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**MU School of Law Selects Polsinelli’s Cortney Mendenhall for Top Honor**

*Cortney Mendenhall chosen for Distinguished Recent Graduate Award and will be honored April 25, 2014 at the MU School of Law.*

**Kansas City, Mo** (April 21, 2014) The University of Missouri School of Law selected Polsinelli’s Cortney E. Mendenhall as its 2014 recipient of the Distinguished Recent Graduate Award. Mendenhall is a shareholder in the firm’s Life Sciences Practice who focuses on concept to market issues for startup and technology companies, among others. Her recent client results include representing a specialty pharmaceutical company in its $100 million sale to a publicly held company. In addition, she is very active in mentoring law students and entrepreneurs.

“Cortney is a great role model for our more recent graduates because of her dedication to the practice of law, her professionalism and collegiality, and her willingness to help train the next generation of law students,” said University of Missouri School of Law Dean Gary Myers.

“As a Columbia native, and rabid fan of both the University and the law school, I am very touched and honored to receive this award,” said Mendenhall who earned her law degree from the MU School of Law in 2005. “My law school education provided me with a solid foundation which has helped me to excel in the career I have today.”

Mendenhall is involved in two different mentoring programs both aimed at helping others succeed. She’s part of a tearm of attorneys at Polsinelli who provide oversight and supervision to law students who assist startup companies with appropriate legal work. Together with the Missouri Innovation Center (MIC) and the the University of Missouri School of Law, they have created an externship program to provide valuable resources to startups just getting off the ground and to expose law students to experience with corporate and transactional matters. Most traditional externship programs are focused on litigation.

“This has been a very successful program that helps startup businesses in the area, while also offering students practical experience in client representation,” said Dean Gary Myers.

In addition, Mendenhall serves on the Executive Committee of the Women’s Capital Connection (WCC) which is a regional network of accredited angel investors dedicated to identifying and funding the most promising start-up business opportunities in the region. The Women’s Capital Connection officially launched in January 2008 with 33 founding investors committed to investing in women-led ventures in the Midwest. Since 2008, 82 women investors have been involved in supporting angel investing and 300 women-led ventures have inquired about angel funding, with 61 companies moving forward for investor presentations. To date, nine companies have received funding, with nearly $2 million dollars contributed to the region.

Specifically, in her practice at Polsinelli, Mendenhall focuses on the life sciences sector including human health, animal health, and the biosciences industry. She has nearly ten years of experience representing companies in obtaining financing, mergers and acquisitions, joint ventures, licensing and strategic transactions. To see her full bio, [click here](http://www.polsinelli.com/professionals/cmendenhall).

“I thoroughly enjoy what I do for clients each day and feel that I am making a difference in the lives of others,” said Mendenhall. “In addition to my client work, it is deeply rewarding to mentor the law students and assist the next generation of entrepreneurs.”

**About Polsinelli**

real challenges. real answers.SMPolsinelli is a first generation law firm serving corporations, institutions, entrepreneurs and individuals nationally.   Our attorneys successfully build enduring client relationships by providing practical legal counsel infused with business insight, and with a passion for understanding how to assist General Counsel and CEOs achieve their objectives. Polsinelli is ranked 18th in number of U.S. partners\* and has more than 700 attorneys in 18 offices.  Polsinelli was profiled in the June 2013 issue of [*The American Lawyer*](http://sftp.polsinelli.com/files/upload/ArticleAMLPolsinelli2013.pdf) as the fastest-growing law firm in America over a five-year period. The firm focuses on healthcare, financial services, real estate, life sciences and technology, energy and business litigation, and has depth of experience in 100 service areas and 70 industries.  The firm can be found online at [*www.polsinelli.com*](http://www.polsinelli.com/). Polsinelli PC. In California, Polsinelli LLP.

\*Law360, March 2014