

3 June 2013

LGBT Bar Association  
1301 K Street, NW  
Suite 1100 East Tower  
Washington, DC 20005  
USA

**Nomination for Best LGBT Lawyers Under 40**

To whom it may concern:

I write this letter in support of the nomination of Aaron Tidman to receive an award for being one of the Best LGBT Lawyers Under 40. I am a senior partner at Debevoise & Plimpton LLP and I had the pleasure of working with Aaron in our firm's Washington, DC office on a number of matters from 2007 until I relocated to the firm's London office in 2011. Aaron was an exceptional associate and is a superb lawyer and he unquestionably deserves recognition of the kind your award will bestow.

I worked with Aaron on an important federal securities fraud class action on behalf of a well-known videogame company in connection with which Aaron performed some of his first work at the firm. This consisted of research and writing sections of a motion to dismiss. Aaron immediately distinguished himself as driven, focused, creative and thoughtful – characteristics which frequently appear in ones and twos in young associates, but rarely all together. Aaron brought a level of intensity and hunger to his work from the outset which helped to distinguish him from the other fine associates we had and which made him from that case forward one of my top go-to associates. The quality of his writing was exceptional, and he relished brainstorming and was able to make contributions to that process at a remarkably early stage.

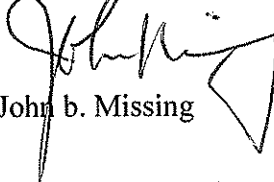
The next significant project Aaron assisted on was our representation of the audit committee of Siemens AG in what is still the largest internal investigation in world corporate history. Here, Aaron assisted on an incredibly important aspect of the engagement involving reporting to the World Bank's Integrity department (and corresponding departments at other multilateral banks). Aaron once again distinguished himself as hard-working, hugely intelligent and creative.

Aaron also went on to assist in connection with the defense of multiple individuals in SEC enforcement matters and became a regular author of an internal newsletter concerning securities litigation developments. In all of these matters, Aaron's characteristic strong work-ethic, attention to detail, enthusiasm and creative energy were consistently and always in evidence.

Finally, Aaron's largest and in many ways most important contribution was his leading role in the firm's representation of multiple detainees held at Guantanamo Bay, a matter that I have led at the firm since the early 2000's. Debevoise has represented four detainees over the years, assisting in securing the release of one; the others remain imprisoned. Aaron became the lead associate in these matters, spending untold hours at the government's numbingly dreary and technologically challenging "Secure Facility" pouring over documents and writing briefs. Many associates came and went on these Guantanamo cases, but Aaron remained a stalwart and could always be counted upon to volunteer when an emergency application was needed. In many ways this was (and is) unrewarding work because the DC Circuit, which has exclusive jurisdiction over all detainee litigation appeals, has been very dismissive of the claims and requests presented by lawyers for the detainees. And yet the pro bono work performed by lawyers such as Aaron is also one of – and perhaps at this point the only – redeeming feature of this dark chapter in US legal history. When the account of this era is written from a point of sufficient perspective, the work of lawyers like Aaron, often associates at large law firms, will surely be highlighted as representing the best that the American legal tradition has to offer. As Aaron knows all too well, the demands placed on him at Debevoise by clients and partners to do billable client work require an impressive amount of stamina. To handle the demands of such work as incredibly ably as Aaron did, and to then have the energy and desire to spend many more hours working on the Guantanamo matters, speaks volumes about Aaron's commitment to the practice and the value he places on the importance of public service. The Guantanamo cases regularly involved matters of first impression as well as the challenge of a factual record in many ways controlled by the adversary; communication with the clients was uniquely difficult; the reviewing court was hostile; and the adversary, even after the election of President Obama, relentlessly uncharitable and seemingly mean-spirited. Aaron continued in this work for far longer than other associates – in fact up until he left the firm – and was a critically important contributor to the few small victories that we were able to obtain for our clients. Aaron's work on the Guantanamo cases is a textbook example – both in terms of the amount of work and the quality of work – of lawyers assisting those who are most vulnerable and unable to protect themselves. Add to this the fact that the Guantanamo detainees are politically controversial and the value of the work performed by Aaron moves into the highest category.

I wholeheartedly support the nomination of Aaron Tidman for this important award and would be happy to answer questions about him or this letter.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John b. Missing". The signature is stylized with a large, looped "J" and a trailing flourish.

John b. Missing