawyer is all about!"

R&C Attorneys Attend SABAC Annual Banquet

The South Asian Bar Association of Connecticut held its Fifth Annual Awards Dinner at the Hartford Hilton in November. Attending on behalf of Robinson & Cole were Managing Partner John B. Lynch, Jr.; Robert S. Melvin; and Nicole A. Bernabo. The Honorable Judge M. Nawaz Wahla was presented with the 2011 Trailblazer Award in recognition of his many professional accomplishments, including becoming the first member of the Connecticut judiciary of South Asian heritage.

2011 DIVERSITY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- Patrick M. Birney
- Antionette D. Bishop
- David W. Bogan
- Britt-Marie K. Cole-Johnson
- Amanda S. Eckhoff
- Pamela K. Elkow, Chair
- John H. Kane
- Peter V. Lacouture
- John B. Lynch, Jr.
- Virginia E. McGarrity
- Keisha S. Palmer
- Marnie J. Rubin
- Jacqueline P. Scheib
- Howard K. Shafer