



# Lathrop Gage Promotes Seven Attorneys to Partner Status

December 14, 2009

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (Dec. 14, 2009) – Lathrop Gage LLP today announced the promotion of Ruth Brackney, Cameron Garrison, Joe Johnson, Pat Kenney, Darynne O’Neal, Melissa Sherman and David Waters to partnership in the firm, effective Jan. 1, 2010.

**Ruth Brackney** (Wealth Strategies - Kansas City): Ms. Brackney prepares analysis and recommendations on sophisticated estate, gift and generation-skipping transfer tax issues, including development of complex estate plans, preparation of estate planning documents, estate and gift tax returns, and administration of estates, trusts, and family limited partnerships. She provides lifetime financial planning involving special needs of children and spouses, and financial planning related to divorce and premarital agreements. Ms. Brackney assists clients with charitable planning and the administration of private foundations and charitable trusts. Ms. Brackney represents estate and trust clients in federal estate tax audits. Previously she was an auditor with the Resolution Trust Corporation - Office of Inspector General in Kansas City, Missouri. Ms. Brackney is a graduate of the University of Missouri-Kansas City School of Law, J.D., L.L.M.

**Cameron Garrison** (Intellectual Property - Kansas City): Mr. Garrison is an intellectual property attorney whose practice focuses on defending clients' rights through litigation and alternative dispute resolution, as well as counseling clients on a wide variety of intellectual property and technology issues. His litigation practice has included patent, trademark, copyright and trade secret litigation in various federal and state courts throughout the nation, as well as both domestic and international arbitration forums. His business counseling practice has included assisting a wide range of intellectual property, manufacturing, entertainment, internet, marketing and media clients on diverse matters such as identification and valuation of intellectual property portfolios, licensing of intellectual property, resolution of domain name disputes, trademark and copyright prosecution, risk management, noninfringement opinions, and technological and operational issues. He received his J.D. from the Washington and Lee University School of Law.

**Joe Johnson** (Intellectual Property – Springfield): Mr. Johnson assists clients in identifying, developing, protecting and commercializing emerging technologies. He is a licensed patent attorney and prosecutes patent and trademark applications before the United States Patent and Trademark Office. He also assists start up and established corporate clients to develop programs to secure, fund and transfer intellectual



property rights. Mr. Johnson represents clients in new product design, development, commercialization and federal regulatory compliance for new technologies. Additionally, his practice includes litigation of trade secret theft, infringement of patents, trademarks and other proprietary rights, complex business disputes and class action defense. He has also served as an expert witness in patent disputes and is an approved mediator in Missouri State and Federal Courts for civil disputes. He is a graduate of the University of Tulsa College of Law.

**Pat Kenney** (Business Litigation - Kansas City): Mr. Kenney represents clients in commercial litigation in the areas of securities, corporate governance, breach of fiduciary duty, shareholder disputes, noncompetition and nonsolicitation covenants, professional liability, breach of contract, and condemnation. Mr. Kenney also assists clients on e-commerce and Internet law issues. He has assisted clients on matters pending before the United States Court of Appeals for the Eighth, Ninth and Tenth Circuits and numerous federal district and state courts throughout the country. He is a graduate of the Washington University School of Law in St. Louis.

**Darynne O'Neal** (Business Litigation – Springfield): Ms. O'Neal represents clients in litigated and non-litigated business-to-business disputes such as breach of contract matters, loan enforcement actions, construction matters, insurance disputes, regulatory matters, business torts and medical malpractice defense litigation. Ms. O'Neal graduated from the University of Missouri School of Law.

**Melissa Sherman** (Business Litigation - Overland Park): Ms. Sherman represents clients in a wide range of litigation matters in state and federal court, from complex business disputes to professional liability actions. Ms. Sherman has particular expertise in condemnation law, and has represented both condemning authorities and landowners in all phases of the condemnation process. Ms. Sherman has significant trial and appellate experience, and has also assisted clients with alternative dispute resolution. Prior to joining Lathrop Gage, Ms. Sherman served as a law clerk for the Honorable Steve Leben, who now sits on the Kansas Court of Appeals. She is a graduate of the University of Kansas School of Law.

**David E. Waters** (Real Estate--Overland Park): Mr. Waters represents developers, landowners, and local governments in planning, zoning, and real estate development matters, and advises clients in connection with all general real estate matters, including the negotiation and settlement of purchase and sale agreements, commercial leases, development agreements, easements, restrictive covenants, and title matters. Mr. Waters is also experienced in municipal law, representing local municipalities and school districts in a variety of matters, and counseling clients with respect to public financing incentives. Furthermore, Mr. Waters handles design and construction projects, including architectural contracts, construction management, and design-build projects. He received his J.D. from the University of Kansas School of Law and is a member of the City of Westwood, Kansas, Planning Commission and Board of Zoning Appeals.



**About Lathrop Gage:**

A full-service law firm, Lathrop Gage LLP has almost 300 attorneys in 11 offices nationwide – from Los Angeles to New York. In 2009, *Chambers USA* ranked Lathrop Gage's corporate, environmental, intellectual property, litigation, real estate and labor and employment teams among the best in the Midwest. For more information, visit [www.lathropgage.com](http://www.lathropgage.com).