

Chicago Daily Law Bulletin®

Volume 161, No. 15

Dinsmore adds two partners, West Virginia firm

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Dinsmore & Shohl LLP continues its growth spurt by acquiring a 40-lawyer West Virginia law firm.

The merger with Huddleston, Bolen LLP effective Feb. 1 comes on the heels of the firm's opening of its Chicago office last year.

With the hiring of two lateral partners for the Chicago office late last year, Dinsmore's local office has grown to 12 lawyers.

The merger with Huddleston, Bolen will add to the firm's presence in West Virginia it has had since 2002, said George H. Vincent, Dinsmore's firmwide managing partner and chairman. It currently has 35 lawyers working in four offices there.

The merger "adds breadth and depth to our West Virginia practice," he said. "We've got 40 more lawyers, and they've got great litigation and estate planning capabilities, which we're happy to get."

Robert A. Lucas, managing partner of Dinsmore's Chicago office, said the merger will benefit at least one large financial services client here. He declined to identify the client.

The merger "gives us additional depth and talent in a geographic area in which one of our client's service out of the Chicago office has litigation matters," Lucas said.

With the merger, Dinsmore, founded in Cincinnati, will have 575 lawyers in 18 U.S. offices.

The Chicago office opened in March when it merged with 35-



Robert A. Lucas

lawyer Peck, Shaffer & Williams LLP, a bond counsel firm that only had one lawyer here.

The most recent additions were partners Robert J. Heyne and Ralph J. Kooy, who joined Dinsmore's Chicago office on Dec. 1. They most recently worked together for 15 years at Tressler LLP.

Heyne and Kooy both concentrate their practices on commercial and construction litigation along with handling fidelity insurance and surety matters.

They represent companies that issue surety bonds primarily related to construction projects and fidelity insurers.

The hiring of Heyne and Kooy "was an opportunity for us to pickup lateral partners who practiced in areas that we previously didn't have in Chicago and would add to the services we can provide to our clients," Lucas said.



Robert J. Heyne

Heyne and Kooy brought about 10 clients to Dinsmore, most of whom are involved in litigation with multi-millions of dollars in damages at stake. Heyne declined to identify the clients,

"Because of (Dinsmore's) size, it gives us a much broader platform for marketing opportunities," Heyne said. "We have been able to take on a couple of clients we would have (previously) sent to other firms," including one in a legal-malpractice case.

"We thought our practice would be a good match," Kooy said. "We're excited to help grow this new branch office."

Dinsmore's client roster includes Fifth Third Bank, Procter & Gamble, the Cincinnati Reds, Lexmark International Inc. and various energy companies. Partners' average hourly billing rates run from \$300 to \$550.



Ralph J. Kooy

The firm's Chicago office moved in the fall to a 12,000-square-foot office at 227 W. Monroe St. That space will eventually house 25 lawyers.

The lawyers here represent clients in corporate matters, commercial litigation, insurance coverage litigation, public finance, intellectual property and real estate matters.

Lucas plans to hire more lawyers for the Chicago office this year but does not have a target number.

"We will continue our focus on hiring lateral partners, both in practice areas not already present in Chicago, as well as adding depth in those practice areas serviced by the Chicago attorneys already," Lucas said.

"In addition, we are and will look to add associates in the Chicago office, particularly in the litigation and corporate practice areas."