

Tampa Office Adds Two Attorneys

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TWO EXPERIENCED TRIAL LAWYERS JOIN EXPANDING TAMPA OFFICE OF SHUTTS & BOWEN LLP

TAMPA, Fla. - The Florida law firm of Shutts & Bowen LLP announced today that veteran Tampa trial lawyer John "Sean" Johnson has joined the firm's fast-growing Tampa office as a partner, and litigator William Cassidy has become a senior associate. Johnson previously was a shareholder and Cassidy was an associate with the Tampa-based law firm of Trenam, Kemker, Scharf, Barkin, Frye, O'Neill & Mullis, P.A.

"Sean and Bill, with their impressive trial skills, round out our Tampa litigation practice," said R. Alan Higbee, Managing Partner of Shutts & Bowen's full-service Tampa office, which opened in March 2006. "Sean brings to the firm more than 20 years of experience litigating a broad range of complex commercial disputes. Bill also has built a significant commercial litigation practice, with a particular emphasis on labor and employment law cases."

Johnson, 46, who had been with Trenam Kemker since 1986 and a shareholder there since 1993, has tried a wide range of cases during his career as a trial lawyer. He served as defense counsel in the nationally publicized case Avnet v. Wyle Electronics, which was featured in the National Law Journal as one of the top 10 defense verdicts in the country in the year 2000. After a five-month trial in state court, which was the longest civil jury trial in Hillsborough County history, jurors ruled in favor of the defendants, rejecting Avnet's \$154 million tortious interference claim.

Shutts & Bowen's sixth Florida office was opened in March 2006 with four attorneys and now has 20 lawyers based in Tampa. Shutts & Bowen's full-service Tampa office represents clients in corporate and securities, mergers and acquisitions, government contracts, intellectual property, commercial litigation, real estate, banking, tax, bankruptcy, health care and employment law matters.

"The Tampa Bay area has an expanding economic base of Fortune 500 and local entrepreneurial companies that require increasingly sophisticated legal representation," Higbee noted. "Shutts & Bowen looks forward to providing dynamic, institutional-oriented legal services to a growing number of those businesses in Tampa and throughout West-Central Florida."

At Shutts & Bowen, Johnson will handle complex commercial litigation, trademark cases, business trade practice disputes, corporate litigation, employment contract enforcement and negotiation, class actions, commercial torts, securities litigation and investigations, professional negligence/liability cases, and product liability litigation.

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"While it was difficult to leave great friends and colleagues at Trenam Kemker, where I began my legal career, I am looking forward to the exciting career opportunities that a statewide law firm like Shutts& Bowen offers," Johnson said. "Since many of my clients transact business throughout the state, I will now be able to tap the firm's substantial resources to handle their litigation and transactional needs anywhere in Florida."

Johnson, who is AV rated by Martindale Hubbell, serves on the Board of Directors of the Tampa Bay Chapter of the Federal Bar Association. He graduated from the University of South Carolina with a bachelors degree cum laude in 1982 and with a law degree cum laude in 1986. At law school, he was a member of the Wig and Robe Society and the Order of the Coif.

Cassidy, 32, represents management clients in the full range of employment law matters involving wage-and-hour issues, family and medical leave, disabilities and discrimination. He also defends employers in Florida and federal whistleblower cases and before the National Labor Relations Board on matters involving concerted activity. In addition, Cassidy litigates and arbitrates general commercial disputes, trademark cases and other complex federal cases.

Cassidy, a former law clerk to U.S. District Court Judge James D. Whittemore, serves on the ABA Liaison Subcommittee of The Florida Bar's Labor and Employment Law Section and previously chaired that subcommittee. He graduated with distinction from The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill with a bachelors's degree in 1996 and received his law degree from the UNC School of Law in 2000.

Practice Areas

Labor and Employment