

Simmons Hanly Conroy shareholder Melissa Crowe Schopfer named LBPC 'Illinois Attorney Under Forty to Watch'

November 17 2017 3:16 PM

ALTON – Simmons Hanly Conroy, one of the nation’s largest law firms focused on consumer protection and mass tort actions, is pleased to announce Melissa Crowe Schopfer, a shareholder in the firm, has been chosen by the Law Bulletin Publishing Company as one of its 2017 “40 Illinois Attorneys Under Forty to Watch.”

“The firm is very proud of the work Melissa has done and continues to do on behalf of our clients as well as her tremendous commitment to charity work that benefits our community,” said Perry J. Browder, a Simmons Hanly Conroy shareholder and head of the firm’s Asbestos Group. “As an attorney who helps people who have been diagnosed with the rare and deadly cancer mesothelioma, Melissa is an accomplished litigator in and out of the courtroom whose work makes a difference for her clients and their families.”

The Law Bulletin’s annual “40 Under Forty” recognizes the 40 “most talented young attorneys practicing in Illinois.” Publisher of the Chicago Daily Law Bulletin and Chicago Lawyer magazine, the LBPC evaluates nominees on their intelligence, passion, success, desire to help the community and willingness to work hard at their profession. This year’s recipients, who all were under age 40 prior to May 1, 2017, were chosen from among 1,500 nominations.

In past years, Simmons Hanly Conroy shareholders John A. Barnerd, Karoline Carstens and Amy E. Garrett and Chairman John Simmons all have been “40 Under Forty” honor recipients.

In nominating Schopfer for the award, Allison Sonneveld, an attorney with law firm Polsinelli, praised Schopfer’s devotion to her work and care for her clients, pointing out that Schopfer even postponed her honeymoon to complete a client’s deposition.

“I noticed that Melissa had something special about her in the way that she connected with her clients and other witnesses,” Sonneveld said. “She got to know her clients and their families very well.”

Steven A. Hart, a partner with law firm Hart McLaughlin & Eldridge, said about Schopfer, “Melissa is a rare attorney who possesses high-level intellect with street smarts and a strong sense of civility rarely seen by lawyers of any age, let alone those under the age of 40.”

Schopfer is an asbestos trial team leader at Simmons Hanly Conroy, managing a group of attorneys, paralegals and medical assistants. Since joining the firm in 2005, she has worked on more than 500 cases, helping to recover significant settlements and verdicts on behalf of individuals and families impacted by mesothelioma and other asbestos-related diseases. Her experience has focused particularly on helping workers in the aircraft and automotive mechanics and auto body repair fields and in occupations involving plastic molding compound and laboratory equipment. Schopfer also regularly speaks about asbestos litigation at conferences and teaches continuing legal education seminars.

In addition to working on many of the charitable initiatives that Simmons Hanly Conroy supports for cancer research and treatment for asbestos-related diseases, Schopfer donates time to multiple community organizations, including Friends of Wings (St. Louis), Queen of Peace Center (St. Louis) and Foster and Adoptive Care Coalition (St. Louis).

Schopfer earned her J.D. from St. Louis University School of Law and her Bachelor of Science from Western Illinois University.

About Simmons Hanly Conroy, LLC

Simmons Hanly Conroy is one of the nation’s largest mass tort law firms. Primary areas of litigation include asbestos and mesothelioma, pharmaceutical, consumer protection, environmental and personal injury. The firm’s attorneys have been appointed to leadership in numerous national multidistrict litigations, including Vioxx, Toyota Unintended Acceleration, BP Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill, DePuy Pinnacle and the Volkswagen Emission Scandal. The firm also represents small and mid-size corporations, inventors and entrepreneurs in matters involving business litigation. Offices are located in Alton, Chicago, Los Angeles, New York, San Francisco, St. Louis. Read more at www.simmonsfirm.com.