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For immediate release: May 17, 2018

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Workers Sue Denver’s Posh Ella Bliss Beauty Bar for Wage Theft

Denver, Colorado: Today, Denver nail technician Lisa Miles filed a class action lawsuit in Federal Court alleging that Ella Bliss Beauty Bar systematically stole employees’ wages in blatant violation of state and federal law. Workers allege that Ella Bliss implemented systematic, written policies that were clearly illegal and denied workers the hard-earned wages needed to support their families. Wage theft is shorthand for a variety of ways that employers nickel and dime employees out of legally earned wages. In this case, Ella Bliss Beauty Bar forced its service technicians to perform janitorial work without pay, refused to pay overtime, withheld tips, and shorted commissions. Ms. Miles not only seeks her own back wages, but also the wages stolen from all Ella Bliss Beauty Bar Service Technicians.

“Wage theft disproportionately victimizes women workers, who too often stay quiet as they struggle to make ends meet,” said Nina DiSalvo of Towards Justice, which represents the workers. “Fighting back against entrenched and unfair practices is hard – and I am inspired by Ms. Miles’ courage in coming forward and seeking justice.”

“It is time for businesses to quit financially exploiting women. Oppression of vulnerable workers remains all too common, and this is a particularly audacious case,” said Mari Newman, an attorney representing Ms. Miles and her coworkers. “I hope this case will not only force Ella Bliss Beauty Bar to follow the law, but also compel all employers in the industry to treat workers with the dignity and respect they deserve.”

“I am filing a lawsuit against Ella Bliss Beauty Bar to assist in bringing an end to their blatant, illegal employment practices. I am seeking retribution and just compensation due, not only for myself but for all those employed by Ella Bliss past, present and future.” said Ms. Miles, the lead plaintiff in the case. “It is my belief that the owners of Ella Bliss have a preconceived notion that those of us in the cosmetology industry lack a formal education and are not a viable threat to their unlawful business practices. My hope is that this lawsuit will enlighten them to the contrary.”

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Towards Justice is a Denver-based non-profit organization that empowers America's chronically marginalized workforce to address systemic injustice, defend family financial stability, and ensure that work is the most effective strategy for economic success in our country. Learn more at www.towardsjustice.org.

Killmer, Lane & Newman, LLP is a Denver-based law firm committed to fighting for the underdog. It focuses primarily in the areas of civil rights litigation, employment law, criminal defense, and pro bono work. Learn more at www.kln-law.com.