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For Immediate Release

Locke Lord's Volunteer Work with Chicago Youth Recognized with Just The Beginning Foundation Diversity Partnership Award

(CHICAGO) August 15, 2012 – International law firm Locke Lord and its Chicago office will be honored next month with the Just the Beginning Foundation (JTBF) Diversity Partnership Award for its mentorship programs and volunteer work with Chicago area middle school students to foster interest in the legal profession and careers in law.

The award will be presented during the September 22 "Reaching Back, Lifting Up 2012" gala dinner, which will be held at the Marriott Magnificent Mile. The award honors the work of Locke Lord attorneys and staff in Chicago for their "commitment to diversity, to education, and to the mission and vision of Just The Beginning Foundation."

Locke Lord attorneys have worked with JTBF for several years and most recently hosted approximately 95 middle school students at the Firm's Chicago office for a mock client interview exercise in which attorneys played the roles of clients coming in for an initial interview. The students acted as lawyers in the exercise, which is one of several pipeline programs that introduce legal concepts to diverse students and plant the seed that the legal profession is attainable for students of all backgrounds. The programs also encourage networking and continued interaction and mentorship from Locke Lord professionals.

Dozens of Locke Lord attorneys and staff volunteered their time to participate in JTBF's summer camps over the years by hosting panel discussions and other legal programs through JTBF, a nonprofit organization comprised of lawyers, judges and other citizens who are dedicated to developing and nurturing interest in the law among youth from diverse socioeconomic, ethnic and cultural backgrounds. The group's ultimate goal is to increase racial diversity in the legal profession and on the bench.

"Our Chicago attorneys and staff look forward to working with our students, and everyone – from Partners and Associates to paralegals and summer clerks – helps out," said Locke Lord Partner Ernesto R. Palomo, head of Chicago's Diversity Committee. "We want these young children to know that there are opportunities out there, and that the legal profession is a fascinating and challenging career choice – and one that is open to all of them. We'll continue to work with JTBF and deeply appreciate the recognition."



This year's JTBF 2012 Twentieth Anniversary Biennial conference, from September 20-22, will include several opportunities to see and listen to U.S. Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor, who will meet with student leaders and participate in a Town Hall meeting with Judge Ann Claire Williams, the first judge of color appointed to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit and co-founder of JTBF. Numerous local, state and federal judges, law school professors, lawyers and general counsels will serve on panels during the three-day conference.

Locke Lord LLP consistently ranks among *American Lawyer's* top 100 U.S. law firms. The Firm's full range of practice and industry areas serve national and international clients from offices in Atlanta, Austin, Chicago, Dallas, Hong Kong, Houston, London, Los Angeles, New Orleans, New York, Sacramento, San Francisco and Washington, D.C. It has an excellent reputation in complex litigation, regulatory and transactional work, with its 650-plus lawyers building collaborative relationships and crafting creative solutions – all designed and executed to meet clients' long-term strategic goals.

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