

### President's Message

#### Dear EWI Orlando Chapter Representatives:

Our scholarship dinner and award ceremony last month was excellent! Not only an excellent speaker, excellent candidates, excellent accommodations, excellent food but excellent attendance from the membership as well. A huge thank you to Jennifer Johnson, Scholarship Chair, for facilitating the entire process of notifying the schools, screening the applications, coordinating calls and meetings for judges & candidates, keeping us updated throughout the process, and being our emcee at the event. This was a huge undertaking and Jennifer, you did a spectacular job.



While we are on the subject of education, let me mention our Leadership Convention coming up in September. If you have not yet attended LCAM, then please make every effort to do so this year. You will see EWI at its best and realize just how big we are and how much we do to promote literacy and education. Registration begins this month. Our chapter will once again sponsor 4 individuals for the \$615 convention cost. You may submit your request for sponsorship consideration up until July 15. Not only do you see EWI at a whole other level, you partake in some very impressive leadership training that will enhance both your personal and professional skill set. Additionally, you will see Louisville and meet some pretty amazing women from all over the U.S. I am so looking forward to my 4th LCAM!!

And continuing our education, we have a fabulous speaker for June. Sonya Wilder-Johnson will speak to us about riding out this recession under the current economic conditions. Be sure to bring a guest to this informative program.

### June Chapter Meeting

**Date:**

Tuesday, June 16, 2009

**Location:**

Crown Plaza Hotel, Lake Room  
304 W. Colonial Dr.  
Orlando FL

**Speaker:**

Sonja Johnson-Wilder, SunTrust Bank

**Schedule:**

5:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

**Price:**

Members \$30, Guests \$35

**Please remember you must pay once a reservation is made. No shows are responsible for sending payments to the Chapter Sergeant at Arms. Payment for your meal is due at the event.**

**Reservation Deadline:**

Friday, June 12, 2009

**RSVP:**

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## Leadership Conference & Annual Meeting



### September 24-26:

EWI is excited to announce plans for the 62<sup>nd</sup> Leadership Conference & Annual Meeting in Louisville, KY.

This will be an amazing opportunity to enhance Connections, Careers and Community. Connect with others throughout the conference, enrich your career by learning from our excellent speakers, and take pride in EWI's service to community.

### EWI® Mission and Vision

#### Mission

Executive Women International® is an organization which brings together key individuals from diverse businesses for the purpose of:

- Promoting member firms
- Enhancing personal and professional development
- Encouraging community involvement

#### Vision

To be the Leading Connection for Business Professionals

## GrayRobinson in the Daily Business Review:

### *AmLaw 200 Growing GrayRobinson scores with 199th ranking*

June 04, 2009 By: Alana Roberts

With strong revenue and head count growth, Orlando-based GrayRobinson is making its debut on a list of the nation's largest law firms.

And despite the economic downturn, Byrd "Biff" Marshall, GrayRobinson's president and managing director, said he expects the firm to achieve 10 percent to 15 percent revenue and head count growth this year, after similar growth in recent years. The firm opened its Miami office a year and a half ago and now has 20 attorneys in place. Its 3-year-old Fort Lauderdale office has 23 lawyers.

GrayRobinson, which entered the Am Law 200 rankings at No. 199, has driven its growth primarily through strategic lateral partner hiring. "Over the last 60 days, we have hired 13 partners in our law firm," Marshall said. Tampa-based Carlton Fields jumped 17 places to 162 with a 25 percent revenue jump. Akerman Senterfitt dropped four places to 110 with relatively flat revenue.

The Am Law 200, compiled by DBR affiliate American Lawyer, features the second 100 largest firms in the country. The Am Law 100, released earlier this year, includes firms such as Greenberg Traurig and Holland & Knight.

The performance of Carlton Fields and GrayRobinson indicates serving a larger concentration of middle market clients and a heavier reliance on partners with significant books of business helped the Florida firms weather a tough economic environment.

Although most firms have mostly hired partners during the current economic downturn, both Carlton Fields and GrayRobinson have been more heavily focused on lateral hires and since before the downturn. Both firms had double-digit gross revenue growth.

Leaders of both firms both have said a partner-heavy, associate-light roster is a more economical way to serve clients, while Akerman's ratio is close to half partners, half associates.

Marshall said the firm's focus on Florida has helped insulate it from much of the exposure of New York transactional firms to the frozen credit markets. The firm handles a large amount of midlevel clients, but also serves some national clients, he said. Clients include Anheuser Busch and Brinker International Restaurants.

"Florida is a midlevel state," Marshall said. "Not having to worry about what's happening in New York and Atlanta has helped."

The firm's practice mix relies heavily on litigation work and to a lesser extent on corporate and real estate work, Marshall said. Other important practice areas for the firm are bankruptcy, construction litigation and intellectual property. The firm also counts health care as a major practice area, which falls in both the litigation and corporate categories.

The firm saw its gross revenue grow by nearly 10 percent to \$98.8 million. The firm's lawyer roster grew 13 percent in a year to 215 attorneys. The firm's non-equity partnership dropped 13 percent, while its equity partnership grew 7 percent to 108 lawyers.

But it wasn't all rosy for GrayRobinson. The firm's revenue per lawyer dropped by 3 percent to \$459,534. Marshall said the firm has been able to attract partners because its centralized management structure lacks an executive committee. The firm's board of directors is made up of 120 partners and some of counsel.

"We attract lawyers that like to be left alone to practice law and not have lots of executive committee meetings and administrative nonsense," Marshall said. "That's my job."

All three firms showed growth in profits per equity partner, but Carlton Fields led all three firms with a 5 percent jump.

*Continued on page 5*

## EWI Orlando Scholarship Winners



(L to R) Jennifer Johnson – EWI Orlando Chapter Vice President and Scholarship Chair, Julie Wood - Osceola High School student, Chelsea Monk - Ocoee High School student, Mishara Bronson - Valencia Community College student, Lisa Green - Florida Hospital College of Health and Sciences student and Lynette Gaylord – EWI Orlando Chapter President

**2009 ASIST Recipient Mishara Bronson** – is a born and raised Orlando resident, and single parent of 2 children ages 11 and 5. Currently is a full-time employee as a deputy clerk for Orange County and attends Valencia Community College part-time. Her goal is to transfer to



the University of Central Florida in August 2009 and work towards a Bachelors of Science in Social Work. Mishara's ambition is to work with teens and single parents, providing a variety of counseling/guidance services. Having had a child at 17, she knows first hand the difference a positive support system can have in someone's life, and she wishes to provide the same support and encouragement to other parents in need. Another goal of hers is to work with organizations that provide sex education, STD and AID's awareness through the Central Florida Community.

**2009 ASIST Recipient Lisa Green** - Mother of 2 elementary school boys, and has been accepted into the Florida Hospital College of Health and Sciences to pursue a degree as an Occupational Therapy Assistant (OTA). Her perspective of the OTA's role is unique because she was an occupational therapy patient after undergoing brain surgery 19 years ago. She was touched by the compassion and encouragement her OTA offered her during a very challenging time in Lisa's life. She is excited to help patients in the same manner, and show them how to maximize their potential for independence. After her surgeries, Lisa had to relearn how to study and process information. She took basic classes, while working full-time, to find out what she had to do differently to retain information. In 1992, she proudly graduated from the University of Central Florida with a 3.75 grade point average. Her bachelor's of art from UCF has made her ineligible for federal grants and/or state scholarships. Private scholarships and loans are the only way for her to fund the necessary schooling for her OTA degree and still meet her family's financial obligations and necessities. The ASIST scholarship will allow Lisa to enter a profession where she can make a difference and help others in a way she was helped 19 years ago.



**2009 EWISP Recipient Chelsea Monk** – is currently a junior at Ocoee High and is in the top 2% of her class. She is in the honors program and has a GPA of 4.72. Chelsea is an active member of her National Honor Society, Model UN, and Business Professionals of America. Her work in these organizations has received numerous awards and honors such as 1st place at regional, and 3rd place at State, in Presentation Management Team for Business Professionals of America. She also received 1st place in Financial Math and Analysis at the BPA Regional Competition. Chelsea was also recognized for her involvement with the Model UN and Knight of the Round Table. She is active in her community as well as in her school. She is a regular volunteer for Invisible Children, Summerville Assisted Living Center, OK Café, numerous charity walks (such as March of Dimes), and Project House, just to name a few. After high school, Chelsea plans on attending the University of Florida and major in International Business. Her ambitions are to manage her own business, and to travel around the world.



**2009 EWISP Recipient Julie Wood-** is currently a junior at Osceola High and is in the top 1% of her class, with a 4.0 GPA. She has been involved in her school's National Honor Society since her sophomore year, and is President of the Key Club, which she has been a member since 9th grade. Other extracurricular activities of Julie's are Math League, Cheerleading, and Flag Football. Her list of awards and honors include 9th Grade Hall of Fame, Honor Roll 9th-11th grade, Hugh O'Brien Youth Leadership Ambassador, Osceola Teen Leadership Ambassador, and Certificate of Merit for Principles of Excellence.



In addition to her educational accomplishments, Julie has made a difference in her community by working with the Ronald McDonald House. She prepared meals for families and helped put together a holiday festival and fundraisers. After high school, Julie plans on pursuing a degree in civil engineering with a specialization in architecture. She is considering several prestigious universities such as the University of Florida, the University of Central Florida, and a few out-of-state schools as well. After finishing her undergrad, she has aspirations of obtaining her masters degree and finding work with an engineering firm.

### ***GrayRobinson in the News*** – continued from page 3

Carlton Fields has been on a steady climb. This year's jump in the ranking was fueled by a 16 percent jump in revenue to \$145 million. Last year, the firm rose nine places on the Am Law 200 to 179 last year. The firm's attorney head count grew 12 percent to 264 lawyers as of September. It's non-equity partnership grew 4 percent to 57, and its equity partnership grew 17 percent to 95 lawyers.

In May, the firm snagged three Adorno & Yoss commercial litigators after attracting a six-lawyer group of Adorno attorneys two years before. The firm also hired a seven-lawyer group of former Zuckerman Spaeder lawyers in March 2008.

Gary Sasso, Carlton Fields' Tampa-based president and chief executive officer, could not be reached for comment by deadline.

Meanwhile, Akerman Senterfitt's drop on the list followed revenue growth of 0.4 of a percent to \$254 million, which caused the firm to descend four places to 110 on the Am Law 200 list. That dip follows a two-spot ascent last year.

About 29 percent of its non-equity partners either left or were promoted in 2008, while the firm lost 5 percent of its equity partners. Overall, the attorney count rose 1 percent to 468 lawyers, profit per partner grew 1.6 percent, and revenue per lawyer dropped 0.52 of a percent.

Akerman Senterfitt chairman Andrew Smulian said the firm's ranking drop isn't significant. "We're basically in the same neighborhood. I don't find that particularly distressing," he said.

A source familiar with the firm said longtime Akerman attorneys doubt its efforts to grow outside of Florida have helped the firm financially. The firm has been able to stave off sharper gross revenue declines through significant increases in billable hour rates in recent years.

The source said despite many of the firm's aggressive hiring efforts the firm has lost a lot of non-equity and equity partners because of increasingly onerous capital contributions. But the firm has intentionally made its capital contribution requirements less of a burden on new hires in order to attract new talent to the firm.

"We've had the same capital structure in place for a while now," Smulian said. "We've adjusted our rates like all firms have, and we're working with clients in these times on alternative fee arrangements like all firms."

He said the firm has attracted clients away from large New York firms for corporate work because of a more modest price structure. He declined to name any of the clients or the kind of work his firm did for them.

"There are at least three instances in our corporate practice where we have won significant assignments that normally have gone to New York mega firms," Smulian said.

## **EWI Orlando Member Firms**

**Arts Sandwich Shop & Catering**

**Cross, Fernandez & Riley, LLP**

**DeVry University**

**FL High Tech Corridor Council**

**GrayRobinson, PA**

**Gulf Eagle Supply**

**Hansard Accounting & Consulting Inc.**

**Longaberger, Inc.**

**Metro Orlando Economic Dev Commission**

**Monti Interpreting, Translation &  
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**Orange Lake Country Club**

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**PSTCorp.com**

**Seminole Community College**

**Seminole County Sheriff's Office**

**SunTrust Bank**

**Zimmerman, Kiser & Sutcliffe, PA**

# **Executive Women International®**

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WITH YOUR EXECUTIVES TOO!**

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