

Shook Hardy Brings On 4 Goodell DeVries Attys In Philly

By Mike Curley

Law360 (March 2, 2020, 4:35 PM EST) – Shook Hardy & Bacon LLP announced Monday that it is expanding its Philadelphia office with the addition of four new product liability litigation partners from Goodell DeVries Leech & Dann LLP.

Bob Limbacher, Eben Flaster, Adam Tolin and Margaret O’Neill began working at Shook Hardy on Sunday, the firm said in a statement, bringing their experience in defending pharmaceutical companies and medical device makers in product liability and other commercial matters.

Flaster, who co-chaired the product liability practice at Goodell DeVries, told Law360 on Monday that they were drawn to Shook Hardy because its broader platform that will help them serve their clients, who span across the country. He added that the four have worked with Shook Hardy lawyers over the years and see an opportunity to strengthen their relationships with the firm’s clients, as well as connect with new ones.

“It gives us a chance to do more for our existing clients,” he said. “We have contacts at other pharmaceutical companies that I think would be excited about the opportunity for us to have the additional resources and brand that Shook provides us.”

Tolin also touted Shook’s reputation as a premier trial firm, saying they hope to expand their business at the firm.

“Marrying us up with the terrific lawyers at Shook and the great brand that Shook has, we think it’s a natural fit,” he said. “We can help expand current client relationships that have existed for many, many years, but our presence can help in even further cementing and potentially expanding the current client base.”

Flaster, a graduate of Georgetown University Law Center, has been active in high-profile pharmaceutical litigation for two decades, the firm said in a statement, and has represented biotech and other large clients in product liability cases.

Tolin has served as trial counsel in a \$1 billion commercial arbitration in addition to his work at trial for



Bob Limbacher



Eben Flaster

product liability and complex commercial litigation cases. He earned his law degree from New York University School of Law.

University of Texas School of Law alum Limbacher held senior management positions at his prior firms and serves as lead counsel defending pharmaceutical and medical device companies in product liability and other litigation matters.

In addition to her work defending product liability cases for pharmaceutical and medical device companies, O'Neill, a graduate of University of Pennsylvania Law School, has experience defending design defect claims for medical handling equipment.

O'Neill said the group's experience in the pharmaceutical space, where they've spent the bulk of their careers, will be a boon for Shook Hardy, adding each has unique experience aside from that shared background. In her case, she said, as a junior associate she did a secondment with Sunoco Inc., which was headquartered in Philadelphia at the time.

Working with the in-house litigation department for three months, she said, gave her insight into what their clients were looking for, what the in-house demands were, and what issues the businesses would be dealing with, all of which have served her in her practice.

Limbacher, Flaster and Tolin had previously worked at Dechert with Sean Wajert, managing partner at Shook Hardy's Philadelphia office.

"We are very excited to welcome our new partners, who bring deep experience in product liability and commercial litigation," Wajert told Law360 on Monday. "So we are building on our strengths. Growing the Philadelphia office is part of our strategic vision to grow the firm, especially in the northeast. This area is home to many of our clients, and also a frequent venue for litigation against our clients."

He added that his experience working with them gives him confidence that they'll do well at the firm.

Flaster, in return, said Wajert's presence at Shook Hardy is one of the reasons the group decided to take up the opportunity, saying it gave them comfort that they were making the right move.

Looking ahead, Tolin said the four are hopeful they'll be able to integrate their practice with Shook Hardy's and revisit past working relationships. Flaster added they also want to expand both their own client base and their new firm's by reaching out to contacts within the pharmaceutical and medical device spaces and offering them the services they can now provide thanks to Shook Hardy's platform.

"I think this will be a great move for all of us," O'Neill said. "Hopefully, we'll continue to grow together with the bigger firm."

--Editing by Alanna Weissman.



Adam Tolin



Margaret O'Neill