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Quarles partner joins 'green' non-profit

By Jerry Crimmins
Law Bulletin staff writer

A Quarles & Brady LLP partner who has just been named to the board of directors of Keep Chicago Beautiful believes Chicago is "the best city in the country, maybe the world."

"It's beautiful. It's clean. We have flowers. We have trees. It's a very beautiful city," said Janine M. Landow-Esser, 58, an environmental lawyer.

"It's not just the downtown," she said. "It's the neighborhoods. It's everywhere."

"We get so used to the fact that the streets are lined with trees, and then you go somewhere else, and whoa, a tree! One tree."

Landow-Esser, who is from Omaha, has been here 27 years and lives near Montrose Avenue and Lake Michigan.

Keep Chicago Beautiful, a not-for-profit organization, has a variety of beautification and litter prevention activities, including community gardens and "Adopt a Place In Your Neighborhood."

Landow-Esser said its main mission is education, revolving around environmental issues such as recycling and waste



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reduction. Keep Chicago Beautiful has developed curricula for teachers to teach children about environmental issues and trains teachers in this.

"The board supports ongoing refinement of curricula for teachers" and also fund raising to support Keep Chicago Beautiful's mission, Landow-Esser said.

She said the board has at least two other lawyers, Theodore L. Banks of Schoeman, Updike, Kaufman & Scharf; and Renee Cipriano of Schiff, Hardin LLP.

She said Banks, when he was a corporate counsel with Kraft Foods four years ago, asked if Quarles & Brady would host the visit to Chicago of two interns from The Arava Institute for Environmental Studies in Israel, a college-level environmental studies program.

The internship program here for The

Arava Institute is run by Keep Chicago Beautiful.

As a result, Quarles & Brady has hosted two interns each year from Arava for for years now, one Israeli and one from an Arab country.

This relationship led to Landow-Esser joining the board of directors of Keep Chicago Beautiful.

The directorship is unpaid, and Quarles & Brady has agreed to help support the group.

"Chicago does have a reputation of being one of the greenest cities," Landow-Esser said. "I think, in reality, it is. We have more green roofs than any other city and more LEED-certified buildings than any other city." LEED stands for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design.

"It takes the mayor and organizations like Keep Chicago Beautiful and citizens who embrace the movement to keep the city that way," she added.

At Quarles & Brady, Landow-Esser focuses her practice on environmental and OSHA law.

"I've had a lifelong interest" in the environment, she said, "and my private practice includes environmental work and work with clean energy and green buildings. That's one of the reasons why it makes so much sense to join the board" of Keep Chicago Beautiful.

E-mail: jcrimmins@lbpc.com