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Top Laterals

Gregory B. Jordan left Reed Smith to serve as general counsel at PNC Financial Services Group. Photo by Laura Mares.

Adding Laterals: What's in It for a Firm's Attorneys?

BY PETER R. SPIRGEL
Special to the Legal

Most firms are looking to grow and many see the recruitment of rainmakers as an integral component of this effort. To most firms, adding a lateral candidate with a large compatible practice and a compatible personality (not a jerk) is a no-brainer. Or is it? Ever wonder what's in it for me as an attorney at the acquiring firm?

Successful lateral hiring requires a convergence of the strategic goals of the acquiring firm and the lateral candidate, as well as a coordinated effort at executing this vision after the lateral arrives. At many firms, the execution of the strategic vision fails because the existing members of the firm don't see how successful integration impacts them. Current staff, from senior shareholders to associates, must perceive a benefit to the firm in adding the lateral and share responsibility for the successful integration of the lateral into the firm.

The first step in successful lateral integration is to clearly identify and communicate the strategic benefits of adding the particular candidate to the firm. Does the candidate bring to the firm a capability or specialty that is either lacking or in need of additional depth? Is the candidate bringing clients that need the expertise of others at the firm?

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Contrast these potential benefits with the potential negatives of adding a lateral attorney. First, the lateral may be viewed as competition by the existing attorneys. Junior attorneys often legitimately see laterals as potential barriers to their elevation to partnership. Even senior attorneys can fear that a lateral will compete for the interesting matters within their specialty. Laterals can also bring conflicts that could prevent existing attorneys from being able to accept certain matters. Lastly, the addition of each new partner to the firm dilutes the power of the existing partners—especially in firms with democratic forms of governance.

A common misconception associated with growth in law firms is that growth equals higher profits per partner. A new partner can increase the compensation earned by existing partners within a firm in several possible ways: (1) spreading the cost of fixed overhead (rent) over more people; (2) creating work for others with unused capacity; (3) allowing others to originate work by the new lawyer's presence at the firm (adding a new capability or enhancing the brand); or (4) creating profit generated from the new attorney that is distributed to others at the firm. For many existing partners, the prospect of any possible added income from the lateral's addition to the firm is outweighed by the potential negatives identified above.

The first step in successful lateral integration is to clearly identify and communicate the strategic benefits of adding the particular candidate to the firm.

Management must realize that attorneys will often not articulate these fears or concerns, but may consciously or subconsciously act on them during the interview process or after the lateral arrives. Often, laterals are left to fend for themselves after a brief orientation period at the start of their employment at the firm. They are expected to introduce themselves to the attorneys at the firm (especially those outside of their practice group or office) and attempt to cross-sell their services to the other attorneys.

Laterals often must rely on department chairs to identify the appropriate resources within the firm to service the needs of their clients. In addition to new policies and procedures and new software to learn, each firm has the unwritten common law that attorneys are expected to know. Existing attorneys must realize that the effect on them of adding a lateral is small when contrasted with the daunting task the lateral candidate has of moving his or her practice and integrating into a new firm.

Our firm has developed several initiatives that have proven very successful in integrating laterals into the firm. The first step is to clearly communicate how the addition of the lateral is consistent with the firm's strategic plan—a plan that has been developed

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The Impact of Compensation on the Lateral Market

BY JASON MANDEL
Special to the Legal

As a legal recruiter in the Delaware Valley for almost 10 years now, I've had a front-row seat to watch the market for lateral attorneys. What was once a robust, competitive seller's market in the early 2000s shifted into an ultraconservative, buyer-beware game. Law firms tightened the screws in the late 2000s and began to re-evaluate not only the laterals they brought on, but, in a lot of cases, their own partners.

As the economy continues to improve, firms are now beginning to take more risks, while not forgetting the recent past. This caution has shifted to partners themselves, who have in many cases re-evaluated their practices and the firm at which they currently practice. Those who chose to step outside the walls of their firms have noticed that things are changing. It's a different world, with options abound not only in the size and scope of practice that different law firms offer, but in the way they compensate partners.

There are many reasons that partners tend to leave their firms: billing rates that clients can no longer support, conflicts, lack of leadership opportunities and, of course, compensation. As many times as I hear from candidates, "It's not about the money," and while that may be partially true, my experience tells me it's always about the money. Law firms both big and small are realizing that the methods they previously used in determining compensation are becoming archaic—whether it's a compensation committee that sits behind a closed door and arbitrarily decides what their own partners are going to earn in the coming year, or a dictatorship style. Many firms traditionally have determined compensation for the upcoming year based on previous years' production. This method has many flaws, chief among them being that previous production in no way is a guaranteed predictor of the future. Partners are typically paid a larger base salary, with a small bonus if they exceed expectations.

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The fundamental change we have seen over the past five years is the model of smaller firms compensating their attorneys in a measurable format based on their production for the current year. In this method, a draw is determined, and partners are usually given credit for both origination and production, as well as any other area they contributed to the firm, such as leadership roles.

Our firm recently assisted a partner who had been at a midsized regional firm for the past decade. Under his current formula as an equity partner, he was given a large draw plus a bonus that was determined by a combination of how his practice did and how the firm did as a whole. As it turned out, regardless of how good of a year he had with his own origination and production, his compensation almost always ended up being around the same from year to year.

Law firms both big and small are realizing that the methods they previously used in determining compensation are becoming archaic.

I presented many opportunities to this candidate and none really jumped out to him as exciting. He had a lot of required criteria in the firm he was seeking, but there had to be a persuading reason for him to ultimately leave the firm he had grown comfortable at. It was not until I presented him an opportunity with another regional firm that offered a compensation system based on measurable numbers, where his compensation year to year would truly be tied to his own origination and production, that his ears perked up. In this new model we determined that while there was risk, the potential significant upside along with the opportunity to help lead and shape a department were too much to pass up.

Partners who are considering making a move first need to evaluate their own practice before they can start looking at other firms. What makes your practice successful? Are clients likely to follow you if you go from a large international firm to one that has fewer than 100 attorneys? Do you need to be at a firm that has offices in 23 different countries when all of your clients are within the region? Are your clients working with you because of your expertise or because of the name of the firm at the top of your letterhead? What type of associate and administrative support do you need for your practice to be

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Making the Switch From Defense to Plaintiffs Work

BY JAMES C. HAGGERTY
Special to the Legal

Nearly two years ago, I made a career move that some thought risky. As a career defense attorney on the management committee of a large defense firm, my decision to move to plaintiffs work represented a major career shift. The decision was motivated by several factors. The insurance industry had drastically changed. Defense counsel had become fungible vendors. More importantly, the fundraising efforts my family began for brain tumor research following my brother's death opened my eyes to the tangible benefits of helping people. The decision to shift the focus of my career for the next 10 years was an easy one. The selection of new partners and the transition to a new firm with its own style and culture was challenging.

Selecting new partners is a major life decision. While due diligence into the financial aspects of any new firm is a given, the real challenge lies in the assimilation into a new way of doing business. Personalities matter. While the adage, "You spend more time with your business partners than your spouse," sounds trite, it is true.

In addition, in a smaller firm, attorneys work more closely together. A good fit is crucial. A lateral attorney must be able to function professionally and personally with his or her new partners. In a plaintiffs practice, there is more exchange of ideas and theories. Attorneys must be able to work with partners who can accept constructive criticism. Litigation is not for the faint of heart. Thus, choosing the right partners is crucial. Not only must they be good attorneys, but, more importantly, good people. In my new firm, I was very fortunate in this regard.

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Adapting to a new firm does pose challenges. Any new environment presents new issues. A different firm has its own culture. Previously, I could say, "Just do it this way." Now, understanding the new environment became critical to adopting established processes and then, in turn, suggesting change.Patient observation becomes a necessary course of action. Each different firm has certain established practices. The desire to immediately criticize must give way to patience and observation. Patience is a virtue. Any attorney moving to a new firm needs to be particularly virtuous.

Any lateral attorney needs to observe the new practices and procedures in his or her new firm. Like Jane Goodall in the wild, the lateral attorney needs to identify the sources of power in the new organization, whether they be attorneys or support staff. Care must be taken to avoid criticizing a practice or procedure that may have been implemented by an important member of the office, particularly if it was a member of the support staff who actually wields the power in the organization. Although there is often a better way to do things, it is advisable for the lateral attorney to avoid attempting to impose his or her will upon established procedures. While the new procedure may be better, the resulting ill will over careless criticism, especially in a smaller organization, may take months to smooth over. Observation and suggestion is often the best course of action. A wise older attorney once counseled that "you don't get honey by kicking the hive." Polite suggestion is the better course of action.

Of vital importance to any move is the support staff that accompanies the lateral attorney to the new firm.

Of vital importance in any move is the support staff that accompanies the lateral attorney to the new firm. Fortunately, I was blessed with people with whom I worked for many years. Their satisfaction and level of comfort becomes of paramount importance. An infrastructure must be established in any new environment in order to allow the lateral attorney to practice without distraction. Regular consultation with support staff is needed in order to make sure that everyone is satisfied and flourishing in the transition.

The need to create an environment where the practice can advance is important. As soon as possible, all new or different technologies must be mastered. Software and case management systems need to be understood and utilized. The lateral attorney needs to be assimilated into the new firm as quickly as possible. At the end of the day, the attorney needs to be productive. In order to do so, there needs to be a competent and comfortable support staff that understands all new policies

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The Legal's Top Lateral Hires of 2013

BY GINA PASSARELLA
Of the Legal Staff

The team approach to lateral moves continued in 2013, as many firms grabbed up groups of laterals or an entire boutique to bolster a practice area or open an office in a new market.

Last year saw a number of significant lateral groups switch firms, resulting in at least two new firms entering the Pennsylvania legal market, one splitting up and another merging out of existence. Insurance was a hot practice area, with four of the top 10 lateral moves in 2013 concentrated in some aspect of that practice. Energy and intellectual property attorneys also made the list, along with financial services, commercial litigation and white-collar defense lawyers.

Gregory B. Jordan left Reed Smith to serve as general counsel at PNC Financial Services Group. Photo by Laura Mares.

GREGORY B. JORDAN

There are many reasons that Greg Jordan's departure from the top spot at Reed Smith to serve as general counsel of PNC Financial Services Group topped our list of laterals for 2013.

Just the fact that Jordan's name is no longer associated with Reed Smith was a big splash in the legal community. Jordan had served as Reed Smith's global managing partner since 2001, When he took on that role, Reed Smith had about 700 attorneys, around $300 million in revenue and had just finalized its combination with U.K. law firm Warner Cranston, establishing the firm's first office abroad. In 2012, the last year for which financial data was available at press time, Reed Smith crossed the billion-dollar revenue mark for the first time and reported more than 1,800 attorneys across 25 offices. Jordan led the firm through an era of significant transformation.

His departure also meant a new leader at Reed Smith for the first time in more than a decade and made for the first time the firm's leader was outside of its Pittsburgh headquarters. Washington, D.C.-based partner Alexander "Sandy" Thomas, who joined the firm laterally in 1999 and most recently headed up its litigation department, took over as head of Reed Smith.

And to serve as the head of any sizable legal department is a significant accomplishment. In taking over the top spot at PNC, Jordan is now leading the legal team at one of the largest companies in the state and one of Reed Smith's largest clients.

Jordan is the executive vice president, general counsel and head of regulatory and government affairs at PNC. He also has responsibility for the PNC Foundation and the Corporate Ethics Office. Jordan joined PNC's executive committee and reports directly to CEO William Demchak.

THE GORDON & REES TEAM

When San Francisco-based Gordon & Rees was looking to expand into Pennsylvania, it was initially eyeing Philadelphia, but it first made an unexpected pit stop in Pittsburgh in 2012 with the hiring of a group of attorneys from Buchanan Ingersoll & Rooney.

Gordon & Rees made waves again when it grabbed eight partners at the start of 2013 from Cozen O'Connor, including three of the firm's senior insurance litigators, to open a Philadelphia location.

William Shelley, the former chairman of Cozen O'Connor's insurance group, and partners Ann Thornton

Gordon & Rees' lateral group. Standing, from left to right: Ann Thornton Field, James E. Robinson, Jacob C. Cohn, Joshua Wall, Sara Anderson Frey, Catherine Slavin, Joseph A. Arnold, Ilan Rosenberg and C. Tyler Havey. Seated: William P. Shelley. Photo by Nanette Kardaszeski.

Field and Josh Wall left for Gordon & Rees, along with Cozen O'Connor partners Joseph A. Arnold, Jacob C. Cohn, C. Tyler Havey, James E. Robinson and Catherine Slavin. Shelley serves as managing partner of the office, which now has 17 attorneys. Cozen O'Connor CEO Michael Heller said at the time that he expected other attorneys to follow the group to Gordon & Rees, with a total of between nine and 12 lawyers making the move.

Gordon & Rees managing partner Dion N. Cominos said at the time that he expected the eight attorneys to add eight figures in revenue to the firm.

Field had served in a number of leadership roles during her time at Cozen O'Connor. She was vice chair of the commercial litigation group, a member of the management committee and a member of the board of directors. Wall had been with Cozen O'Connor since 1977 and was a member of the firm's global insurance group.

Aside from serving as chairman of Cozen O'Connor's global insurance group at the time of his departure, Shelley was also on the firm's board of directors and management committee. He was responsible for the management of the 125 attorneys and paralegals in the department.

CHRISTIE PABARUE DEPARTURES

A seven-lawyer insurance coverage defense team left Christie Pabarue Mortensen & Young last summer to open a Philadelphia office for New Jersey-based Carroll, McNulty & Kull. The departures, which included members of firm leadership, caused the Christie firm to change its name to Christie Pabarue & Young.

Co-founding shareholder Bradley J. Mortensen and managing shareholder Ralph J. Luongo left Christie Pabarue, along with shareholders Elaine Whiteman Klinger and Cynthia Ruggerio and associates Susan

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Clockwise from top: *Carroll, McNulty & Kull's lateral group. From left to right: Anneliese Scott, Bradley J. Mortensen, Susan B. Thauer, Ralph J. Luongo, Elizabeth A. Bartman, Cynthia Ruggerio, Elaine Whiteman Klinger.*

Wilson Elser Moskowitz Edelman & Dicker's laterals, Marc L. Bogutz (left) and William F. McDevitt.

Anderson Kill's lateral group. Standing: Peter J. Deeb (left) and Inez M. Markovich. Seated: Frank G. Murphy (left) and Stephen H. Frishberg. Photos by Nanette Kardaszeski.

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Bradford Thauer, Elizabeth A. Bartman and Anneliese Scott.

Carroll McNulty managing member Gary S. Kull said he thought the lawyers joining his firm "wanted to get to something that had a bigger platform for them." Kull said his firm has a national practice and shared a number of clients with the Christie Pabarue team.

Christie Pabarue co-founding shareholder James A. Young said his firm had been planning for some time to scale back its insurance coverage defense practice. The departure of Mortensen's team decreased Christie Pabarue's headcount from 36 attorneys to 29 attorneys.

Mortensen helped found Christie Pabarue in 1992, after he, James Christie and James A. A. Pabarue left now-defunct Philadelphia firm Clark, Ladner, Fortenbaugh & Young with 15 other attorneys and joined up with James Young, who had been a partner at Stradley Ronon Stevens & Young in Philadelphia. Luongo, meanwhile, had served as Christie Pabarue's managing partner since October 2003.

WOLFSOHN AND GORANIN

David J. Wolfsohn, a member of intellectual property boutique Woodcock Washburn's policy committee, left the firm in October with Aleksander J. Goranin, the chair of the firm's litigation practice, to join Duane Morris.

Duane Morris Chairman John J. Soroko said at the time that the addition of Wolfsohn and Goranin strengthened the litigation component of the firm's Philadelphia intelletual property presence, which until that point had tended more toward transactional IP work.

Soroko had said having greater IP litigation capabilities so close to the Delaware federal courts is also a plus, and that Wolfsohn and Goranin are among the "best of the breed" of IP litigators.

The departure of Wolfsohn and Goranin came about a month before word leaked that Woodcock Washburn and Baker & Hostetler were in merger discussions. The two firms ended up moving forward with that merger in January of this year.

Duane Morris hired Wolfsohn and Goranin several months after opening up an IP-focused office in the Silicon Valley.

Soroko had said he anticipated Wolfsohn and Goranin being "extremely active" in the Silicon Valley office.

Wolfsohn had said that while there are benefits to the IP boutique model, he and Goranin were interested in joining a firm with a larger cadre of litigators than they had at Woodcock Washburn. Goranin had said that when a client is demanding a quick turnaround on a matter, being able to ramp up staffing is important and often difficult to accomplish at a small firm.

Top: Schnader Harrison Segal & Lewis' lateral group. From left to right: Ira Neil Richards, Kenneth I. Trujillo, Pedro Ramos, Nicole M. Acchione and Lisa J. Rodriguez.
Bottom: *Duane Morris' duo, Aleksander J. Goranin (left) and David J. Wolfsohn.*
Photos by Nanette Kardaszeski.

TRUJILLO, RODRIGUEZ & RICHARDS

Schnader Harrison Segal & Lewis acquired in July all of the attorneys at litigation and government relations boutique Trujillo, Rodriguez & Richards.

The combination added two former city solicitors to Schnader, as well as a former head of the Philadelphia School Reform Commission.

Name partners Kenneth Trujillo, Lisa J. Rodriguez and Ira Neil Richards joined Schnader along with partner Pedro Ramos and associates Nicole Miles Acchione and Gary M. Goldstein.

Over the years, Trujillo Rodriguez had shifted from representing plaintiffs in class action cases to representing both plaintiff and defendant corporations and public entities in litigation. The firms said the Trujillo Rodriguez lawyers were looking for a larger platform to help handle that work. "Over the last few years, increasingly we were in a situation where we would only be able to get pieces of the litigation or pieces of the representation just because we needed more capacity," Trujillo said at the time.

Joining Schnader, he said, made sense from a cultural and business standpoint. The two firms share a history, including Trujillo, as city solicitor, hiring Schnader to work on litigation involving the financing of Philadelphia's stadiums and Trujillo running Schnader partner Jim Eisenhower's bid to become Pennsylvania attorney general.

Given the political background of some of Trujillo Rodriguez's attorneys, the firm had focused a portion of its practice on public-private partnerships. Trujillo and Ramos are each former city solicitors and Ramos was recently the chairman of the Philadelphia School Reform Commission. Schnader has long had a successful public-private partnership practice, the firm said.

BOGUTZ, BOGUTZ AND MCDEVITT

Christie, Pabarue, Mortensen & Young board member Marc L. Bogutz left the firm in July along with his father, Jerome Bogutz, and partner William F. McDevitt. The trio took their professional liability defense practice to the Philadelphia office of Wilson Elser Moskowitz Edelman & Dicker.

Along with serving on the board of directors of Christie Pabarue since 2004, Marc Bogutz also ran that firm's professional liability defense group, working closely with McDevitt and the senior Bogutz in that practice.

The three are lawyers' lawyers, spending the bulk of their time representing attorneys in malpractice actions. They also represent other professionals, such as architects, accountants and engineers, in professional liability matters. Marc Bogutz is co-chairman of the Pennsylvania Bar Association's professional liability committee. Jerome Bogutz also has a long history with the state's bar associations, serving as chancellor of the Philadelphia Bar Association in 1980 and president of the Pennsylvania Bar Association from 1985 to 1986.

"One of the things that attracted me to Wilson Elser is the fact that they have quite a few attorneys in the Philadelphia office that are experienced in professional liability defense," Marc Bogutz said.

Moving from a 40-lawyer firm to an 800-lawyer firm would provide his group with the chance to expand their practice nationally, Marc Bogutz had said. He said Wilson Elser has its roots in insurance defense but has broadened out to a full-service law firm with a national presence.

DEEB, FRISHBERG, MARKOVICH AND MURPHY

Philadelphia-based Deeb Blum Murphy Frishberg & Markovich split up in September, with four of the name partners and one associate joining Anderson Kill's Philadelphia office and a fifth name partner, along with another associate, joining Shook, Hardy & Bacon's Philadelphia office.

Partners Peter J. Deeb, Stephen H. Frishberg, Inez M. Markovich and Frank G. Murphy, along with associate Kevin G. McDonald, joined Anderson Kill.

Frishberg said at the time that Deeb Blum had been working with a recruiter to find new hires when it was brought to the firm's attention that Anderson Kill was looking to expand its Philadelphia presence.

According to Frishberg, he and his colleagues were initially unsure of what to expect when they agreed to meet with Anderson Kill's management, given that a significant portion of Anderson Kill's practice is insurance recovery, which Deeb Blum didn't do.

However, Frishberg said, they were pleasantly surprised to find that Anderson Kill's practice extends well beyond insurance recovery to include

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And If the List Were Longer ... Top Lateral Runners-Up

BY ZACK NEEDLES
Of the Legal Staff

There was no shortage of notable lateral moves in 2013 and, as usual, there were too many to put them all on the shortlist.

But, unlike last year, this year's group of runners-up ranges beyond just the traditional move from one firm to another, including an attorney who left private practice to go in-house, an attorney who left a firm he founded to start a new shop and one lawyer who returned to the firm he once led after spending time in state government.

DEBRA S. DUNNE

Debra S. Dunne, who previously chaired Philadelphia-based Stradley Ronon Stevens & Young's life sciences regulatory and compliance practice group, left the firm in May to join the Philadelphia office of Shook, Hardy & Bacon as a partner.

Dunne focuses her practice on food and drug law, counseling drug, medical device, food, dietary supplement and cosmetics industry clients on Food and Drug Administration regulatory and compliance issues.

Dunne has also defended complex products liability cases and has served as science and coordinating counsel in mass torts litigation.

Sean P. Wajert, managing partner of Shook Hardy's Philadelphia office, said in a press release that Dunne's clients "have come to value her insight and guidance on complex regulatory questions."

Wajert said Dunne's knowledge of FDA regulations and the life sciences industry "fits well with our existing practice, including serving many leading pharmaceutical and food clients in the Delaware Valley and tristate area."

HALMON L. BANKS III

Halmon L. Banks III, who had been a partner at the workers' compensation firm formerly known as Martin Banks until his acrimonious departure in May, opened Banks Law, his own three-lawyer firm, the following month.

The move came about three months after Banks, while still a partner at Martin Banks, filed a suit claiming the other partners at the firm had taken steps to drive him out of the firm, including steering big cases away from him, firing his paralegal without his consent and limiting his access to the firm's case management software.

At the same time, Banks had also filed a motion for special and preliminary injunction and expedited discovery seeking to enjoin the firm from changing its name to Martin LLC, but Philadelphia Court of Common Pleas Judge Gary S. Glazer denied the motion, finding in a footnote that Banks failed to show how the name change would cause him irreparable harm.

The firm sent out a press release that same day announcing it had officially changed its name to Martin LLC.

Banks officially left the firm effective May 31, 2013.

Banks said that, like his former firm, Banks Law handles workers' compensation matters, but noted that it would also include an expanded focus on Social Security, long-term and veterans' disability benefits work.

Banks was joined at the new firm by associates Mary LeMieux-Fillery and Jody Joy.

HERMAN C. FALA

Herman C. Fala, the former chairman of Cozen O'Connor's real estate department, announced in December that he was leaving the firm to serve as general counsel to client Liberty Property Trust.

Fala officially took over in the new role Jan. 1 of this year.

The real estate partner served as chairman of Cozen O'Connor's real estate group since his team joined the firm in 2009 when his former firm, Wolf Block, dissolved. Fala had led Wolf Block's real estate department for 10 years prior to that.

"Herman has represented Liberty on countless transactions over many years," Liberty CEO Bill Hankowsky said in a statement. "We are very pleased to welcome Herman to Liberty and we are fortunate to have his expertise and insight."

Fala replaced former Liberty GC James J. Bowes, who died from lung cancer at the age of 60. Bowes had joined the commercial real estate developer from Blank Rome in 1996.

Fala called the situation "surreal," saying he worked with Bowes for 18 years and considered him a dear friend. Fala said he had anticipated finishing out his career at Cozen O'Connor, a firm that supported his group's real estate practice when it joined in the depths of the recession in 2009 and helped it grow to be profitable again by 2011. Fala said he supposed he was a natural choice for the general counsel position, however, given he worked with the company since the late 1970s when it was under the name Rouse & Associates.

CHURCH, LANDY, KASICKY AND WIGGINS

Employee Retirement Income Security Act attorneys Sarah Lockwood Church, Joni Landy, Paul Kasicky and Kevin A. Wiggins left Pittsburgh-based Thorp Reed & Armstrong to join Saul Ewing's Pittsburgh office in March.

The move came just ahead of Thorp Reed's April merger with Detroit-based Clark Hill.

Church, who had been the head of Thorp Reed's employee benefits group, joined Saul Ewing as special counsel, along with former Thorp Reed senior counsel Kasicky and Wiggins and former counsel Landy, all of whom joined as special counsel.

Along with ERISA work, the group's practice focuses on assisting employers with adopting, amending and terminating employee benefits plans, as well as representing plan sponsors and administrators before the Internal Revenue Service, the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corp. and the U.S. Department of Labor.

The move nearly doubled the size of Saul Ewing's Pittsburgh office, which opened in May 2012.

STEPHEN S. AICHELE

Stephen S. Aichele, who served as Gov. Tom Corbett's chief of staff until stepping down in July, returned in November to Philadelphia-based Saul Ewing, where he was previously chairman.

Aichele rejoined the firm as a partner in its real estate practice.

Aichele's last day with the Corbett administration, in which he had been serving as senior adviser, was Oct. 18.

Saul Ewing managing partner David S. Antzis said the firm expressed interest in bringing Aichele back into the fold immediately upon the announcement of his stepping down as chief of staff.

"He had a number of opportunities and ultimately had to decide if he was going to come back," Antzis said.

Aichele said that until the firm reached out to him, he had never assumed or even considered that Saul Ewing would want him to return if he ever left the government.

Once it became clear that he would be welcomed there, however, Aichele, 65, said he needed to first decide whether he wanted to continue working and, if so, whether he still wanted to go back to practicing law.

Aichele said that while he enjoyed his time in government, "in the end, I think of myself as a lawyer."

RICK GRIMALDI AND LORI ARMSTRONG HALBER

Atlanta-based labor and employment boutique Fisher & Phillips expanded its Philadelphia office last February with the addition of partners Rick Grimaldi and Lori Armstrong Halber from the Philadelphia office of New York-based Jackson Lewis.

Grimaldi, who founded Jackson Lewis' Philadelphia office in 2007 and served as its managing partner until 2012, said part of what brought him over to Fisher & Phillips was the firm's willingness to launch a government relations practice.

Grimaldi, who served as deputy general counsel to then-Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Ridge and was chief counsel to the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry before going in-house at Unisys Corp. and eventually entering private practice, said the move provided him with "an opportunity to broaden the scope of what I can offer clients."

Christopher Stief, managing partner of Fisher & Phillips' Philadelphia office, said Grimaldi is well known in the Philadelphia labor and employment community and has an impeccable reputation among attorneys.

Halber, meanwhile, said Fisher & Phillips offers her and Grimaldi bench strength similar to that of Jackson Lewis but will also provide them more opportunity to be "entrepreneurial."

DAVID A. NASATIR

David A. Nasatir rejoined Philadelphia-based Obermayer Rebmann Maxwell & Hippel after nearly two years in the Philadelphia office of Thorp Reed, from which he brought with him a group of lawyers and staff.

Nasatir rejoined Obermayer Rebmann as chairman of its business and finance department, a group for which he served as vice chairman before leaving the firm. He brought with him Thorp Reed associates Karen M. Sanchez and Stephanie J. Sprenkle, marketing specialist Beth Dainoff and paralegal Annette Talerico.

Nasatir and partner Jonathan W. Hugg left Obermayer Rebmann in May 2011 to join Thorp Reed. Hugg, a litigator, is still with Thorp Reed. Prior to leaving the firm, Nasatir had been with Obermayer Rebmann for 14 years.

Nasatir said he was very happy at Thorp Reed, but when The Legal broke the story in January that the firm was in merger discussions with Detroit-based Clark Hill, Nasatir began getting calls.

One of those calls was from Obermayer Rebmann management committee member Thomas A. Leonard. Nasatir said Leonard was "relentless" for about three weeks in selling Nasatir on the opportunity to lead and grow the firm's business and finance practice.

GINA MAISTO SMITH AND LESLIE MARIE GOMEZ

Pepper Hamilton bulked up its growing white-collar litigation practice in February of last year with the addition of Gina Maisto Smith and Leslie Marie Gomez from Ballard Spahr.

Smith, who spent a good chunk of her time at Ballard Spahr representing the Archdiocese of Philadelphia in its review of allegations of sexual abuse by priests, and Gomez both joined Pepper Hamilton's Philadelphia office.

The two former longtime prosecutors with the Philadelphia District Attorney's Office became partners in Pepper Hamilton's white-collar litigation and investigations practice group. While at Ballard Spahr, Smith and Gomez represented universities, private schools, religious organizations and nonprofit institutions in their response to sexual misconduct allegations. The pair also conducted internal investigations and developed compliance programs for those clients.

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by the members of the firm. Next, we identify the people within the firm who perceive a direct benefit from the addition. These are often attorneys in the same specialty but can also include attorneys with personal relationships with the lateral or a need for the expertise the lateral brings to the firm. This group within the firm is an important vehicle for communicating the strategic vision associated with the potential addition to other members of the firm and they are also the group that will facilitate the integration of new attorneys into the firm.

We have developed a document that outlines the strategic fit and identifies the potential issues, including any additional resources that will be needed should the lateral join the firm. This document is prepared with input from the candidate and the practice group within the firm that the lateral attorney would join. We also invite all partners to the interview process. Of course, for larger firms, inviting everyone may not be practical; however, being as inclusive as possible ensures that enough people will be invested in the process to increase the likelihood of its success.

Once the lateral arrives at the firm, in addition to the typical orientation to the firm's systems and procedures, our firm selects one or more partners to mentor the new lateral. Think of the mentor as a cultural attaché. The mentor's job is to help the lateral integrate into the firm's culture. We strive to select mentors with a vested interest in the lateral's success. Often, the lateral was introduced to the firm through a friend he or she had at the firm. These people are typically the best choices for this role. Absent an existing relationship with someone at the firm, we strive to select someone with a compatible personality who is committed to helping the lateral succeed at the firm.

We have found that too often, without someone assigned to this role, the new attorney was set adrift within the firm, expected to know the personalities and skill set of each attorney and also the firm's myriad unwritten rules and customs. In most firms, practice leaders are assigned the task of making sure newcomers within their departments receive the resources they need. In my experience, this practice falls short of truly integrating the lateral into the culture of the firm. Peers are more available and invested in an individual's success.

One other technique we have employed is to reserve time at a partners meeting for the lateral to speak about his or her practice. In advance of the meeting, we ask the lateral to identify his or her significant relationships—both clients and referral sources—and describe the projects he or she is working on for these entities. We also ask the lateral to identify opportunities that he or she would like to pursue. Often, others at the firm have contacts who can help with these opportunities or they are able to suggest possible avenues for increasing business from the lateral's existing relationships.

Lastly, we ask that each department chair invite the new attorney to a practice group meeting for the purpose of identifying cross-selling opportunities for both the lateral and the existing members of his or her departments.

The recruitment and integration of laterals must be in furtherance of a well-developed and well-communicated strategic plan. The first day of a lateral's tenure at his or her new firm is the beginning of the integration process that is often given short shrift by the existing members of the law firm.

In many cases, the existing partners don't see much benefit in adding the new partner and can even feel threatened by the addition. Successful integration of a lateral depends on a firm recognizing and confronting these issues. In most cases, communication of the benefits of adding a particular candidate coupled with an integration plan that involves both the candidate and interested members of the firm can greatly increase the chances of integrating new partners into the firm. •

Compensation continued from 4

successful? These are all questions that need to be asked.

Let's talk for a minute about firm size. There is little question that big firms provide not only a reputable name with years of experience that can be backed up with deal after deal, but also a breadth of expertise in a diverse range of practice areas that simply can't be matched by small firms. Partners with practices that need a wide range of support in a multitude of practice areas, such as tax, securities, employment and complex financing, often need to be at a big firm.

In contrast, a state-focused litigation practice, corporate practices representing mostly privately held businesses, and estates attorneys can excel at a small firm. Though small firms typically can't offer the same depth and varied experience, they nonetheless are often composed of a similarly bright group of lawyers who have chosen the model that bigger isn't always better.

There is a common misconception that partners at big firms are earning significantly more than their colleagues at small firms. While it's true that small firms typically charge lower rates and may be billing fewer hours than large firms, these firms are often run with significantly less overhead.

Compensation continues on 13

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While traditional large firms spin their wheels looking at the partners with the elusive million-dollar practice, small firms are making deals with partners with significantly less. While a partner with a $700,000 practice at a large firm may be a small fish in a big pond, those roles are often reversed when you place him or her in a small firm. Furthermore, these partners can often earn more at a small firm.

As the economy continues to improve, firms continue to look at ways to improve their bottom line. They are getting more aggressive and taking risks on deals that a few years ago they would have been quick to pass on. I've seen several situations over the past year where partners approached us with a sense of fear that they would not be marketable. In many of these instances, we not only were able to ultimately place the candidate, but I'm happy to report they had multiple offers.

The bottom line is that it's hard to gauge one's true worth without getting out there and testing the market. •

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and procedures. The goal of the lateral attorney is to become a productive and profitable member of the firm as soon as possible. Only with the support of an integrated team that knows and understands the new environment can this occur.

In seeking to become profitable as soon as possible, distractions must be minimized. Little things, like the physical plant, must be considered. Support staff need to be located in areas where they can maximize productivity. They must not be made to think that they are being placed haphazardly.

Office selection for the lateral attorney can also prove dicey. In every office, no one on the surface actually cares where he or she is to be located. However, placing the lateral in an office deemed less desirable than that of an attorney lower in the food chain can be disastrous. In reality, although they may deny it, people care deeply about their office location. Both the lateral and the new firm need to be aware of these issues. Accommodations must be made; egos need to be kept in check.

The transition to plaintiffs work was not hard. Each case, however, from the plaintiffs point of view, requires more work. As a defense attorney, I would never have spent three hours at a kitchen table of a client in Levittown, Pa., learning all aspects of his life so that they could be assembled into a cogent presentation at trial. While the time commitment to each case is greater, there is more flexibility and creativity in formulating the story to be presented to the jury. More time can and should be spent on each case. People's lives and well-being are at stake. With the tyranny of time sheets removed from practice, there is more time to enjoy the law, to use the law to make a difference in someone's life.

Transitioning to not only a new firm but a different aspect of practice is challenging. Clients are different and, as a result, so are client demands. Individuals are no less demanding than insurance carriers and, in many instances, more so.

Representing plaintiffs, however, has its distinct advantages. Securing a good result for someone who actually appreciates your time, effort and skills is satisfying. Making a change for the better in someone's life is particularly rewarding. My transition from a defense practice to a plaintiffs firm has been challenging. On the whole, however, it has been incredibly rewarding.

Any lateral move for an attorney can be traumatic. Confidence in making the decision is important. Selecting the right environment is crucial. Making my transition successful has been, above all, the direct product of the actions of my new partners. It is important to have new partners who appreciate your strengths, recognize your eccentricities and welcome you into the new organization. Having all partners working together in the same direction to make the firm better, not only for the attorneys but for the clients, is particularly important. That, coupled with a supportive, loyal and hardworking staff, has made my transition particularly rewarding.

The lateral move for an attorney is not to be taken lightly. In today's legal practice, it is becoming increasingly common. Therefore, care must be taken before making a change. The nature of the new work environment is of paramount importance. The lateral attorney must focus on the comfort of his or her support staff. The professional and personal interactions of the lateral with the new firm are crucial. Once these aspects of the move fall into place, the practice of law can move forward, productively and profitably on all levels. •

Top Laterals continued from 9

commercial litigation, financial services and trusts and estates work, all of which fit squarely within the Deeb Blum group's bailiwick.

Pamela D. Hans, managing shareholder of Anderson Kill's Philadelphia office, said at the time that the group brought strong commercial litigation and financial services capabilities to the firm's existing banking, energy and construction clients.

KENNETH S. KOMOROSKI

KOMOROSKI

Just over two years after joining Norton Rose Fulbright to help open its Pittsburgh-area office, energy and environmental compliance attorney Kenneth Komoroski left the firm in October to join Morgan, Lewis & Bockius in Pittsburgh along with a team of associates.

Komoroski trained as an engineer and represents clients in midstream, downstream and oil and gas production and exploration companies. He also handles cases involving land use and zoning, permits, water usage and wastewater treatment, environmental issues, royalties, lease terms and local ordinances, among other litigation areas. His clients are based in Pennsylvania, Ohio, West Virginia, New York and Maryland.

Komoroski said that although Morgan Lewis already has an established practice dealing with oil, gas and shale litigation—particularly in Houston, where the firm has about 75 attorneys—his addition to the firm will help it expand its East Coast presence.

Jami Wintz McKeon, head of Morgan Lewis' litigation group and incoming chairwoman of the firm, said Komoroski "adds depth to our already robust environmental litigation services and a strategic complement to other practices globally, including our practices focusing on transactions, regulatory issues and private equity in the energy industry."

MICHAEL L. KRANCER

KRANCER

Blank Rome bulked up its energy practice with the addition of former Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection Secretary Michael L. Krancer as a partner in its Philadelphia office.

Krancer was previously a partner at the firm from 1992 to 1999, before leaving to become a judge—and eventually chief judge—of the state Environmental Hearing Board. He rejoined the firm in March as chair of the firm's energy, petrochemical and natural resources practice. Since that time, Krancer has been an outspoken advocate of natural gas production in Pennsylvania.

As head of the firm's new energy, petrochemical and natural resources practice, Krancer had said his job would be to marshal the resources of a wide range of practices within the firm, from government relations to corporate, and focus them toward clients in the energy and natural resources sectors.

Krancer had said the Philadelphia region is poised to play a "pivotal" role in energy and natural resources development in both the Appalachian Basin and nationwide.

Despite not being situated atop a shale formation, Philadelphia has a number of other assets, including ports, a large workforce, infrastructure and a significant university base. Philadelphia also has more venture capital than anywhere else in the state and is only a one-hour plane ride away from Pittsburgh, Krancer said.

DAVID M. LAIGAIE

LAIGAIE

White-collar attorney David M. Laigaie left Dilworth Paxson in September to join the Philadelphia office of Eckert Seamans Cherin & Mellott as a member and head of the firm's corporate investigations and white-collar defense practice.

Laigaie, who was previously a partner at Dilworth Paxson and head of the firm's corporate investigations and white-collar group, said he saw an opportunity at Eckert Seamans to join a larger firm with a wider geographical reach.

Laigaie said at the time that Dilworth Paxson's practice is largely centered on Philadelphia and South Jersey, whereas Eckert Seamans' practice covers the entire Mid-Atlantic region.

In addition, Laigaie said Eckert Seamans' rate flexibility was exactly what he needed to accommodate a client book that includes both middle-market companies and individuals.

According to Laigaie, Eckert Seamans expressed a vision of having the firm's white-collar practice based in Philadelphia.

Laigaie, who focuses a large part of his practice on representing health care providers, had said Philadelphia is the "most rational" place to headquarter the practice because "most of or a good portion of government enforcement efforts are up and down the Eastern Seaboard."

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As 2014 continues to pick up steam, our firm continues to get called on with Lateral Partner opportunities in Philadelphia & the suburban marketplace. We are currently working with a variety of prominent suburban and Center City firms, on very solid financial footing, that are looking to grow strategically. Several practices areas are targeted for this growth including: Labor/Employment, Commercial Litigation, Real Estate, Corporate, Family law, Trust/Estates, Intellectual Property, Insurance Defense, Tax, as well as others. These firms all offer very competitive compensation structures, unique cross-selling opportunities, as well as the support to help you grow your practice.

Please contact us if you have given thought to a potential move, group move, or merger and would like to hear about some of the opportunities our clients have to offer. While most of our clients are looking for attorneys with active practices, the amount of portables desired varies. Further, if you would just like to have a HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL conversation to discuss the overall landscape of the legal market, please feel free to reach out to us at any time.

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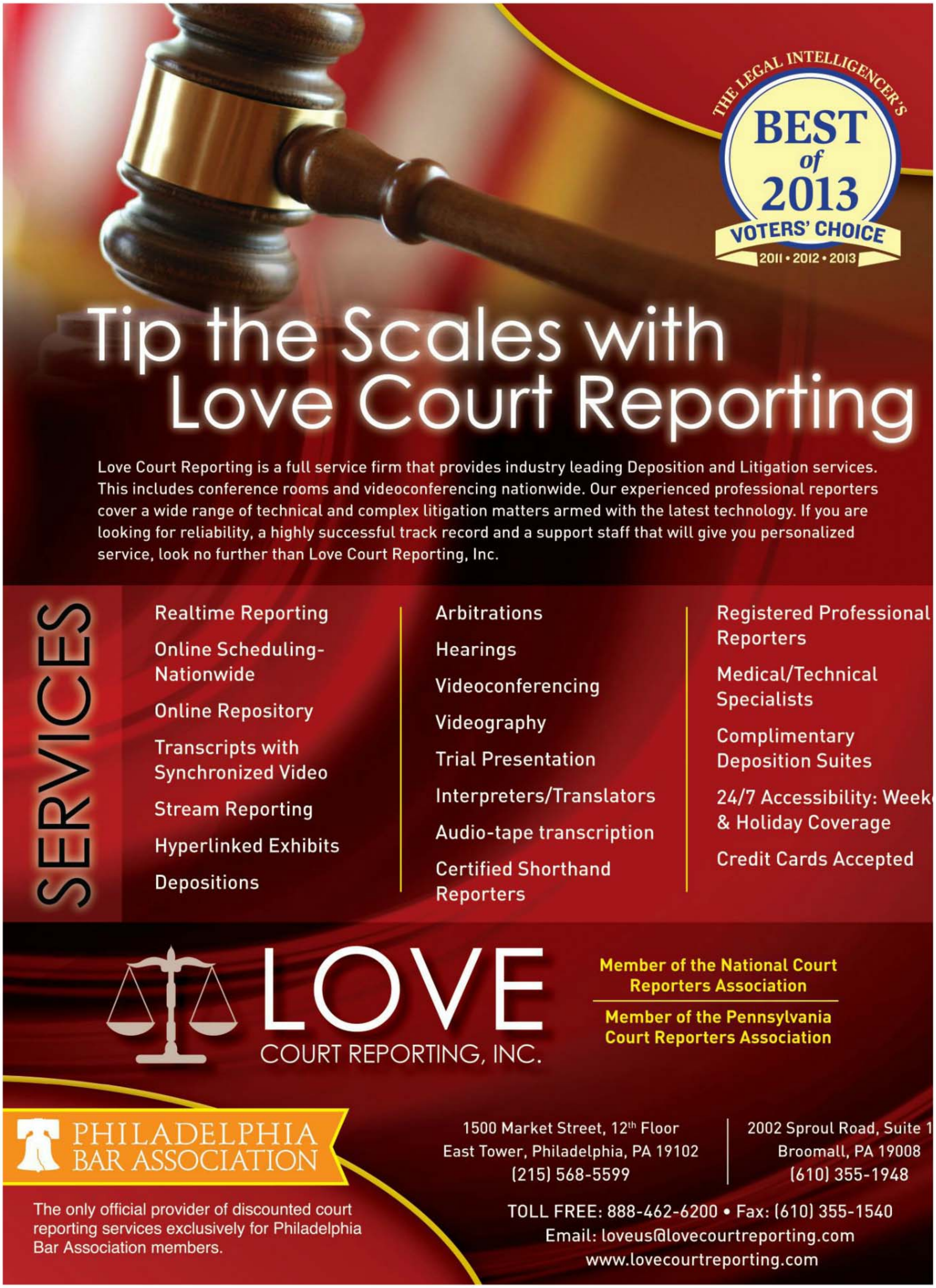
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