

## **New Counsel Hires Expand Alston & Bird's Financial Services Offerings in Washington, D.C. and New York**

### **Christina A. LaVera and Martin A. Hewitt Bring Extensive Regulatory Experience to Firm's Financial Services & Products Group**

**WASHINGTON, D.C. – February 25, 2010** – The national law firm Alston & Bird LLP today announced the addition of two new counsel to its Financial Services & Products group. Christina A. LaVera and Martin A. Hewitt joined the firm's Washington, D.C. and New York offices respectively, where they will provide a full range of support on bank and financial regulatory matters and advise a variety of Alston & Bird's clients.

“In this new era where Wall Street is heavily influenced by regulatory activity, the addition of these experienced lawyers will compliment Alston & Bird's financial services offerings,” said Mark McElreath, leader of Alston & Bird's Financial Services and Products group. “Their mix of governmental, corporate and law firm experience in handling sophisticated and complicated regulatory matters in the financial services arena will greatly serve our clients' ability to succeed in today's continually changing financial climate.”

Ms. LaVera brings significant in-house experience to Alston & Bird's Washington, D.C. office having previously served as Associate General Counsel to Sallie Mae and Associate General Counsel to E\*TRADE Financial Corporation where she provided counsel on a range of banking matters and managed the regulatory aspects of new product development and new lines of business. She also brings a wealth of financial regulatory experience during her time working at the D.C. offices of two law firms, Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP and Mayer, Brown, Rowe & Maw LLP. Ms. LaVera received her J.D. from the Washington College of Law at American University.

Mr. Hewitt joins Alston & Bird's New York office after working for several law firms including Lowenstein Sandler PC, Cadwalader, Wickersham & Taft LLP <<http://www.cadwalader.com/>> and Simpson Thacher & Bartlett LLP, where he handled a wide-range of corporate finance issues including FINRA compliance and mortgage-backed securities. Mr. Hewitt currently serves as chair of the CLE & Publications Subcommittee of the American Bar Association (ABA) Section of Business Law Committee on State Regulation and Securities and is the editor of *The Blue Sky Bugle*, which is published by the ABA. He also serves as co-chair of the ABA Subcommittee on The National Securities Markets Improvement Act (NSMIA). Mr. Hewitt received his J.D. from Seton Hall University School of Law.

Alston & Bird's Financial Services and Products Group is devoted to providing the sophisticated services that major financial services companies require in today's complex marketplace. The firm represents some of the largest U.S. banks, insurance companies and investment firms on a variety of regulatory and transactional matters including securities offerings, corporate governance concerns and strategic mergers and alliances.