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NEWS FROM WASHINGTON: Two Venable partners join the Trump team. And gross revenue and profits per partner rose at Covington & Burling. **PAGE 11**

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CFPB Lawyers: Trumped?

Practices rooted in CFPB work prepare to pivot.

BY C. RYAN BARBER

Last October, Maria Earley left the law firm Sidley Austin for Reed Smith with the hope of building a practice around defending clients against the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau.

For Earley, a former consumer bureau lawyer, the timing seemed ideal. The CFPB was aggressive as ever, bringing multimillion-dollar enforcement actions and rolling out rules to restrict payday lending and to ban arbitration agreements that prevent class actions. Hillary Clinton was poised to take the White House in an election that would have emboldened a President Barack Obama-era agency that one lawyer, in

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UNDER SIEGE: The CFPB was created by the Dodd-Frank Act, which faces GOP threats.

Acosta Put FIU Law on the Map

Trump's labor secretary choice made student recruitment a personal mission.



LABOR DEPT. NOMINEE: FIU College of Law Dean Alexander Acosta.

BY KAREN SLOAN

When it comes to recruiting new students to Florida International University College of Law, Dean Alexander Acosta has borrowed a page from the college football coach recruiting playbook.

Acosta, who is poised to become the next U.S. secretary of labor, employed the usual admissions tactics of offering scholarships and inviting admits for special campus visits, but he added a personal touch: hosting top prospects for a group dinner at his Coral Gables home and pitching the law school himself to perspective students at their undergraduate campuses. He highlighted the school's small size, high bar pass rates and location in Florida's largest legal market.

"I never took admissions as the kind of personal challenge he did," said Professor Emeritus Leonard Strickman, FIU Law's

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Meet Yale Law's First Female Dean

Heather Gerken defends law's nonpartisan values.

BY KAREN SLOAN

Yale Law School this week named its first woman law dean—professor Heather Gerken, a federalism and election law expert who'll take the reins July 1.

Consistently ranked as the No. 1 law school by U.S. News & World Report, Yale is often in the public eye, and its dean has a megaphone most other legal academics don't. (For proof, check out this recent *op-ed* by outgoing Yale Dean Robert Post and Harvard Law School Dean Martha Minow, which takes President Donald Trump to task for his attacks on the judiciary and the rule of law.) And, as Gerken admits, the school's long history and entrenched traditions mean change often comes slowly.

Yet, Yale's position at the top of the law school heap means it isn't struggling with the same challenges many other schools are, namely declining applicant pools and budget woes. In short, Yale Law School remains a hot ticket for whip-smart, ambitious aspiring lawyers.

On Feb. 22, we caught up with Gerken to discuss her new gig, the challenges that await, and her hobby as an amateur novelist. Her answers have been edited for length and clarity.

The National Law Journal: What appealed to you about this job?

Heather Gerken: I wasn't sure I wanted the job a few years ago, mostly

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HEATHER GERKEN

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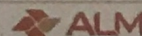
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2641 ABACO AVE
MIAMI FL 33133-3803

JACQUELINE M. VALDESPINO

Jacqueline Valdespino is a highly regarded and recognized Matrimonial and Family Law practitioner with a record of success. She is well regarded and respected by her colleagues and the judges she appears before. Ms. Valdespino has established a professional reputation for passionately representing her clients at both the trial and appellate levels with true grit and determination. Ms. Valdespino provides expert litigation services in contested matters including complex financial issues, and high conflict dissolution of marriage



cases. She is equally adept at aggressively advocating litigated cases and negotiating resolutions. She is straightforward, fair and employs a team approach that includes the client in each aspect of the case.

Ms. Valdespino is a sought out speaker, writer and commentator on a number of news outlets on issues of Family Law. In the Fall of 2015 she was published in the Florida Bar Journal on issues of relocation. In 2013 she spoke on domestic violence for the ABA Family Law Section at the Supreme Court in Alaska.

VALDESPINO & ASSOCIATES, P.A.

2641 Abaco Avenue, Miami, FL 33134

p: 305.442.1200

www.valdespinopa.com • legalservice@valdespinopa.com