Lathrop GPM Adds Six Attorneys in Environmental & Tort Practice Group

March 4, 2021

Environmental attorneys join Lathrop GPM's growing team in several states across U.S.

KANSAS CITY (Mar. 4, 2021) — Lathrop GPM welcomes six attorneys to the firm's Environmental & Tort Practice Group. Among the attorneys are Kayla Brewe in St. Louis, Matthew Walker in Chicago, Madeline Level, Shanna McCormack and Arielle McPherson in Kansas City, and David Ashdown in Los Angeles.

"We are delighted to welcome these environmental and toxic tort attorneys to the Lathrop GPM team. Strategic growth and recruitment of top talent in the areas of tort, particularly toxic tort, and the environmental space, is a top priority for the firm. Each attorney's background and experience are exactly what we are looking for, and we are excited for our clients to benefit from their skills," said Environmental & Tort Practice Group Leader Mara Cohara.

St. Louis

Kayla Brewe joins the Lathrop GPM from Shook, Hardy & Bacon's Kansas City office. She focuses on toxic tort and product liability litigation. Brewe has experience defending Fortune 500 companies in product liability and general tort litigation, including alternative dispute resolution. She received her J.D. from the University of Missouri School of Law in 2016 where she was named to the Order of Barristers and served as the note and comment editor of the *Journal of Environmental and Sustainability Law*. She received a B.A. *summa cum laude* from the University of Central Missouri in 2013.

Chicago

Matthew Walker joins Lathrop GPM's Chicago office from Winston & Strawn, concentrating his practice on all areas of environmental law including litigation and regulatory compliance. Walker is well-versed in litigation involving the core environmental laws, including suits under the Clean Water Act, contaminants and toxic tort, enforcement actions for waste violations and issues surrounding state and federal CERCLA claims. He also focuses on monitoring state and federal investigation and regulation of PFAS, and helps businesses develop strategies to adapt to regulatory developments. Since joining the firm, Walker has been instrumental in helping to launch the practice group's first blog, the PFAS Playbook. Walker previously

served as an Assistant Attorney General with the Environmental Bureau of the Illinois Attorney General's Office where he litigated matters relating to environmental, land use and energy disputes. He earned his J.D. *cum laude* from University of Illinois in 2016 from where he also received a B.S. in Natural Resources and Environmental Science in 2013 and an M.S. in 2016.

Kansas City

Madeline "Maddie" Level focuses her practice on product liability and tort litigation. She is actively involved in all stages of litigation including discovery, motion practice, and assisting in alternative dispute resolution, trial, and appeal preparation. She previously served as a summer associate at Lathrop GPM. In 2019, Level, a competitive gamer, published an article in the Kansas Law Review that addressed the legal issues with respect to gaming, specifically "loot boxes." She received her J.D. from the University of Kansas School of Law in 2020 and a B.A. with honors and distinction in English Linguistics from University of Kansas in 2017.

Shanna McCormack comes to Lathrop GPM from the United States Environmental Protection Agency. She focuses her practice on environmental law, providing regulatory counsel to clients. Her experience at the EPA allows her to advise a broad range of clients on environmental matters. Prior to joining the firm, McCormack worked as a summer associate for Earth Law Center. She received her J.D. *cum laude* from Lewis & Clark Law School in 2020 and an LL.M. in Environmental, Natural Resources and Energy Law in 2021. She received a B.A. in Environmental Policy and B.S. in Environmental Science from Drake University in 2016.

Arielle McPherson focuses her practice on product liability and tort defense litigation. McPherson originally joined Lathrop GPM as a summer associate in 2019. Prior to joining the firm, she worked as a judicial extern for the United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois and press intern for the U.S. House of Representatives & Congressional Black Caucus Foundation in Washington, D.C. She earned a J.D. from Loyola University Chicago School of Law where she was awarded the CALI Excellence for the Future Award for receiving the highest grade in her Appellate Advocacy class. She received her B.S. *magna cum laude* in Criminology and Interpersonal Communication from Missouri State University in 2015.

Los Angeles

David Ashdown focuses his practice on complex product liability and toxic tort litigation in defense of catastrophic injury and wrongful death cases. He is actively involved in all stages of litigation including discovery, developing defense strategies, drafting pleadings, motion practice and trial. Ashdown is currently a member of a client team that acts as national coordinating counsel for a manufacturing client in cosmetic talc litigation. Prior to becoming an associate at Lathrop GPM, Ashdown served as a law clerk and a paralegal for the firm. He received a J.D. cum laude from Boston University School of Law in 2020 and a

B.A. in Political Science from the University of California, Los Angeles in 2011.