



Locke Lord Bissell & Liddell_{LLP}

Attorneys & Counselors

Contact: Julie Gilbert
Chief Communications Officer
T: 713-226-1140
jgilbert@lockelord.com
www.lockelord.com

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LOCKE LORD BISSELL & LIDDELL CHICAGO PARTNER NAMED ONE OF “40 ILLINOIS ATTORNEYS UNDER FORTY TO WATCH”

(CHICAGO) September 4, 2008 – Mona M. Stone, a Partner based in the Chicago office of Locke Lord Bissell & Liddell LLP, has been named one of the Law Bulletin Publishing Company’s top “40 Illinois Attorneys Under Forty to Watch.” Stone was recognized for her outstanding legal abilities in managing her diverse practice, which has enabled her to develop key skills in a myriad of contexts. The first Indian American Partner at Locke Lord, Stone also was honored for her commitment to diversity efforts at the firm and in the law school and legal community.

Each year, the Law Bulletin Publishing Company’s “40 Under Forty Committee” reads through hundreds of nomination forms in order to find 40 young attorneys who are on the fast track professionally. Nominations are sent in by attorneys from across the country. Respondents are not allowed to nominate themselves nor attorneys at their own firms. The final selection is determined by the Committee.

Stone has extensive experience in complex commercial litigation, employment disputes, insurance defense, and aviation defense. She has represented both public and private entities throughout the country, ranging from individuals and small businesses to multibillion-dollar companies.

The Law Bulletin Publishing Company is a diversified print and electronic information company serving legal, real estate and financial markets in several states including Illinois, Minnesota, and Ohio. Founded in 1854 and based in Chicago, the Law Bulletin Publishing Company’s flagship publication, the Chicago Daily Law Bulletin, is the oldest daily courts newspaper in the country, and serves the largest unified court system in America. The daily newspaper and monthly legal magazine, the Chicago Lawyer, are consistently recognized for editorial excellence, and have received numerous awards.

Locke Lord Bissell & Liddell LLP is a full-service, national law firm of more than 700 attorneys with offices in Atlanta, Austin, Boston, Chicago, Dallas, Houston, London, Los Angeles, New Orleans, New York, Sacramento and Washington, D.C. With a vast geographic scope, and a national reputation in complex litigation, regulatory and transactional work, Locke Lord Bissell & Liddell is focused on achieving client success as a team. Among Locke Lord’s many strong practice areas are appellate, aviation, corporate, class action litigation, employee benefits, energy, environmental, financial services, health care, insurance and reinsurance industries, intellectual property, labor and employment, public law, real estate, REIT, tax and technology.

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2008 **40**
under
forty



40 Illinois Attorneys Under Forty to Watch

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Mona M. Stone

Locke Lord Bissell & Liddell LLP

111 S. Wacker Drive
Chicago, IL 60606
312-443-0619
mstone@lockelord.com

Age: 34

Law School: Tulane University School of Law

**Practice Areas: Business Litigation,
Labor and Employment, and Antitrust**

The lawsuit was a huge one, eventually including 65 contract attorneys each working more than 60 hours per week. It pitted giant credit card companies Visa and American Express/Discover against each other. Billions of dollars were at stake.

None of this, though, fazed Mona Stone.

Stone, a partner with Chicago's Locke Lord Bissell & Liddell, managed the team that represented Visa. Displaying her natural leadership and organizational skills, Stone led her team through the case's many challenges, ultimately leading to a favorable settlement for Visa in the American Express case. Notably, she did it without ever losing the calm, professional demeanor that has helped make Stone one of the city's top commercial litigation specialists.

Stone astutely created a new protocol during the case that made the discovery process far more streamlined and efficient, resulting in significant cost savings to Stone's client. The protocol was so effective in slashing both expenses and time, team members simply referred to it as "Project Mona."

Those who know Stone say such efforts are typical of her.

"Two of the unique and exceptional lawyer skills that Mona is blessed with are that she is both clever and intelligent," said nominator Kevin Murphy, of Allianz Aviation Managers, LLC. "She uses her intelligence to sort through complex problems. She uses her cleverness to be resourceful. I never met an associate who could get results and 'make things happen' as smoothly and efficiently as Mona could."

The Visa antitrust case is far from Stone's only high-profile triumph. Early in her career, she helped earn a successful defense verdict in a wrongful death action brought against

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a pilot involving a near mid-air collision resulting in a fatality. She also was part of the team that handled claims brought against the company that conducted pre-board screenings for American Airlines Flight 11 on Sept. 11, 2001. Stone has secured dismissals in actions involving discrimination charges brought before the Chicago Commission on Human Relations and EEOC.

"I worked with Mona defending a client in an SEC investigation. Mona was an excellent supervisor, leading by her strong example," observed Samuel Finkelstein, clinical assistant professor of law at Northwestern University School of Law. "If late nights were necessary, and they often were, she was right there with the associates, putting in the long hours. Her positive attitude kept morale high."

Stone also has made an impact by serving as a role model for minority attorneys both at Locke Lord Bissell and in the Chicago legal community. She is the first Indian American partner at Locke Lord Bissell and has taken a lead role in promoting diversity at the firm. Recently, Stone addressed the annual North American South Asian Law Students Association Conference on the advancement of women in the legal profession. She again spoke at the conference the following year on private law firm practice.

"Mona goes above and beyond everything that is necessary to be an excellent lawyer," commented Dr. Arin Reeves with The Athens Group in Chicago. "She takes the extra step at every turn to be an excellent citizen of the legal profession in addition to being an excellent lawyer."

To this day, Stone keeps in touch with her former college professor Dr. Craig Curtis at Bradley University, who from the beginning recognized that she was "an outstanding person that was destined to be a success." *