

Women's Council Spotlight Series: Meghan Collins

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McDonald Hopkins has women attorneys and professionals in every office, department, practice group and level of leadership. This Spotlight Series shines a light on those attorneys and professionals, giving our clients and friends the opportunity to learn more about them and their practice.

Tuesday, October 4, 2022

Meghan Collins is an associate in our Chicago office and part of the firm's Data Privacy and Cybersecurity team. Not only is Meghan on call to help clients with unpredictable cyber incidents, she is also a full-time referee, chauffeur and wrangler of two active, energetic little girls. Read below to learn more about Meghan, her practice, and what she sees changing and not changing when it comes to trends in cyber attacks.



What is your practice area and how did you get into that area?

I am a Data Privacy and Cybersecurity attorney. I made the jump over to this practice area when I joined McDonald Hopkins in March and I've never looked back. At my previous firm I had the opportunity to dabble in the few cyber matters we received and knew this was the area I wanted to spend the remainder of my career. The fast-paced nature of the role of a data privacy and cybersecurity attorney, coupled with the constantly changing rules and regulations in this space makes it an exciting and unpredictable field to be in. The opportunity to work with the amazing group of people at McDonald Hopkins cemented what I already knew was the right decision.

How do you anticipate your practice changing in the upcoming years (or how has it changed because of COVID)?

When people ask me to describe our group, I tell them it's like a 24-hour help desk - cyber incidents are unpredictable and we are ready to be there for the client when they need us. I see nothing changing in the near future. When COVID forced the U.S. into remote working situations, many businesses recognized, or

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should have, that they were not operating with optimal cyber safety protection. Cybersecurity and protection became more of a mainstream conversation and upticks in incidents occurred. While the trend of incident types, those affected, and the threat actors ebbs and flows, one thing remains constant - data privacy and cybersecurity is both a vital and busy practice area.

How do you spend your free time?

The majority of my free time is spent with my husband wrangling our 4-year-old and almost one-year-old girls, bringing them to various dance classes, the park, swimming and play dates. We like to stay active, take trips, shop at Target and Home Depot (my 4-year-old's personal favorite), and watch movies as a family. When I'm not running around or playing referee, you can catch me on the couch with my Shih Tzu, Staley, watching Bravo.



What is one of the biggest professional challenges that you've faced in recent years?

Deciding whether or not to take the leap and dive into data privacy and cybersecurity full time. It's the best decision I've made and I only wish I'd done it sooner.

What are you most looking forward to in the coming months?

I'm most excited for the holiday season(s) coming up - Halloween, Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's! I'm ready for sweaters, hot chocolate, and the return of our Elf on the Shelf, Elsa-Anna.

What is a recent success story that you are proud of?

Starting at a new firm is always tough, but I found starting at a new firm and fully embracing a new practice area at the same time even tougher. However, with the help of everyone at McDonald Hopkins and my practice group in particular, I've re-energized my excitement to practice. And, I love to hear my daughter tell people that her mom "fights the bad guys."

Do you serve on any firm committees or community organizations?

I am part of the University of Illinois College of Law mentorship program and I'm also part of the Judicial Intern Opportunity Program. In addition to serving on those organizations, I also volunteer each year to judge the University of Chicago Mock Trial competition in the spring. At McDonald Hopkins, I'm also a member of the Women's Council.



Meghan A. Collins