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St. Louis Firm Expands into Texas with Four Dallas Litigators



(From left to right in back) Elizabeth Myers, Jennifer Ecklund and Katie Clark with Nicole Williams (seated)

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Thompson Coburn, the largest law firm based in St. Louis, opened a Dallas office on Tuesday with a trio of litigation partners from Thompson & Knight and one from litigation boutique Hedrick Kring.

The 375-lawyer firm's sixth outpost in the U.S. will be led by Nicole Williams, who had spent her entire 17-year career at Thompson & Knight. Williams is joined by an all-female team that includes fellow T&K partners Elizabeth Myers and Jennifer Ecklund and Hedrick Kring partner Katharine Battaia Clark, who practiced and made partner at T&K before moving to the Dallas litigation boutique last year.

Williams, who developed co-counsel

relationships with several attorneys at Thompson Coburn on Texas cases, says she and her team weren't looking to change firms, but a "unique opportunity" presented itself when she worked on a big case last fall with a Chicago partner at Thompson Coburn. She learned of the management committee's significant interest in launching a Dallas office and was attracted by the firm's focus on litigation and client list, which includes Enterprise Rent-A-Car, United Van Lines and US Bank.

It was also a chance for Williams to "build something from the ground up."

"I'm one of those strange people who finds the management side of a law firm interesting," she

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says. “Finding the right people and the right team to provide great client service becomes a little bit easier when you have the chance to do that from the beginning.”



**Nicole
Williams**

Thompson Coburn Chair Tom Minogue says firm clients in Texas and outside of Texas had been wanting it to have a presence in the state for at least two years. The firm also has offices in Chicago, Los Angeles, Washington, D.C. and Belleville, Illinois.

“We are big believers that when expanding into a new market we need the right people,” Minogue says. “The opportunity came up serendipitously. It was obvious to us from a cultural and practice perspective that this litigation group was the exact way to start. They are outstanding lawyers in their field who are connected to the community and involved in civic activities.”

Minogue is hoping to replicate the success the firm has had with its Chicago and Los Angeles openings. The Chicago office, with about 65 lawyers, has grown to be the firm’s second largest. Over the next few years, Thompson Coburn leadership wants to build out the Dallas outpost to more than 40 attorneys in the following key areas: commercial litigation, product liability litigation, healthcare, labor and employment, corporate and energy.

With its first Dallas hires, Thompson Coburn is bringing on attorneys with diverse litigation expertise and extensive relationships in the community.

Williams focuses her practice on antitrust, advertising and RICO matters. She is the vice-chair of the Judicial Nominating Commission for the City of Dallas and is involved with leading the advocacy program at the UNT Dallas College of Law. She also serves on the board of Rainbow Days, which aims to serve children and youth in adversity build coping skills and resilience for positive futures.

Myers represents healthcare and oil and gas clients in litigation relating to commercial disputes, product defects, consumer fraud and securities class actions. She is a member of the Equality Texas Foundation’s board of directors.

Ecklund, a former attorney for the U.S. Department of Justice’s Tax Division, concentrates her litigation practice on white-collar fraud, primarily in healthcare. She sits on the boards of directors of the Dallas Area Rape Crisis Center and Café Momentum, a Dallas restaurant and culinary training facility that seeks to transform lives by equipping at-risk youth with life skills, education and employment opportunities.



**Tom
Minogue**

Clark, winner of the 2017 Turnaround of the Year Award from the Turnaround Management Association, focuses her practice on bankruptcy and insolvency litigation. She is on the board of Junior Players, which provides life skills and mentorship opportunities to youth through participation in the arts.

Thompson Coburn’s temporary Dallas address is at 1919 McKinney Ave.