

The National Law Journal presents 75 of the nation's most accomplished female attorneys in the legal profession today, representing excellence in private practice, corporate counsel work, public interest law, legal education and the judiciary. In making our selections, NLJ editors evaluated hundreds of nominations submitted from around the country by law firms, corporations, nonprofit organizations and law schools. As we pared down the list, NLJ reporters and contributors investigated further to help make the final choices.

OUTSTANDING WOMEN LAWYERS



BARBARA BECKER

**PARTNER, GIBSON, DUNN &
CRUTCHER, NEW YORK**

Hostile takeovers don't rattle Barbara Becker. Co-chairwoman of Gibson, Dunn's mergers and acquisitions practice, Becker last year was special counsel to Kindred Healthcare Inc. in its \$1.8 billion unsolicited bid for Gentiva Health Services Inc. In 2010, she led a 20-lawyer Gibson team representing Kraft Foods in its \$19 billion cross-border takeover of Cadbury PLC. She also helped Tenet Healthcare Corp. successfully defend against a hostile bid. "It's a very different dynamic in a hostile situation," Becker said. She recently launched the "Women of Gibson Dunn" initiative, which will bring together nearly 500 female partners and associates for the first time at this year's retreat.

KEY SKILLS AND PERSONALITY TRAITS

The skill that has benefited me most is that I can maintain an internal calm despite the chaos of a deal or personalities of individuals involved. Having the ability to keep things in perspective and be level-headed throughout allows me to get the deal done effectively.

—BARBARA BECKER