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BUILDING BUSINESS FOR A GREATER NEWARK

## Will You Be Ready for This Law on July 1?

By Chip Hallock,  
President & CEO, NRBP

With this month's feature story relating how some of our member law firms are operating during these difficult economic times, it seems like a good time to remind all of our members about a new law that affects virtually all New Jersey employers...Paid Family Leave.

Not to be confused with the federal Family and Medical Leave Act or the New Jersey Family Leave law, the New Jersey Paid Family Leave Act applies even to employers of fewer than 50 people. Beginning July 1, employees may apply for up to six weeks of full-time or intermittent leave and benefits to care for newborn or adopted children or sick family members. While the benefits are paid from a state fund that is initially funded by a new tax on all workers, employers need to understand how to fulfill their responsibilities under the law while considering how to maintain their operations at peak efficiency.

Recently, Carla Dorsi, a member of the Employment Law Department at the Newark based firm **Gibbons P.C.**, walked members through their responsibilities under this new law at a NRBP workshop. Ms. Dorsi explained notification requirements, employee and employer obligations, entanglements with other laws and much more. It was a sobering and necessary look into yet another government mandate that requires careful handling to ensure compliance and prevent litigation.

As with many categories of industry, NRBP's membership is rich with excellent legal talent. We suggest that you make sure that those responsible for human resources and benefits issues in your organization are well prepared for the looming eligibility date. If you are not sure about the law or its implications, you may want to check with legal counsel. You will find a talented pool of attorneys within NRBP's online member directory at [www.newarkrbp.org](http://www.newarkrbp.org).

## Law Trends in a Down Economy

Sometimes viewed as immune to the ups and downs of the economy, law firms have made headlines in the current downturn with announcements of layoffs and cuts to summer intern programs while law schools are reporting that it is more challenging to place graduating students. NRBP member firms reported that they have trimmed expenses and focused on maximizing their resources and seeking new sources of business. For this issue of *Connections*, NRBP wanted to know what areas are emerging as opportunities, where there is decline, and how the firms are fairing overall.



"Defaults by tenants for our landlord clients and defaults by borrowers for our lender clients are the principal legal issues facing our clients in today's economy," noted Steven D. Fleissig, partner at **Herrick, Feinstein LLP**.

"Herrick Feinstein has used this opportunity to focus our law firm's business in areas which are legal-intensive in today's market such as bankruptcy, loan workouts and preventative legal advice to try to have clients avoid litigation in the future."

On the topic of firm activity, Mr. Fleissig noted, "The firm has been able to keep its level of business steady by shifting from transactional to working out legal issues and taking steps to avoid issues for their clients."

While many firms find the transactional part of their real estate practice shrinking, other areas have experienced growth. "The decline in real estate values has led to a substantial increase in property tax appeals. Our clients nationwide have sought to avail themselves of the various tax boards and tax courts to achieve reductions in their tax assessments so as to more closely reflect market conditions. We expect this trend to continue for at least the next several years,"



said Frank Ferruggia, partner at **McCarter & English LLP** and a NRBP board member.



Jim Burns, partner with **Genova Burns & Vernioia**, reported an increase in employment labor law, one of the firm's core practice areas. "As companies decide on key personnel during this recessionary period, employment related lawsuits increase," said Mr. Burns. He also cited

increases in work related to labor negotiations, defined benefit pension plans, health care and hospitals.

"As a litigation service provider for law firms, we have found that our clients' top legal challenge in today's economy has been to minimize their spending throughout the entire litigation process without

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# Welcome New Members

Companies, organizations and individuals join NRBP for a host of good reasons – business development, peer-to-peer networking, business information, community interaction and public policy advocacy among them. The following are new members since the last issue. Please give serious consideration to using a member company for products and services that you require. To see the entire membership directory, please go to [www.newarkrbp.org](http://www.newarkrbp.org).

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**Reliable Van & Storage Company, Inc.**  
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**Safe Shredding LLC**  
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## NRBP STAFF

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## Connections

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For membership details, please contact Lorraine Gretchen, Membership Services Coordinator at (973) 242-4228.

## Law Trends *(continued from page 1)*



jeopardizing the outcome of the case,” said Catherine Kane, vice president of operations at **Rosenberg & Associates, Inc.** “With the escalating cost of litigation, we examine the methods and platforms that the law firm has in place to litigate and determine if it has been effective. If it isn’t, we provide the law

firm with expert solutions to minimize cost and time to effectively support their case.”

John D. Goldsmith, partner at **Buchanan, Ingersoll & Rooney, P.C.** commented, “Certainly



all major law firms are facing challenges from the economy. We are proactively taking steps to manage our own expenses and stick to our budgets. Our goal, first and foremost, is to continue delivering value to our clients by providing top-notch legal counsel and regulatory advice as efficiently and effectively as possible.”

Agnes I. Rymer, member of the firm at **Saiber LLC** noted, “We have cut back on discretionary spending, particularly in the area of internal firm events. Our accounting department is making an effort to send bills out in a more timely fashion and is keeping a closer eye on receivables. In addition, the firm has implemented some best business



practices including reducing staff overtime.” Ms. Rymer stated, “The firm has not made significant changes with regard to expanding or contracting the range of legal services we provide, however, we have seen natural increases in certain areas and decreases in others over the past 6-8 months.”

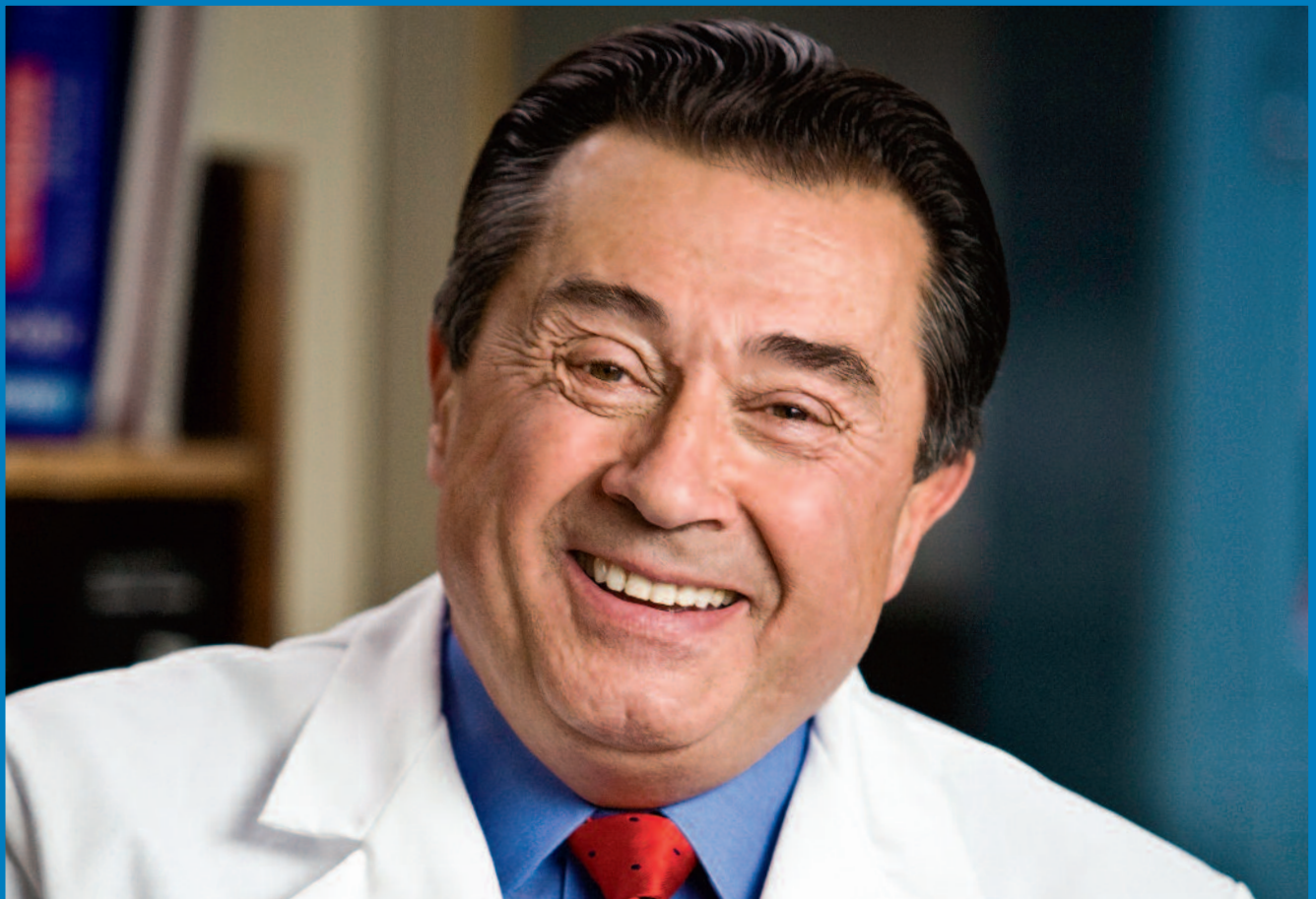
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“As a full-service law firm, we are able to expand certain practices while others might contract during recessionary periods. For example, we have an extraordinary group of bankruptcy and creditors rights’ lawyers who are able to represent clients that have been adversely affected in this downturn, either directly or in their capacity as creditors of troubled companies. This also enables our transaction lawyers to remain busy despite the lack of activity in the capital markets,” said Mr. Goldsmith.

The current economic climate has also caused some firms to consider the plight of those who have fallen on hard times. Ms. Rymer noted, “In a direct response to the current economic climate, the firm has initiated a pro bono program asking each associate to do at least one small pro bono matter per year through the ReLeSe Program in Newark or the Pro Bono Criminal Appeals program through the New Jersey courts.”

Despite these challenges, law firms still see the glass as half full rather than half empty, as these members demonstrate. The most successful have been able to be proactive in adjusting their marketing strategies and serving their clients’ changing needs.



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*Dr. Eugene Cheslock, MD  
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The Horizon Foundation for New Jersey supports health centers throughout the state giving the uninsured access to health care. Greater access. Better health. Lower health care costs for New Jersey. To learn more, visit [www.MakingHealthcareWork.com](http://www.MakingHealthcareWork.com).



*The Horizon Foundation for New Jersey*

## MEMBER CORNER

If you have expertise you would like to share with members, please call (973) 242-4229 for rates and specifications.

### The Newark Bears Are Back!

#### Major League Talent at Minor League Prices at Bears & Eagles Riverfront Stadium

This season, under new ownership, the Newark Bears hit the field with new manager and former Major League All-Star, **Tim Raines**, and a star-studded player roster. The impressive Bears team boasts 15 players who have major league experience totaling 100 seasons. Eleven of the position players have reached the big leagues during their career for a combined total of all or part of 80 seasons. Four of the pitchers have reached the big leagues during their career for a combined total of all or part of 20 seasons. The 2009 season of baseball in Newark is sure to be an exciting one.

In addition to its commitment to the team, the new ownership's great commitment to the community has been expressed through the Bears' "I'm In!" campaign. The campaign is a simple yet strong proclamation of engagement with community organizations, local youth, charities, and the people of Newark.

The Bears commitment to the community can also be seen in the extraordinary line-up of entertainment designed to offer a truly memorable time for guests. Opening weekend, May 1-3, featured special performances and appearances by Patti LaBelle, General Colin Powell, Tino Martinez, Richie McDonald, Col. Jack Jacobs, and singer Nikko Smith. Music lovers will want to check out the Songfest Saturdays Choir Competition, which provides Newark choirs the chance to showcase their talents each Saturday home game beginning May 23, and compete for a \$10,000 grand prize! More special events and theme nights are posted on [www.newarkbears.com](http://www.newarkbears.com). For the ultimate fan experience, guests of the 6200-seat Bears & Eagles Riverfront Stadium will enjoy new concessions, remodeled luxury suites, a boardwalk area for the kids, and resident mascots Ruppert and Effa.

Whether it is a family night out, a corporate hospitality event, a client appreciation outing, or a birthday party, Bears & Eagles Riverfront Stadium delivers baseball fun and excitement for all. Regular and box seat tickets are only \$10 each! To purchase individual or group tickets, please call the Bears Box Office at 1-888-85-BEARS.



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# Member NEWS

**KS Engineers, P.C.**, a MBE/SBE/DBE engineering firm which provides civil/structural engineering, traffic & transportation engineering, land surveying, landscape architecture and construction management/inspection services, has announced the recent addition of Bruce Connor, P.E. as vice president and director of operations. Mr. Connor is a licensed professional engineer and brings more than 40 years of experience to KSE.

**NJIT** announced that civil engineering professor and former provost Priscilla Nelson was inducted into the inaugural class of the Academy of Geo-Professionals. This academy was established by the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE). Dr. Nelson is also a former president and lifetime member of the Geo-Institute of ASCE.

**Rutgers University** history professor Annette Gordon-Reed was awarded the 2009 Pulitzer Prize in history for her landmark work, *The Hemingses of Monticello: An American Family* (W.W. Norton, 2008). The history Pulitzer which carries a \$10,000 prize is awarded for a "distinguished and appropriately documented book on the history of the United States."

**Sills Cummis & Gross P.C.** announced that David L. Cook has joined the firm's Newark office as counsel to its litigation practice group. Mr. Cook received a J.D. from Cornell Law School, where he was an editor of the Cornell Law Review, and an A.B. from Cornell University.

**Newark Public Radio, Inc. (WBGO-FM)** which serves the NY/NJ metropolitan area with mainstream jazz, blues, news and public affairs programming received a My Source Community Impact Award for Engagement from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB). The award recognizes stations for their commitment and responsiveness to their communities, providing innovative services on-air, online, and in person.

Congratulations to the following NRBP member companies who were honored at NJBIZ's 2009 Best Places to Work in New Jersey Ceremony: **American Cancer Society; Deloitte LLP; Gibbons P.C.; Maser Consulting P.A.; Porzio, Bromberg & Newman, P.C.; Weiser LLP; and Wiss & Company, LLP.** The awards program is open to all for-profit and nonprofit companies in the state. The initiative is designed to honor companies in New Jersey that show a dedication to their employees' growth and quality of life.

The National Association of Industrial and Office Parks (NAIOP) recently announced office elections. Michael Seeve, president, **Mountain Development Corp.** became an officer while the following members were elected to the board of trustees: Clark Machemer of **Rockefeller Group Development Corp.** and Seena Stein of **Newmark Knight Frank.**

*To submit your organization's member news, please send an email to [msteinberg@newarkrbp.org](mailto:msteinberg@newarkrbp.org)*

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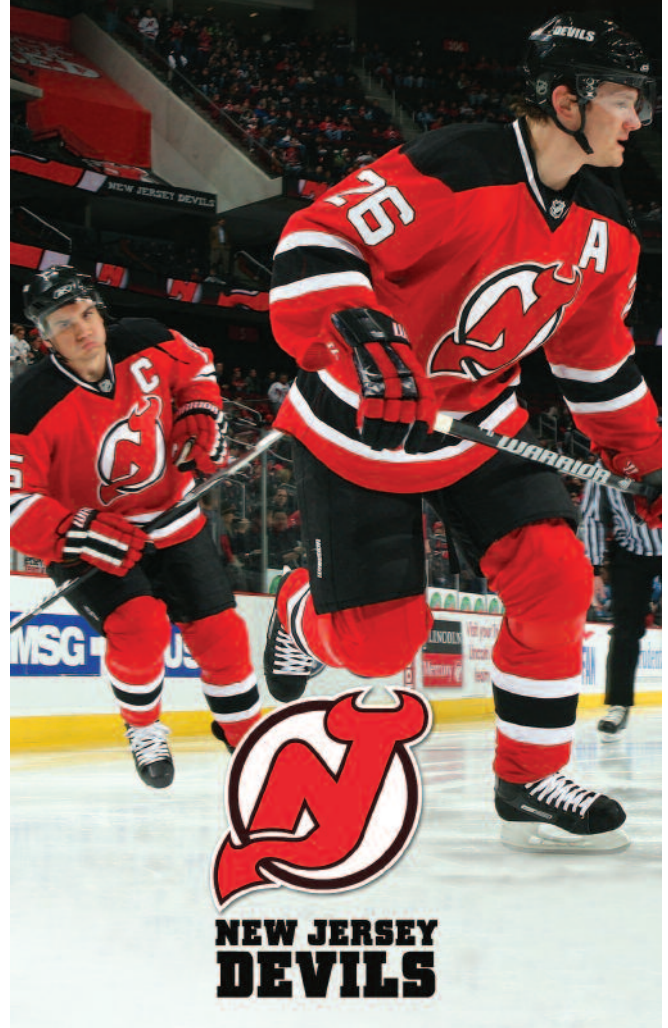
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# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## JUNE — JULY 2009

- June 4** Eye Opener featuring Mark Alexander, Seton Hall Law School Professor and Former Senior Advisor, Obama Campaign
- June 12** Brown Bag Lunch: "Keep You & Your Workforce Healthy"
- June 17** Newark Insiders Forum featuring Newark Mayor Cory Booker and Police Director Garry McCarthy
- July 22** Let's Do Lunch at Theater Square Grill
- July 23** Jazz in the Garden, The Newark Museum

For more detailed information or to register for NRB's events, please visit [www.newarkrbp.org](http://www.newarkrbp.org). Credit cards accepted.

**\*\*Event Date and Topic Subject to Change\*\***

If you are interested in sponsoring an event in 2009, please call Barbara E. Kauffman at (973) 242-4219 or send an e-mail to [bkauffman@newarkrbp.org](mailto:bkauffman@newarkrbp.org)

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