

The Legal's Top Lateral Hires of 2011

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Of the Legal Staff

If anything could be said of the lateral partner market in Pennsylvania in 2011, it could be that the buddy system was in full effect.

While lateral moves continued to be more modest in numbers than in years past, the number of attorneys moving to new firms in groups was higher than in any year in recent memory.

Of the top 10 lateral moves of 2011, eight were groups of two or more and seven had three or more attorneys jumping ship.

Moves related to the Marcellus Shale and energy practices were the most prevalent. They were accompanied by partner moves in the areas of e-discovery, corporate work, intellectual property, litigation and personal injury work. A number of the moves included attorneys in significant leadership positions at their former firms.

It was a move in the mortgage banking arena, resulting in the rapid growth of a practice group for Blank Rome, that tops our list of lateral hires in 2011.

WAYNE STREIBICH & GROUP

When Blank Rome wanted to bolster its consumer financial services group last year, it hired Dilworth Paxson partner Wayne Streibich and six of his colleagues to join the firm, naming Streibich chairman of the firm's newly formed

consumer financial services industry team.

At Dilworth Paxson, Streibich was a member of the executive committee and had served as co-chairman of the business department and chairman of the consumer financial services and middle-market/emerging company groups.

Streibich's work representing financial institutions like Bank of America in markets across the country was said to bring with it a hefty book of business. And since his joining the firm in February 2011, Blank Rome has found cause to expand the group by more than a dozen additional attorneys to help keep up with the demand and geographic reach of the practice.

Partner Kevin C. Rakowski, of counsel Jonathan K. Moore and associates Michael N. DeAngelo, Philip A. Italiano, Michael P. Trainor and Adam L. Bliss, were those initially making the move to Blank Rome, with Dilworth Paxson attorney Edward Chang following later in the year.

Aside from the attorneys from Dilworth Paxson, Blank Rome hired throughout the course of 2011 associates from a number of firms across locations such as Boca Raton, Fla.; Houston; Los Angeles; and Washington, D.C.

DAVID R. COHEN & HIS E-DISCOVERY TEAM

After nearly 30 years at the firm, David R. Cohen left K&L Gates in May to join the Pittsburgh office of Reed




Babst Calland's Energy Team (Seated, from left: Ashley M. Resko, Matthew J. Malcho, Steven B. Silverman, Paul J. Atencio, Bruce F. Rudoy. Standing, from left: Scott K. McKernan, Jason M. Zoeller, Melissa B. Krasnow, Leah R. LuFramboise, Joshua F. Hall, Christopher J. Hall, Heather Ann Brooks, Ashley M. Lysson, Jonathan E. Dan, Rachel E. Henry, James P. Weaver).



David Cohen's E-Discovery Team at Reed Smith (Front row, from left: Karen Lust, Beth Wurzel, David Cohen. Middle row, from left: Juliet Leopardi, Jim Leety, Marcin Krieger, Mandy Crawford, Patty Novak, Katie Alessandria, Chris Kenny. Back row, from left: Brian Wood, Jeff Sradomski, Andy Codelka, Ryan Del Greco, Frank Gilbert).

Smith and start an e-discovery practice group at the firm. Just a few weeks later,

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target these business lawyers with the aim of building on our existing business practice to create a premier middle-market, mid-Atlantic corporate transactional practice.

We were confident that our message to these partners — exceptional client service, lower rates, a practice and clients that were an important part of the firm's strategic direction and a stable, collaborative firm culture — would resonate. And it did.

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Reed Smith announced 11 e-discovery attorneys, two litigation support specialists and a practice administrator left K&L Gates to join Cohen.

While many of the attorneys are akin to long-term contract employees and the rates can be lower, e-discovery practices are one of the hottest trends in the industry right now. Several other firms started e-discovery practices after Cohen made his move. The practice is one that can make up through volume what it doesn't charge in rates, as e-discovery disputes can and do arise in nearly any case, no matter the size.

"It is a necessary aspect of virtually every litigation now," Pittsburgh office managing partner George Stewart said of e-discovery at the time of the move.

He said Cohen's practice is more than just managing e-discovery in the midst of litigation. It also includes developing proactive document retention and litigation readiness policies for companies.

"All firms should be advised to increase their expertise in this area rapidly if they don't have it," Leonard Deutchman, general counsel of consulting firm LDiscovery, had said. "Litigation firms in no small part will be distinguished going forward between those that have a good solid grasp of e-discovery and those that don't."

BABST CALLAND'S 16-LAWYER ENERGY TEAM

Even more so than e-discovery, energy has been the hot practice area in recent years — and in Pennsylvania, energy means Marcellus Shale.

Babst Calland made a serious move to bolster its energy practice in November when it picked up 16 lawyers in Pittsburgh from Tucker Arensberg.

The group, led by Bruce Rudoy and Steve Silverman, joined the firm's natural resources practice and consists of mergers and acquisitions and title attorneys, along with a litigator in the energy space. Rudoy was the head of Tucker

First on board was Ted Segal, a corporate partner from DLA Piper, whose clients included The Johns Hopkins Health System Corporation and McCormick & Company Inc. Segal, a lifer at DLA Piper until he made the move to Stradley, is a mergers and acquisitions lawyer and was the managing partner of DLA's Washington office.

As Segal's clients became more vocal about their unhappiness with the cost of legal services, he began to listen more intently. It became clear to Segal that his ability to retain his clients and to provide value for the legal services they received

would necessitate a move.

Segal joined Stradley Ronon in January 2011 as chair of our mergers and acquisitions practice group, after months of discussions that included development of a business plan that laid out the strategy and action steps for our middle-market, mid-Atlantic transactional practice. Almost immediately, Segal began to identify other attorneys in the Washington area whose reasons for wanting to leave their big firms and whose interest in being a part of a strategically important and valued practice mirrored his own. In fairly short order, additional lawyers

from DLA, Bingham, Pillsbury and Dechert agreed to join our Washington office.

Our Washington strategic initiative has proven very successful to date. In addition to a variety of new clients, we've added industry expertise — including health care regulatory, public company and board governance and insurance regulatory — that complements our corporate practice. Our Washington office now houses 22 lawyers and we have just signed a lease to increase our office space by 70 percent to accommodate new arrivals we have every confidence we will attract in the near future. •

Arensberg's energy department and Silverman was the co-chairman of the firm's technology and intellectual property practice. Paul Atencio, Heather Brooks, Jonathan Dan, Chris Hall, Josh Hall, Rachel Henry, Melissa Krasnow, Leah LaFramboise, Ashley Lypton, Matt Malcho, Scott McKernan, Ashley Resko, James Weaver and Jason Zoeller all made the move as well.

Their addition followed on the heels of Babst Calland's October launch of a Charleston, W. Va., office, which was opened with a pair of energy attorneys from Charleston-based Jackson Kelly.

The group appears to be the largest single acquisition of energy attorneys with a focus on oil and gas since the Marcellus Shale work has started driving such movement over the past few years.

Valerie Esposito of recruiting firm McAnney Esposito & Kraybill Associates in Pittsburgh said at the time that the practice was less than two years old at Tucker Arensberg and was "somewhat segmented" from the rest of the firm's historical practice areas. The departure didn't have a material impact on Tucker Arensberg, but makes for a strong fit at Babst Calland, which Esposito had said has the strongest environmental practice in the city.

KENNETH S. KOMOROSKI & GROUP

Houston-based Fulbright & Jaworski added six energy lawyers from K&L Gates, including partner Kenneth Komoroski, to open its Southpointe, Pa., office in April.

Komoroski, the partner in charge of the Southpointe office, focuses the oil and gas portion of his practice on representing producers and pipeline companies in matters including land use and zoning, permitting, litigation and local ordinances.

The environmental component of his practice, meanwhile, includes permitting, state and federal compliance and industrial property negotiations.

"You can't really participate in something as important and as technically advanced as [the Marcellus Shale play] without having superb local profession-



The Petrakis Group at Duane Morris (From left: Colin Knisely, Ashley Federer, Jon Petrakis and Louise S. Melchor).



Jones Passodelis (From left: Michael R. Lettrich, Marie Milie Jones, C.J. (Dean) Passodelis, Jason A. Rosenberger, Jeffrey Cohen).

als involved," Steven B. Pfeiffer, chair of the executive committee of Fulbright & Jaworski, told *The Legal*.

The team that made the move to Fulbright & Jaworski with Komoroski comprised partners Amy Barrette and Jeremy Mercer, associates Megan E. Smith Miller and Emily Beach Thomas and counsel Matthew Sepp.

MARIE MILIE JONES, C.J. "DEAN" PASSODELIS & THEIR GROUP

In June, Marie Milie Jones and C.J. "Dean" Passodelis left Pittsburgh-based litigation defense firm Meyer Darragh Buckler Behenek & Eck after a combined dozen years at the helm to form their own litigation defense bou-

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The Komoroski Group at Fulbright & Jaworski (Front row, from left: Janet McQuaid, Emily B. Thomas, Megan E. Smith Miller. Back row, from left: Kenneth S. Komoroski, Jeremy A. Mercer, Matthew H. Sepp, Amy L. Barrette).



Paul A. Lauricella, left, and Slade H. McLaughlin.

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tiq, Jones Passodelis, with three other Meyer Darragh lawyers.

The new firm focuses on defending clients in medical malpractice, products liability, medical device, employment and civil rights litigation.

Along with firm principals Jones and Passodelis and two legal assistants, former Meyer Darragh non-equity partners Jeffrey Cohen, Michael Lettrich and Jason Rosenberger joined Jones Passodelis as senior attorneys.

"In this new shop, we're able to better focus externally and look at the best interests of our clients — it's more of a looking outward rather than inward approach," Jones told *The Legal* at the time.

JON PETRAKIS & GROUP

Jonathan M. Petrakis, co-founder of Philadelphia-based business law boutique Deeb Petrakis Blum & Murphy, left the firm in September to join Duane Morris as a partner, citing a desire to bring large-firm resources to his clients and to focus more on growing his business litigation and transactional practice than on managerial duties.

Petrakis, whose client base comprises mostly banks and financial institutions, brought with him his "core team" of former Deeb Petrakis partner J. Colin Knisely and associates Ashley A. Federer and Louise Melchor, as well as his long-time assistant.

Knisely joined Duane Morris as a partner, while Federer and Melchor joined as associates.

Petrakis said there were times when his former firm was simply too small for certain matters.

"You're certainly limited [at a smaller firm]," Petrakis said. "There were several matters that I had to refer out to Duane Morris, among other firms, for clients in other states and now I don't have to refer anything out."

Petrakis' former firm now goes by Deeb Blum Murphy Frishberg & Markovich.

SLADE H. MCLAUGHLIN & PAUL A. LAURICELLA

Just weeks after their raucous argument and subsequent split from The Beasley Firm, Slade H. McLaughlin and Paul A. Lauricella resurfaced with their own firm, McLaughlin & Lauricella, announcing that they would run it while simultaneously serving as of counsel to Philadelphia plaintiffs firm Shrager Spivey & Sachs.

Both McLaughlin and Lauricella said that, because their departures from The Beasley Firm were so unexpected, this arrangement with Shrager Spivey reflected a desire to avoid rushing into anything new.

The pair has already made a name for itself under its own firm, getting involved with some very high-profile cases. It currently represents alleged victims related to the sex-abuse scandals surrounding both the Philadelphia Archdiocese and Penn State, by far two of the largest cases facing the state's legal system in recent memory.

JOSEPH CONDO, VINCENT ROCCIA & GROUP

Joseph R. Condo, former chair of Woodcock Washburn's patent procurement services group, and Vincent J. Roccia, former transactions operations manager at the firm, left the firm to open Condo Roccia in May.

Their practices focus on acquiring and



Condo Roccia Lawyers and Staff (Seated, from left: Janet Griffin, Stuart Schanbacher, Cassandra Katz, Michael Koptiw. Standing, from left: Summer Uchin DeWitt, Jennifer Rassa, Michael Ghobrial, Mu Yang, Vince Roccia, Lori Swanson, Joe Condo, Krysanna See, Kathleen Kenney, Joe Klinicki, Darleen Yacovone. Not pictured: Hilary Reinhardt, Andrew Fitzgerald, Diana Kang, Marissa Antonelli and Michael Jordan).

analyzing patent portfolios, particularly for clients in the electrical, computer and mechanical industries.

They brought with them six patent procurement associates from Woodcock Washburn's Philadelphia headquarters.

Michael Koptiw, Lori Anne Swanson, Stuart Schanbacher, Michael Jordan, Michael Ghobrial and Joseph Klinicki all joined the firm as associates.

Condo said he and Roccia decided to start their own firm because the big-firm model was "not nimble enough" for their practice.

"Bigger [IP] firms are built on a business model that is primarily fueled by and reliant upon litigation and, as a

result, have developed infrastructure and overhead that is too expensive" to allow for cost-effective patent procurement and analysis, Condo said.

While patent prosecution may not be the main focus of every IP firm, the Condo Roccia team was said to have taken with it a good amount of work.

AMY PANDIT

In June, Buchanan Ingersoll & Rooney corporate partner Amy Pandit left the firm to join the Pittsburgh office of Morgan Lewis & Bockius.

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Office managing partner Marlee S. Myers said Pandit was the first lateral partner to join the office in several years, as it is "very picky" about adding the right people who mix with the practice both locally and nationally or internationally as well as fit with the Pittsburgh office culture.

Myers said Pandit is very dynamic and has done a great job of building her practice at an early stage of her career



PANDIT

as a partner. She said Pandit has developed strong client relationships in industries that make sense for Morgan Lewis both in Pittsburgh and across the firm.

Joining the business and finance practice as a partner, Pandit focuses her securities practice on representing public companies in corporate governance matters. She counsels companies on federal securities law compliance, corporate governance and executive compensation, including the development of ethics and compliance programs.

She has focused on the energy industry, with specific experience in the coal, natural gas and power sectors. In 2009, Pandit took the lead on Buchanan Ingersoll's role representing coal company Alpha Natural Resources Inc. in its \$2 billion merger with Foundation Coal Holdings Inc. At the

time of her move, Pandit was representing Alpha on certain aspects of the company's \$7 billion acquisition of Massey Energy.

DAVID DENIOUS

In February, former Dechert corporate partner David Denious joined Drinker Biddle's corporate and securities practice group as a partner. Denious focuses his practice in the private equity realm, handling leveraged acquisitions and dispositions as well as corporate finance transactions.

During his nearly 20 years in practice, Denious has represented a variety of pri-



DENIOUS

vate equity firms on leveraged buyouts, "going private," recapitalization and other control transactions, and the debt and equity financing relating to those transactions.

Denious joined Drinker Biddle at a time when deals were starting to increase. He was said to have brought in several million dollars in business to the firm in the first year he has been there.

Drinker Biddle Chairman Alfred W. Putnam Jr. said at the time Denious joined that the private equity market was starting to see new life. He said Denious would be able to offer the firm's clients something it couldn't before given his broader experience in a number of different types of transactions.

Putnam said part of Denious' move was to be able to serve his clients in a more flexible way while meeting their needs on fees. •

Runners-Up

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were always a problem and rates started becoming an issue."

D'Annunzio said his next rate increase at Blank Rome likely would have put him at \$700 per hour and he was beginning to feel pushback from clients.

Add to that what he said was the "normal bureaucracy" inherent at big firms and D'Annunzio was ready for a change.

"I was enamored of the midsized platform, where there's great litigation talent," he said. "I looked at Klehr and found it's very well run, financially sound and a good commercial brand to attract my commercial clients."

STEPHEN S. STALLINGS

Pittsburgh solo attorney Stephen S. Stallings, a former federal prosecutor, joined Burns White as chair of the firm's white-collar criminal defense practice.

Burns White founding member David B. White said he had been serving as the "de facto chair" of the practice but that bringing Stallings on board as the practice's first official head represents the firm's intention to increase its focus on white-collar criminal defense.

Stallings said he was interested in joining the firm for the added support it could offer both his clients and himself.

"The resources that a firm like Burns

White brings to a case and to helping a client out are tremendous," he said. "Then there's the intangible of having a good group of lawyers to bounce ideas off of."

According to White, Stallings fit the profile of the type of lawyer the firm was seeking to head up its white-collar group.

"We're aware that there seems to be a small fraternity of attorneys who routinely get referred or asked to handle white-collar defense matters," White said. "We felt we needed to get somebody in that fraternity to lead the group and bring the work in."

IVAN DEVOREN

In September, Houston-based Burleson announced that Ivan DeVoren, chair of the environmental group at Philadelphia-based Kleinbard Bell & Brecker, had joined the office it opened in Washington County in 2010 and would lead the firm's environmental practice.

Kevin L. Colosimo, head of Burleson's Washington County office, said the firm had been looking for about eight months for someone who could head up its environmental practice in Western Pennsylvania but was having some difficulty finding a lawyer with a wide-ranging expertise.

DeVoren "had that breadth of experience, which was important, but he was also experienced on the corporate side of the business," Colosimo said. "At his core, he's a deal lawyer whereas some [environmental lawyers] are more on the

litigation side."

DeVoren said he left Kleinbard Bell because he realized "the heartbeat of the Marcellus Shale industry in Canonsburg" and the environmental concerns that have been raised since hydraulic fracturing began in the region have created "a wellspring of exciting work."

He said he saw going west as an opportunity to be "on the cutting edge" and to challenge himself professionally.

PHILIP YANNELLA

Phil Yannella's move to Ballard Spahr to start an e-discovery practice was part of a hot trend for Pennsylvania firms in 2011. Several firms looked to start or bolster the e-discovery work they handled for clients through the creation of formal practice groups.

Yannella made the jump from Dechert in order to head up the e-discovery and data management practice at Ballard Spahr. While the firm has had lawyers working in this area for some time — there were 13 attorneys working in the group upon Yannella's joining it — Yannella's addition formalized the practice and gave it its first leader.

While at Dechert, Yannella represented large companies on e-discovery issues in "bet-the-company litigation," particularly in the pharmaceutical and health care industries. He has counseled clients on litigation hold implementation, protocols for discovery coordination and management, vendor selection and overall discovery strategy and litigation readiness. He also has experience advising on cross-border collection matters.

RONALD SARACHAN

Former federal prosecutor Ronald Sarachan joined Drinker Biddle's white-collar criminal defense and corporate investigations team in February from Ballard Spahr, where he had served as head of that firm's white-collar litigation practice since partner Eric Sitarchuk left to join Morgan Lewis & Bockius in 2007.

Sarachan's addition to the firm further builds up what Drinker Biddle Chairman Alfred W. Putnam Jr. had called a "critically important" area in terms of servicing clients' needs and "buttressing the whole litigation front."

Drinker Biddle lost a lot of its white-collar defense capabilities when partner Michael Holston left along with 13 lawyers for Morgan Lewis in 2005. Putnam said the firm didn't have much of a white-collar practice before Holston and didn't have it after he left. But over the last six years, the firm has built that group back up again, particularly in Philadelphia.

Sarachan said he was excited to join a white-collar practice with so much experience. He said he hoped the firm's offices across the country would help expand his practice, which includes the representation of Fortune 500 companies down to individuals. For Drinker Biddle, Sarachan provided a longtime federal prosecutor who has also been out in private practice long enough to have built up a referral network, Putnam said. •



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