

A group of business professionals, including men in suits and women in blouses, are seen from behind, looking towards a bright yellow sky. The background is a city street at night with blurred light trails from traffic and illuminated buildings.

40 under FORTY

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2010

40 under FORTY 2010

Success at any age is impressive. But to achieve it at an early age is even more of a feat.

Each year, the 40 Under Forty Committee at Law Bulletin Publishing Company sift through hundreds of nomination forms to select 40 of the most talented young attorneys working in Illinois. This publication is the result of this work.

This is the eleventh consecutive year that we have produced this edition. This year, it seemed the competition was more intense than ever. We received more than 900 nominations for attorneys through out Illinois.

What does it take to earn recognition as one of the best young lawyers in the state? Intelligence, passion, success in the office, a desire to help community, and, most importantly, a willingness to work hard at one of the country's most important professions.

Putting together this issue is no easy task. We solicited nominations from across the state. We then worked with our nominated attorneys in fine tuning their profiles. The results, we hope, offer both an entertaining and educational read.

Adam Hrejsa
40 Under Forty

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Law Bulletin Publishing Company
415 North State Street
Chicago, Illinois 60654
www.LawBulletin.com

Legal Advertising Team

Michael S. Loquercio
Advertising Sales Manager
312.644.4604
MLoquercio@LBPC.com

Kelly L. Henigan
Account Executive
312.644.4034
KHenigan@LBPC.com

Adam Hrejsa
Account Executive
312.644.2942
AHrejsa@LBPC.com

Andy Shaw
Creative Director
312.644.7121
AShaw@LBPC.com

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Michael F. Bonamarte IV a personal injury lawyer at Levin & Perconti, is achieving success at a young age. He already has won millions in verdicts and settlements

G. Grant Dixon of the Dixon Law Offices in LaGrange, Illinois calls Bonamarte, "A shining star in a difficult business."

In several cases, Bonamarte, 31, has won \$1 million or more for clients. One verdict handed \$2.9 million to the family of a 57-year-old woman who'd died from suffocation due to a nursing home's negligent care of her tracheostomy tube. After the trial, the defendants settled for \$3.6 million, the additional payment representing attorney's fees under the Nursing Home Care Act. The case, which Bonamarte handled with senior partner Steven Levin, was Bonamarte's first jury trial.

In another case brought by Bonamarte, a woman died from complications after developing 23 pressure sores and multiple infections while living at an assisted-living facility in Chicago. The case ended with her family receiving a \$2.3 million settlement.

"It is rare to find a young attorney with the abilities and depth of experience that Mike possesses," Steven Levin says. "Despite his age, Mike possesses advanced trial preparation and trial advocacy skills that make him an integral part of our litigation team. There is no aspect of the trial process that Mike cannot confidently handle."

Bonamarte also gets high marks from judges he has appeared before. "He is always extremely well-prepared and is a true expert in this area of law," one judge says, asking to remain anonymous. "These cases are hard to try, and he had an excellent result for his client." "He thoroughly works up his cases," another judge says. "Michael is tenacious when it comes to discovery."

"He is genuinely concerned with the clients he represents, feeling their pain, understanding their misery and ... compensating them as best he can," says Leonard F. Amari of Amari & Locallo. Amari says Bonamarte has succeeded in these cases because of his work ethic. "Rarely is there an early evening or weekend when Michael is not working on files, preparing for depositions, and putting 100 percent of his heart and soul into his being an outstanding contributor to the firm," Amari says.

The ability to relate to people plays a big role in achieving success in the practice area of personal injury law. Those who have seen Bonamarte at work say his personal touch with clients is a big reason for his success. "Mike is way beyond his years in his approach to the litigation practice," says another lawyer who knows Bonamarte, James D. Spiros of Spiros & Wall. "Not only does he have excellent technical skills, but he has what I consider to be an important intangible — he has the ability to relate well to his clients."

Bonamarte's father was also an attorney. After the elder Bonamarte unexpectedly died from a stroke in 2006, the son founded the Michael F. Bonamarte III Foundation to raise awareness and money for stroke prevention and research. "He was a good role model for Michael, who is following in his footsteps," says family friend Donald C. Schiller, senior partner at Schiller DuCanto & Fleck. "The bond between father and son was strong."

When he is not working on behalf of his clients, Bonamarte mentors law students at John Marshall Law School, where he earned his law degree in 2005. Bonamarte also writes a regular column for the Justinian Society Newsletter, and he has given speeches to seminars sponsored by the Illinois Trial Lawyers Association, the Chicago Bar Association, the Illinois Institute of Continuing Legal Education, the National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys, as well as several senior citizen groups in the Chicago land area.



MICHAEL F. BONAMARTE

AGE
31

LAW SCHOOL
**JOHN MARSHALL
LAW SCHOOL**

AREA OF PRACTICE
**PERSONAL INJURY,
NURSING HOME NEGLECT,
MEDICAL MALPRACTICE**

Levin & Perconti
325 N. LaSalle Street, Suite 450
Chicago, IL 60654
T 312.332.2872

*"A shining star
in a difficult business."*

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LEVIN & PERCONTI CONGRATULATES

MICHAEL F. BONAMARTE IV

FOR BEING SELECTED AS A 2010
"40 UNDER FORTY" HONOREE.

We proudly recognize Mike's contributions to our practice, his commitment to the community and his achievements for our clients.

\$2.9 million nursing home neglect verdict (\$3.6 million post-verdict settlement)

\$2.3 million nursing home pressure sore settlement

\$1.25 million medical malpractice settlement

\$1.06 million nursing home choking death settlement

\$750,000 hospital pressure sore settlement

\$700,000 record Coles County nursing home settlement

If your clients have personal injury or wrongful death matters that fall outside the scope of your practice, contact us to discuss how we can work with you.

Levin & Perconti

325 North LaSalle Street, Suite 450

Chicago, Illinois 60654

Tel | 312.332.2872

Fax | 312.332.3112

www.levinperconti.com

blog.levinperconti.com

medicalmalpractice.levinperconti.com