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40 Under 40



Shari Blecher

Firm: Lieberman & Blecher, *Princeton*

Born: 1973

Education: State University of New York at Binghamton, B.A., magna cum laude, 1995; Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law, Yeshiva University, J.D., 1998

Primary Practice Areas: Environmental law; toxic torts; real estate; land use.

Highlights: Blecher co-founded her firm at age 27 with Stuart Lieberman, a fellow veteran of the now-defunct Goldshore & Wolf. She focuses her practice on the areas of MTBE contamination and coal-tar contamination, much of it on behalf of neighborhood and community groups. Teaming with the California firm of Masry & Vititoe, Blecher represents 100 Bayville homeowners in a federal suit against Chevron Corp. over alleged MTBE contamination of ground water. Blecher and the California firm are also representing plaintiffs in another MTBE contamination case against Exxon-Mobil Corp. by about 100 residents of Liberty, N.Y.

Editor's Note

The biographies that follow are of 40 young lawyers in the state we think are worth watching, not only for what they have achieved so far in their careers but more so for the potential they show to be among the leaders of the New Jersey bar in the next decade.

The attorneys chosen represent a broad spectrum of the bar, covering an array of practice areas. Some are litigators and some are devoted to transactional and compliance-oriented areas. What all have in common is that they have distinguished themselves early in their professional lives and promise more of the same.

We chose the lawyers ourselves. In determining the list, we looked at such indicators as achievement in practice areas; recognition by peers and professional organizations; leadership in bar groups; membership in merit-based associations; and records of lectures and publications.

We favored lawyers who have become leaders in their own firms at a young age. Many are partners at the state's largest firms, but some are from smaller ones. The size of the firm was not a criterion for selection.

Any qualitative list is necessarily subjective, and there are doubtless numerous young attorneys who have yet to gain public attention. As we repeat this selection in future years, they may be chosen. But for now, the 40 lawyers listed are well qualified to carry the distinction.

– Ronald J. Fleury
Editor-in-Chief

