

# PRESS RELEASE

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## Linda A. Klein Honored by Georgia Association of Black Women Attorneys

July 27, 2018

**Linda A. Klein, senior managing shareholder at Baker Donelson and immediate past president of the American Bar Association (ABA), has been named the recipient of the Georgia Association of Black Women Attorneys (GABWA) 2018 Zenith Award for Distinction in the Profession.**

Ms. Klein, who received the award during the 2018 GABWA Annual Glitter Gala on July 21 in Atlanta, Georgia, was recognized for her high level of success in the profession, as well as her demonstration of extraordinary service to women and children of color through both her professional and personal leadership.

The award honored Ms. Klein's career as a trail-blazer who has always focused on paving the way for others and advocating for those in need. In June 1997, she became the first woman to serve as president of the State Bar of Georgia. During her term, she advocated for the state to allocate funding for lawyers to help indigent victims of domestic violence and organized a statewide group of community organizations and local and minority bar associations that together convinced the General Assembly to appropriate \$2 million. Annual appropriations since then have helped thousands in Georgia with legal issues related to domestic violence, and the Judicial Council of Georgia Standing Committee on Grants recently announced the award of \$2.43 million to legal aid groups around the state for low-income victims of domestic violence and their children.

Ms. Klein was also one of the first women to lead a prominent Georgia law firm. She served as managing partner of Gambrell & Stolz beginning in 2001 and led the firm's 2007 merger with Baker Donelson, becoming a Baker Donelson board member and Georgia managing shareholder.

Her leadership and service is exemplified in her active involvement in the American Bar Association. Ms. Klein has served as chair of the ABA's House of Delegates, the second-highest elected office in the organization; chair of the Tort Trial and Insurance Practice Section; chair of the Committee on Rules and Calendar of the House of Delegates; chair of the Coalition for Justice; and chair of ABA Day, the Association's Congressional outreach effort. Ms. Klein's ABA involvement culminated in her being chosen as president-elect in 2015, then becoming the organization's president in 2016. During her term as president, she focused on improving Access to Justice for veterans, spearheading the [ABA Veterans' Legal Services Initiative](#), and leading numerous efforts that raised awareness and increased pro bono services to veterans, their families and caregivers. As ABA president, she spoke out frequently on issues such as the independence of the judiciary, due process and access to justice. She also led an ABA campaign to help ensure the continued funding of Legal Services Corp., the nation's largest provider of civil legal aid services, and championed a lawsuit against the Department of Education when it reneged on its commitments to forgive student loan debt for borrowers who work in non-profit sectors.

Ms. Klein's achievements have earned her numerous recognitions, including the *Daily Report's* 2018 Attorney of the Year Award, the National Association of Women Judges Florence K. Murray Award in 2017, the Randolph Throver Award for Lifetime Achievement in Diversity in 2009 and the ABA's prestigious Margaret Brent Achievement Award in 2004. In 1998, *Georgia Trend Magazine* named her one of the 100 most powerful and influential Georgians. Ms. Klein is listed in *The Best Lawyers in America* and *Chambers USA*, and is regularly recognized by Super Lawyers among the top 100 lawyers in Georgia and among the top 50 female lawyers in Georgia.

Ms. Klein earned her J.D. at Washington & Lee Law School in Virginia and her B.A. at Union College in New York. Her practice includes most types of business dispute resolution, including contract law, professional liability, and risk and crisis management, working extensively with clients in the construction, higher education and pharmaceutical industries.