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Saul Ewing adds lawyers, hires 4 from Leech Tishman



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Four lawyers from Leech Tishman Fuscaldo & Lampl, including the heads of its construction and litigation practices, joined **Saul Ewing LLP's** Pittsburgh office April 16.

That brings the local total to 13 as Philadelphia-based Saul Ewing nears its first anniversary here in May and remains on track to meet firmwide Managing Partner David Antzis' goal of 20 by year-end.

"When I said that last year ... people thought I was crazy," Antzis said. "But we're on target."

Initially operating in temporary space and with four employees, Saul Ewing didn't start recruiting until it settled into offices at One PPG Place last fall.

Saul Ewing has roughly 240 lawyers in 11 offices. Leech Tishman has 51 in three offices, including 44 downtown.

"We're adapting to them leaving," said [Pete Fuscaldo](#), Leech Tishman's managing partner. "We have no doubt that we'll fill the void in short order."

Three came aboard as partners. They are [Kevin Acklin](#), who specializes in corporate transactions and private equity; [Joe Bucci](#), who chaired Leech Tishman's construction practice group; and [Charlie Kelly](#), who led Leech Tishman's litigation practice. [Eric Kimbel](#), who specializes in construction and litigation law, joined as special counsel.

Kelly said he found Leech Tishman too small, and his prior firm, **K&L Gates LLP**, which just opened its 48th office, too large.

"It sounded a lot like K&L when I first arrived there back in 1987, and I was lawyer number 232," Kelly said. "At Saul, you have multiple layers of the law covered with real depth. The other day, a Ph.D. microphysicist called me because she needs patent advice. And I was immediately able to connect her with a Ph.D. biochemist staff attorney in the Baltimore Saul office. I have pretty substantial contacts in Baltimore, which is Saul's second-biggest office, and I've already hit the ground running with opportunities there and pitches coming up for client relationships I couldn't have had (at Leech Tishman)."

Bucci, who worked in the construction industry prior to earning his law degree, said his experience plays well into the "larger network of clients" at Saul Ewing. The geographic reach and working with a broader group of lawyers also are pluses, he said.

"I was a resident project engineer on the PPG complex when it was built in the 1980s, so I am now working in a building that I helped build," he said. "It's almost like an omen."

Kimbel said some of his clients work in the Washington, D.C.-Maryland area, "and having people in our firm dealing with the courts there is definitely a help."

Antzis tends to hire in groups here, starting with a quartet of lawyers from Schnader Harrison's Pittsburgh office. Last month, four ERISA/employee benefits lawyers from Thorp Reed & Armstrong LLP came aboard.

"You're gaining critical mass more quickly, and it's a cumbersome process to grow to 20 people by hiring 20 individually," Antzis said. "It's not just a faster way to grow, but a sounder way; you're taking people who are used to working together, and they embrace the same core values, and that gives you a better chance of success."

Capabilities Saul Ewing wants to add here are real estate, bankruptcy and commercial litigation.

Like Saul Ewing, San Francisco-based Gordon & Rees opened its Pittsburgh office last spring. It has doubled in size from seven to 14 lawyers.

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