

FOR: Illinois Bar Foundation

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News Release

Bloomington Attorney Speaks at Illinois Bar Foundation Gala to Give Back

BLOOMINGTON, IL, November 21, 2017 –Jessica Jones, Associate Attorney at Ogar & Miller in Bloomington, Illinois and a Warren Lupel Lawyers Care Fund beneficiary, shared her family’s story to a room of over 400 of her peers at the Illinois Bar Foundation’s (IBF) 19th annual Gala on October 20 at the Four Seasons in Chicago.

After suffering some complications during her pregnancy, Jessica’s son, Wyatt, was born 8 weeks prematurely. Right before being discharged at 3 ½ weeks old, Wyatt contracted a life-threatening blood infection, creating severe complications that required him to be airlifted to specialists in Philadelphia. Doctors there were successfully able to treat her son and the family was able to return home. With Wyatt healthy, Jessica and her partner’s focus now shifted to their overdue bills, outstanding familial loans and the \$1.6 million hospital bill from Philadelphia. “This was 108 days after I initially entered the hospital and I was only beginning to comprehend the financial disaster that all of this had caused,” Jessica recalls in her speech.

A close colleague then told her about the IBF’s Lawyers Care Fund. She submitted an application, had an interview, and was approved for funding. “I can’t begin to express how grateful I am for that assistance. It came at a time when we needed it most and allowed us to catch up enough to feel like we could see the light at the end of the tunnel. Our family will be forever grateful for the generosity of the [Illinois] Bar Foundation and its wonderful donors. Without you, I’m not sure where our family would be right now but I absolutely know that we would not be thriving as we are now.” stated Jessica.

Although Jessica felt conflicted at first about applying, she has felt the compassion and support of Illinois’ community of lawyers. “I’m proud to be part of a profession that helps its members when we suffer a hardship or a tragedy. I will forever be grateful and as soon as we are completely back on our feet, I intend to continue to advocate for the Lawyer’s Care Fund and I hope to be able to repay the generosity that was bestowed upon me many times over.” concluded Jessica just before receiving a standing ovation.

Jessica Jones is 1 of 16 recipients of the IBF’s Warren Lupel Lawyers Care Fund this year. The IBF distributes approximately \$100,000 in varying amounts to attorneys and their families in need throughout the State.

Since 1951, a fundamental part of the mission of the IBF has been to provide aid to attorneys and their families who, because of age, illness or disability, can no longer support themselves. The Warren Lupel Lawyers Care Fund, a unique statewide fund named for past IBF President Warren Lupel, provides financial aid to deserving members of the Illinois Bar and their families in order to maintain modest but reasonable standards of living during times of need. The typical recipient

has had a major medical or mental health crisis that prevents them from earning income, with the related medical expenses often depleting savings and making maintaining a reasonable standard of living nearly impossible.

This fiscal year, the IBF will distribute over \$820,000 in funding to ensure meaningful access to the justice system, especially for those with limited means and to support attorneys and their families who have fallen on hard times. The Illinois Bar Foundation, the charitable arm of the Illinois State Bar Association, is located at 20 S. Clark St., Suite 910, Chicago, IL 60603. For a confidential discussion or to request an application call (312) 726-6072 or email IBFinfo@isba.org.

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