

**For Immediate Release**

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**Laura Ellsworth Named 2013 ATHENA Award Recipient**

**ATHENA Young Professional Award Recipient is Amiena Mahsoob**

**(PITTSBURGH – September 30, 2013)** The 2013 Greater Pittsburgh ATHENA Award recipient is Laura Ellsworth, partner-in-charge of Pittsburgh office of Jones Day, an international law firm. She was presented with the award – recognizing professional excellence, contributions to the community and mentorship of other women – at the 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual ATHENA Award luncheon at the Westin Convention Center Hotel Pittsburgh, convened by the [Allegheny Conference on Community Development](#).

The award – named after Athena, the Greek goddess of strength and wisdom – is unique among other regional honors for women in business because of its focus on developing the next generation of women leaders through mentorship.

Professionally, Laura manages the daily operations of the firm and supervises 100 lawyers and staff in addition to coordinating and litigating nationwide matters for clients. She has appeared in federal and state courts across the U.S. She has been named in Best Lawyers in America, Chambers and SuperLawyers and has been identified as one of the top female litigators in Pennsylvania by the *Legal Intelligencer*. In 2008, Governor Edward Rendell named her as one of Pennsylvania’s “Best 50 Women in Business.” Laura was appointed to serve on the Local Rules Advisory Committee for the United States District Court for the Western District of Pennsylvania and she is co-chair of the prestigious Federal Judicial Selection Committee for the Western District of Pennsylvania.

Very active in civic and community affairs, Laura serves as vice-chair of the Allegheny Conference on Community Development. She is chair of the Pennsylvania Economy League of Greater Pittsburgh, the Youth Policy Council of the Three Rivers Workforce Investment Board and the United Way Women’s Leadership Council. She also serves on the boards of the Pennsylvania State System for Higher Education, the Pennsylvania Council on Privatization and Innovation, the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, Magee-Womens Research Institute & Foundation, Imani Christian Academy, University of Pittsburgh School of Law Board of Visitors and the McCune Foundation.

“ATHENA award winners, such as Laura, are – by their guidance and influence – preparing the Pittsburgh region’s next generation of female leaders. Uniquely, the ATHENA award recognizes professional women for mentoring and helping other women reach their full leadership potential,” said Allegheny Conference Chief Financial Officer Janel Skelley. “Laura is as passionate about this opportunity as she is about her professional duties, and it’s a privilege to celebrate her lifetime of generous leadership mentoring.”

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The other 2013 finalists, chosen from among 39 nominees, were:

- **Lenore Blum**, distinguished professor, Carnegie Mellon University
- **Terri Bone**, vice president & corporate controller, EQT Corporation
- **Maurita Bryant**, assistant chief, Pittsburgh Bureau of Police
- **Titina Ott**, vice president, business process & systems enablement, Oracle Worldwide Alliance & Channels

Recognizing a women leader age 35 and younger is the ATHENA Young Professional Award. Instituted at last year's luncheon, this award responds to the reality that Pittsburgh's population is trending younger, with more 20- and 30-year olds choosing to live and work here. Among this expanding younger population are women who will be the region's changemakers and leaders of tomorrow. Recognized as one such individual with the 2013 ATHENA Young Professional Award is Amiena Mahsoob, director of education programs, World Affairs Council of Pittsburgh.

Devoted to helping the next generation of leaders develop global perspectives, Amiena – in her professional role – leads the design and implementation of education programming that reaches more than 10,000 middle/high school students and educators. She has also spearheaded the World Affairs Council's use of video-conferencing to connect Pittsburgh students with students around the world to discuss and take action on issues ranging from education to human trafficking – two issues of particular concern for women and girls. She has traveled to 20 countries for work, study and pleasure. In Japan, she bicycled 2,500 miles over the span of two months as part of an educational and eco-cycling team.

Amiena is a graduate of Leadership Pittsburgh, Inc.'s Leadership Development Initiative Class XVII and leads the Circle of Trust, which supports the personal and professional successes of mid-career female leaders. Her community involvement spans numerous organizations including Strong Women, Strong Girls; the New Pittsburgh Collaborative; the YWCA of Greater Pittsburgh; the Pennsylvania Council for International Education; and the Environmental Charter School.

The other 2013 ATHENA Young Professional Award finalists, chosen from among 29 nominees, were:

- **Erin Isler**, director, loan syndications, PNC Capital Markets LLC
- **Marisa Bartley**, business development office, AVP, Citizens Bank

“Our region is privileged to have an abundance of ATHENA-worthy women in leadership – all of whom have far-reaching circles of influence, talents, interests and skills. Even after 23 years, the ATHENA Awards attracted a record number of nominations in 2013. This year's nominees work in corporations, small businesses, nonprofits, healthcare, education and government. Some have started companies or charitable organizations. Individually, their impact is great. Collectively, they're a force,” said 2013 ATHENA Host Committee Chair Beth Marcello.

The Greater Pittsburgh ATHENA Award Program Luncheon maintains its standing as one of the largest stand-alone events of its kind among some 500 presented annually across the globe in affiliation with [ATHENA International](#).

The Greater Pittsburgh ATHENA Award Program is made possible thanks to Presenting Sponsors ESB Bank and UPMC Health Plan, as well as KPMG LLP, the ATHENA Young Professional Award Sponsor. In addition, the following sponsors are thanked for their contributions: Bank of America/Merrill Lynch, Columbia Gas of Pennsylvania, Development Dimensions International, FedEx Ground, Nemaquin Woodlands Resort, The *Pittsburgh Business Times*, *Pittsburgh Magazine*, *Pop City*, WTAE-TV, Bayer Corporation, Buchanan, Ingersoll & Rooney PC, Duquesne Light, Circulatory Centers, Dickie, McCamey & Chilcote, P.C., Fox Rothschild, LLP, Meyer, Unkovic & Scott LLP, Sisterson & Co. LLP, The Ellis School, TiER 1 Performance Solutions and World Affairs Council of Pittsburgh.

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**The Allegheny Conference on Community Development and its Affiliates** – the Greater Pittsburgh Chamber of Commerce, the Pennsylvania Economy League of Greater Pittsburgh and the Pittsburgh Regional Alliance – work in collaboration with public and private sector partners to stimulate economic growth and improve the quality of life in southwestern Pennsylvania. Learn more at [alleghenyconference.org](http://alleghenyconference.org).