

Contact:

Robin Wagge
Rubenstein Associates
212-843-8006
rwagge@rubenstein.com

**DEBEVOISE PARTNER DONALD FRANCIS DONOVAN HONORED WITH
MEXICAN GOVERNMENT'S ORDER OF THE AZTEC EAGLE AND
MEXICAN BAR ASSOCIATION'S NATIONAL JURISPRUDENCE PRIZE**

New York – December 14, 2006 – Donald Francis Donovan, a partner in the Litigation Department of Debevoise & Plimpton LLP, has been honored with the Mexican Order of the Aztec Eagle, the highest award bestowed on foreigners by the Mexican government, in recognition of Mr. Donovan's pro bono efforts on behalf of Mexican nationals on death row in the United States. He has also been honored with the Mexican Bar Association's 2006 Premio Nacional de Jurisprudencia (National Jurisprudence Prize), presented for the first time in its 18-year history to a non-Mexican, in recognition of his achievements in international arbitration and international human rights, and especially his work on behalf of Mexican nationals on death row.

In January 2003, representing the Government of Mexico, Mr. Donovan brought *Avena and other Mexican Nationals (Mexico v. United States of America)* in the International Court of Justice, which ruled that in 51 of the 52 cases, the U.S. had violated the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, which guarantees foreign nationals the right to contact with their own country's consulate when detained. Since then, Mr. Donovan has sought to implement that decision in the U.S. In one case, *Medellín v. Dretke*, Mr. Donovan sought compliance with *Avena* at the U.S. Supreme Court, and after President Bush intervened to direct that the U.S. would comply, the Supreme Court effectively referred the case to the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals. That Court held recently that President Bush did not have the constitutional authority to direct that the U.S. would comply, and Mr. Donovan will shortly seek Supreme Court review of that decision.

In a ceremony at the Consulate General of Mexico in New York on November 30, Ambassador Ramón Xilotl Ramírez presented Mr. Donovan with the rank of "venera" by the Mexican Order of the Aztec Eagle, bestowed by then-President Vicente Fox in recognition of Mr. Donovan's "unyielding commitment to the defense of Mexican nationals."

In a separate ceremony in Mexico City on December 7, Mexican Bar Association President Fabián Aguinaco Bravo presented Mr. Donovan with the 2006 Premio Nacional de Jurisprudencia for his dedication to fulfilling "the mission of legal and judicial service to others" and "for his excellent performance in representing Mexico."

"By reaching out beyond the members of the Mexican bar to present an American lawyer with your highest honor, you have confirmed the importance of the rule of law in the international sphere and, equally, of the importance of individual lawyers in promoting the rule of law, on behalf of the poor and powerless as well as the privileged, a

commitment that crosses boundaries,” Mr. Donovan said in receiving the award. “I was performing precisely the role that any lawyer, in any society committed to the rule of law, should perform,” he said.

Martin Frederic Evans, the presiding partner of Debevoise & Plimpton, said “We congratulate Donald for these extraordinary acknowledgments by the Mexican Government and the Mexican Bar Association. Donald’s leadership role in what has been a long and complex course of litigation reflects his and the firm’s commitment to use the skill of our lawyers to work for justice on a pro bono basis in both domestic and international matters.”

Donald Francis Donovan is a partner in the Litigation Department of Debevoise & Plimpton LLP. He concentrates his practice in international disputes before courts in the U.S., international arbitration tribunals, and international courts. He has been widely recognized as one of the world’s leading international arbitration practitioners and, earlier this year, with fellow Debevoise partner David W. Rivkin, was awarded the first “Chambers Award of Excellence in International Arbitration.”

Debevoise has long participated in a broad range of pro bono legal services, involving all practice areas. Consistently ranking among the top firms for its pro bono efforts, Debevoise was named a recipient of the American Bar Association’s 2006 Pro Bono Publico Award. 2006 also marked the third consecutive year in which Debevoise ranked first in *The American Lawyer*’s “A-List,” a nationwide ranking of law firms based upon pro bono performance, associate satisfaction, revenue per lawyer and diversity.

Debevoise & Plimpton LLP is a leading international law firm, with a wide range of clients around the world. Founded in 1931, the firm has offices in New York, Washington, D.C., London, Paris, Frankfurt, Moscow, Hong Kong and Shanghai. The firm now has over 650 lawyers, including more than 135 lawyers in Europe. For more information, please visit www.debevoise.com.

###