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## Robinson+Cole Lawyers Named “New Leaders in the Law”

*Connecticut Law Tribune’s 2014 Yearbook Includes Britt-Marie K. Cole-Johnson, Sorell E. Negro, Brian D. Nichols, and Keisha S. Palmer*

HARTFORD, CT (October 2, 2014) – The *Connecticut Law Tribune* has recognized Robinson+Cole lawyers Britt-Marie K. Cole-Johnson, Sorell E. Negro, Brian D. Nichols, and Keisha S. Palmer as New Leaders in the Law. They are among 60 attorneys, all under age 40, recognized in the *New Leaders in the Law 2014 Yearbook* and will be honored at an awards dinner on November 6 at The Bond Ballroom in downtown Hartford. The *Connecticut Law Tribune* received more than 300 award nominations, and honorees were selected based on examples of their legal work, pro bono efforts, and community involvement.

[Britt-Marie K. Cole-Johnson](#) demonstrates leadership in everything she takes on and has excelled at giving strategic legal advice that helps clients achieve their business objectives. At Robinson+Cole, in addition to her labor and employment practice, she is a member of the firm’s Diversity Committee and previously served as the head of the Associates Council. She recently was awarded the firm’s Community Service Award and previously earned the firm’s Mentor of the Year Award. In the community, she serves on the Board of Directors of YWCA Hartford Region, has chaired its Nominating and Governance Committee, and was asked to serve on its Executive Committee and as its board co-chair of the 19th annual In the Company of Women Luncheon. Ms. Cole-Johnson also serves on the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving’s Scholarship Committee and on the Associates Advisory Committee of Lawyers Collaborative for Diversity. She has received various honors and awards for her legal and community work, including being named as an “Associate to Watch” by *Chambers USA* in 2014, as a Rising Star in *Connecticut Super Lawyers®* in the area of Employment & Labor for 2013, and recently as one of “40 Women for the Next 40 Years” by the Connecticut Women’s Education and Legal Fund. In addition, Ms. Cole-Johnson received a Volunteer of the Year Award from the Pro Bono Partnership in 2012 and was recognized in the *Connecticut Law Tribune’s* special section “Lawyers of Color: High Achievers” in 2011.

[Sorell E. Negro](#) has shown the ability and strong work ethic to complete an impressive array of client and professional development activities. She has done sophisticated analytical and advocacy work involving a variety of land use

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issues and real property and environmental litigation, including eminent domain, complex real property disputes, environmental contamination claims, public health violations, and products liability claims involving hazardous substances. In her second year at Robinson+Cole, Ms. Negro worked tirelessly on a matter of the utmost personal importance to the client, and after hosting a 13-hour mediation, she helped the parties come to a reasonable, long-lasting settlement. She has published more than a dozen articles on timely and complex issues related to land use and natural resources, including on the regulation and impacts of natural gas development, reusing vacant properties, and land use implications from rising sea levels, and regularly presents on the topics that she writes about. She has also assumed leadership roles in the Connecticut Bar Association and American Bar Association and was awarded the 2013 Jefferson B. Fordham Up & Comers Award from the ABA Section of State and Local Government Law. Ms. Negro was listed as a Rising Star in Connecticut *Super Lawyers*®\* in the area of Land Use/Zoning in 2013.

[Brian D. Nichols](#), in just eight years of private practice, has risen to the ranks of partner at Robinson+Cole and is emerging as a leader in the health care community, where he is highly respected by his clients and peers. Mr. Nichols has assumed a leadership role on several large transactions, including physician practice acquisitions, health system affiliations, and the development of accountable care organizations. He was listed as a Rising Star in Connecticut *Super Lawyers*® in the area of Health Care Law for 2011. Outside of work, he is committed to giving back to his community in significant ways. A former officer in the U.S. Navy, Mr. Nichols remains actively involved in organizations that support veterans when they return home, including as secretary on the executive board of Give an Hour, a nonprofit organization that provides free mental health services to U.S. military personnel who have served in Iraq and Afghanistan and to their families. With a child on the autism spectrum, he is also passionate about ensuring that individuals on the autism spectrum receive appropriate support. Additionally, Mr. Nichols is a member of Robinson+Cole's Pro Bono Committee and provides pro bono representation to a community day care center with respect to a Connecticut Department of Public Health investigation and to Specs for Little Heroes, Inc.

[Keisha S. Palmer](#) is a skilled public finance lawyer who advises states, municipalities, Indian tribal governments, and quasi-governmental agencies on all aspects of the issuance of tax-exempt and taxable bonds and other debt. At Robinson+Cole, she ably fills many roles, including valued advisor to clients, trusted sounding board to colleagues, and is an active member of the firm's Hiring and Diversity Committees. She also trains new associates, paralegals, and legal assistants in her practice group and mentors others within the firm on a regular basis. Ms. Palmer was listed as a Rising Star in Connecticut *Super Lawyers*®\* in the area of Bonds/Government Finance for 2013 and was recognized by the *Connecticut Law Tribune* in its "Lawyers of Color: High Achievers" section in 2011. She co-founded the University of Connecticut School of Law/Robinson & Cole LLP Summer Law Institute, serves on the Board of Directors of the Hartford Federal Credit Union, and volunteers with Robinson+Cole's Domestic Violence Restraining Order Program.

\* *Super Lawyers* is a registered trademark of Key Professional Media, Inc.

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### About Robinson+Cole

Robinson+Cole is a service mark of Robinson & Cole LLP, an Am Law 200 firm with 200 lawyers in nine offices serving regional, national, and international clients, from start-ups to Fortune 500 companies. Since 1845, Robinson & Cole LLP has expanded to meet the changing needs of clients. The firm represents corporate, governmental, and nonprofit entities, as well as individual clients, in a wide range of matters, including corporate; business and insurance litigation; tax and tax-exempt; finance; public finance; land use, environmental and utilities, and real estate; health law; labor, employment, and benefits; intellectual property and technology; and government relations. For more information, please visit [www.rc.com](http://www.rc.com).

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