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### Introduction: A Tribute to James H.M. Sprayregen

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## **INTRODUCTION: A TRIBUTE TO JAMES H.M. SPRAYREGEN**

Each year, the *Emory Bankruptcy Developments Journal* honors an individual who has significantly affected the field of insolvency and restructuring law with the Distinguished Service Award for Lifetime Achievement. Past recipients of the Distinguished Service Award include: The Honorable William L. Norton, Jr. (1999); Kenneth N. Klee (2000); Frank R. Kennedy (2001); Harvey R. Miller (2002); The Honorable David H. Coar (2003); Gerald K. Smith (2004); The Honorable Conrad B. Duberstein (2005); Senator Dennis W. DeConcini (2006); The Honorable W. Homer Drake, Jr. (2007); Professor Douglas G. Baird (2008); Senator Elizabeth Warren (2009); Barry W. Ridings (2010); Tony Alvarez II and Bryan Marsal (2011); The Honorable Justice Geoffrey B. Morawetz (2012); Richard Levin (2013); Professor David Epstein (2014); Professor Marjorie Girth (2015); Professor Grant W. Newton (2016); Keith J. Shapiro (2017); The Honorable Mary F. Walrath (2018). On March 26, 2019, we presented James H.M. Sprayregen with the Twenty-First Annual Distinguished Service Award for Lifetime Achievement.

Mr. Sprayregen is a Restructuring partner in the Chicago and New York offices of Kirkland & Ellis and served on Kirkland's worldwide management committee from 2003–2006 and 2009–2019. Mr. Sprayregen is recognized as one of the most outstanding restructuring lawyers in the world and has led some of the most complex and highest-profile bankruptcies of his generation, including: Chiquita Brands, Inc., United Artists Theatre Company, Zenith Electronics Corp., Reader's Digest Association, Inc., General Growth Properties, Energy Future Holdings Corp., iHeartMedia, Inc., Caesars Entertainment Operating Co. Inc., Toys "R" Us, Inc., and United Airlines.

He has extensive experience representing major U.S. and international companies in restructurings out of court and in court around the globe and has handled matters for clients in industries as varied as manufacturing, technology, transportation, energy, media, retail, and real estate. He has extensive experience advising boards of directors, and generally representing debtors and creditors in complex workout, insolvency, restructuring, and bankruptcy planning matters worldwide.

Mr. Sprayregen joined Kirkland in 1990 and built its International Restructuring Group. He joined Goldman Sachs in 2006 where he was co-head of Goldman Sachs' Restructuring Group and advised clients in restructuring and distressed situations. He rejoined Kirkland three years later. Mr. Sprayregen is a frequent lecturer, speaker, and writer on insolvency, cross-border and distressed M&A issues. He has served as an Adjunct Professor at the University of Chicago Booth School of Business, New York University School of Law, and The University of Pennsylvania.

Mr. Sprayregen has received recognition from numerous institutions, including, to name a few, *Chambers USA*, *Chambers Global*, *America's Leading Lawyers for Business*, *The World's Leading Lawyers for Business*, *The National Law Journal*, *The Legal 500*, and *IFLR1000: The Guide to the World's Leading Financial Law Firms*.

To mark the occasion, Mr. Sprayregen was introduced by his father, Joel Sprayregen. After his introduction, Mr. Sprayregen addressed all those in attendance at the *Journal's* Annual Banquet. The *Emory Bankruptcy Developments Journal* is delighted to present a revised version of Joel Sprayregen's introduction, and of James Sprayregen's acceptance speech from when we presented him with the Distinguished Service Award for Lifetime Achievement. Please join us in celebrating the significant accomplishments of James Sprayregen.

MATTHEW S. LINDGREN  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF