



HEATHER R. M. BECKER

AGE

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FIRM

Laner Muchin, Ltd.
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Chicago

LAW SCHOOL

DePaul College of Law

AREA OF PRACTICE

Labor and Employment Litigation
and Counseling

"I CAN'T SAY ENOUGH
GOOD THINGS ABOUT
HEATHER'S LAWYERING
SKILLS"

How valuable is employment-law lawyer Heather Becker to her clients? Consider the work Becker performed for the Semrad Law Firm, a bankruptcy firm in Chicago. During the last 13 years, this law firm has grown from seven employees with one office to more than 175 employees with eleven offices in Illinois and Georgia.

As the firm has grown, so has its exposure to a variety of employment claims. The firm then became the target of a growing number of wrongful discharge and discrimination claims. That's where Becker stepped in. Patrick Semrad, the Managing Partner of the firm, said that Becker obtained favorable results in all of these claims. Just as important, Becker worked hand and hand with the firm's management to implement a variety of workplace policies and procedures to reflect best practices, and she took the extra step of personally training the majority of the firm's staff on common human-resources issues.

"The increasingly common claims stopped almost immediately," Semrad said. "Over the years, I have worked with hundreds of attorneys. Heather is one of the few who can spot an issue immediately and be ready to answer the in-depth questions."

Semrad is not alone in his praise for Becker. Both her clients and peers say that Becker is a leader in the employment law field in her representation of both public and private sector employers, and that she works tirelessly to understand the clients' business goals and then achieve the best results for her clients in a cost-effective manner.

George Thomson with the City Colleges of Chicago has worked closely with Becker on a number of matters. In one matter, Becker and her partner recently earned a positive jury verdict for City Colleges in a long and complicated case that lasted six years from filing to trial. The case featured nearly a dozen claims and multiple individual defendants. Becker and her partner also had to work through a mountain of discovery issues. When it came time for trial, the trial team was able to lay out a consistent, cohesive nar-

rative that led the jury to a favorable defense verdict for City Colleges.

"Many of the claims were resolved at the summary judgment stage in part through Heather's attention to factual detail and her superior writing skills," Thomson said. "Heather was an integral part of the trial team, and gave a meticulously prepared and executed closing argument."

"I can't say enough good things about Heather's lawyering skills," said another public sector nominator who asked to remain anonymous. "In a nutshell, she is the consummate professional."

This nominator recently observed Becker's work during another week-long jury trial, in which she obtained a complete defense verdict for her clients. The nominator says that this was an outstanding result in part because Becker did not come into the case until long after discovery was closed and the case had gone to the Seventh Circuit twice and was heard by the U.S. Supreme Court.

Despite just coming into the case when it was time for trial, Becker was able to get up to speed on the strengths and weaknesses of the case in no time and help formulate an effective trial strategy. "Heather came across to her clients as someone with a quiet confidence who should be trusted," the nominator said. "Heather had a way of making her clients feel comfortable with the proposed trial strategy, never overselling the strengths or downplaying the weaknesses, but just calmly predicting how a witness or argument might come across to the jury."

In addition to Becker's thriving employment law practice, she's raising two young children and makes it a priority to regularly volunteer at their elementary school. She also invests her time with the local human resources community through her work with Chicago SHRM by co-hosting the organization's monthly roundtables, which gives local human resources professionals a platform to discuss hot topics in the area of human resources and share ideas with one another.