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## LAW FIRM LEADERS



Schiller DuCanto & Fleck LLP's Meighan A. Harmon is pictured in her downtown office. She is now the family law firm's managing partner, the first woman to hold that position since the firm launched in 1981. *Sarah Mansur*

## Harmon named Schiller DuCanto Fleck's new MP

BY SARAH MANSUR  
*Law Bulletin staff writer*

Schiller DuCanto & Fleck LLP has named Meighan A. Harmon as its new managing partner. She is the firm's first woman to serve in that role. Harmon succeeds Arnold B. Stein, who held that position since 2015. He will remain as a partner.

Harmon, who focuses on complex family law cases, will lead the 48-attorney firm, which has offices in Chicago, Lake Forest and Wheaton.

"Even when I was in law school,

### She has become the first woman to lead the family law firm in its 38-year history

I was aware of Schiller DuCanto & Fleck. I probably thought, even then, that's where I belonged," Harmon said.

She said the firm has established a reputation for delivering high-quality work and retaining ethical lawyers who represent high-net worth clients, or "the one percent."

"This is a difficult practice,

there is no question about it. Emotions run high. Litigation is a battle, at least on some level. And being able to do it in such a way that you are always treating people, even on the other side of the case, with respect is something that is important to all of us," she said.

Harmon earned her law degree from Notre Dame Law School in

1996. She spent five years at Nottage and Ward LLP, a Chicago family law and divorce firm, before she joined Schiller DuCanto & Fleck. Her practice concentrates on divorce cases that involve multimillion-dollar estates.

Donald C. Schiller, a co-founder of the firm, said in a statement Harmon is well suited to take on the managing partner role.

"She is a natural leader who takes great care to help guide and continue the development of our first-rate team of lawyers. Meighan will lead by example as well as carry on her dedicated

service to our clients. When the vacancy arose, there was no question among the executive committee that Meighan was the right person to become our managing partner at this important time in our firm's growth and development. I am delighted to see her take on this next challenge," Schiller said in the statement.

Harmon said she's aware of how the firm has changed since it was founded by Schiller and the late Joseph N. DuCanto in 1981.

"The divorce process used to be called four men and a woman," she said.

There was the husband and wife, and both attorneys and the judge were men.

Like many firms, Schiller DuCanto & Fleck didn't have any female partners for a long time, she said.

"That having been said, I think our founders laid the groundwork for what exists today, a long time ago. Because they not only hired really bright women — they worked with us, they fostered us, they kept us engaged during those critical periods in our career where sometimes women fall off the partnership track," she said. "It's one thing to say 'Well, I did it, you can do it too,' it's a whole other thing to actually create an environment that provides the support for the people who are coming up behind you to do it."

Six of the firm's 13 senior partners are women, and two of the three executive committee members are women.

"This is a really stressful practice. It's one thing to have really smart people here, which we do. We also have to have people who are invested in each other and committed to constantly supporting each other in all aspects of our lives," Harmon said.

Maintaining the firm's culture and closeness among attorneys is a priority for her as managing partner. She also wants to keep the firm on the forefront of the practice area.

"The practice of family law is changing," she said.

For one thing, the client base

has evolved. When Harmon started her career, same-sex marriage and same-sex divorce were not services provided by family law firms.

"I don't think we have really seen the implications of that yet," she said.

Assisted reproductive technology is another new area that falls under the auspices of family law, she said.

"And new family units that will come out of both the opening up of the idea of marriage to a larger group of people but also how families are constructed is changing in a lot of different ways," she said.

"It will be impactful to our practice for sure."

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