

Chicago Daily Law Bulletin®

Volume 160, No. 179

Dinsmore adds three lawyers to new office

Firm grows to nine since opening here six months ago

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Dinsmore & Shohl LLP has added three partners, with one bringing a new practice area to a law firm that opened a Chicago office six months ago.

Jason M. Wejnert is the first intellectual property lawyer to join the local office. He's a former Kirkland & Ellis LLP partner who was a senior patent litigator at the firm.

Thomas G. Drennan, formerly of Tressler LLP, and Gloria L. Materre, who served in executive leadership positions for the state of Illinois, have also joined Dinsmore in the past month.

Dinsmore handles a variety of corporate and business law matters, including mergers and acquisitions; product-liability and mass-torts litigation; employment matters; and regulatory and finance issues. It has more than 500 attorneys in 16 offices across the country.

The addition of the trio brings the Chicago office total to nine attorneys. Dinsmore opened the office in March after it merged with bond counsel firm Peck, Shaffer & Williams LLP, which had one local attorney.

Wejnert focuses his practice on telecommunications, software, hardware, database systems and patents involving Internet and wireless protocols. Prior to becoming a lawyer, he spent nine years working for



Jason M. Wejnert

technology companies such as Motorola Inc., Intel Corp. and Medtronic Inc. He was not available for comment.

Materre was the executive director of the Illinois Liquor Control Commission for three years and previously served as director of the Illinois Housing Development Authority and deputy chief of staff under Gov. Patrick J. Quinn.

"I was very happy with my work with the state, but I was ready to return to the private sector," she said.

Prior to her work with the state, Materre launched her own firm and served as principal attorney at Materre & Associates P.C., where she built a national client base in the media and entertainment industry. She has placed on-air talent for "The Oprah Winfrey Show" and represented networks such as BET and CBS.

Materre is now part of the corporate department and real estate group at Dinsmore.

She will focus on real estate,



Thomas G. Drennan

business, government regulatory work and entertainment. She also has experience in housing finance and business and community development.

A litigator, Drennan spent his entire 13-year legal career at Tressler and concentrates on insurance issues such as coverage disputes; insurance bad-faith claims; fraud and misrepresentation claims; and contract-liability issues.

Drennan said Dinsmore has shown that it is invested in growing in Chicago.

"It was an opportunity to be part of a strong national law firm and a chance at building something new in Chicago," he said. "The combination of those two things was very appealing."

Dion J. Sartorio, managing partner of Chicago's Tressler office, said Drennan "had a unique opportunity to try to build a law office with one of his best friends. We recognize that such opportunities do not come along very often and wish him well."

As someone who started her



Gloria L. Materre

own firm, Materre said she was also drawn to the "entrepreneurial spirit" of Dinsmore.

Robert A. Lucas, managing partner of Dinsmore's Chicago office, said the three are "like-minded individuals who are hungry to get out there and get business and develop new relationships."

The firm offers a great value for clients, he said, with associates who charge in the range of \$200 to \$300 an hour and partners who bill up to \$500 hourly depending on the type of case and practice area. The firm also offers flat fees.

While there is no target growth number, Lucas said the firm is in talks with potential lateral partners and anticipates adding more attorneys by the end of the year. He said the firm seeks more corporate, real estate and IP attorneys.

"We're not exactly looking for those areas," Lucas said. "At some point our goal is to be a full-service firm by adding all of these various groups."