

THE
AMERICAN LAWYERShook Adds 3 Partners in 'Fierce' Market,
Looks for More California Growth

By Andrew Maloney

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Litigation-focused Shook, Hardy & Bacon has added three partners over the last week, bringing two experienced litigators from litigation firms George LLP and Bowman and Brooke, as well as a cybersecurity counselor from Sidley Austin.

Competition for laterals and growth in general remains “fierce,” Shook’s leader said in an interview. But the Missouri-founded firm has found success with an industry-specific focus that brings science and technology, the environment and other complex litigation topics to the fore.

“The competition is fierce. People seem to be in growth mode generally, and you have to have something special that I think people want to gravitate toward,” said firm chair Madeleine McDonough, on the state of the legal market.

The firm recently added first-chair litigators Austin Henderson from Bowman and Brooke, and Chris Arledge, from George LLP, as well as Catherine Muir, a cybersecurity expert who was previously counsel at Sidley Austin.



Courtesy photos

(l-r) Shook, Hardy & Bacon partners Chris Arledge, Austin Henderson, and Catherine Muir.

Shook grew revenue nearly 30% and profits per partner 57.4% last year. The firm continues to see high demand, McDonough said, describing the firm’s strategy and expertise as “industry-specific, in large part” and noting medical devices, software, automobiles and the environment as some aspects under that umbrella.

She said the firm has worked with all three new laterals in the past, on the same side and opposite sides of cases, and that all three of them were looking for an opportunity to continue working on a national platform or an

expanded platform and to continue working with their own, blue-chip clients, as well as tag in on new client matters the firm already has in the works.

"These are people who probably could've gone a lot of different places, but have relationships and friends, and feel they will be happy here," she added.

Henderson has significant experience working with the automotive industry, defending some of the world's largest vehicle-makers and suppliers in wrongful death, product defect, negligence and other high-stakes issues, the firm said. He'll be based in the firm's Orange County office, in the general liability litigation practice.

Before his move to Shook, Arledge was the creator and director of George LLP's trial academy. He is "very much in the business litigation space in Los Angeles," McDonough said, and represents clients across industries in IP litigation, including patents, trademarks and licensing agreements, as well as commercial disputes. His knowledge and depth in "difficult, complex California jurisdictions" will also be an asset to clients, she added.

"Chris remains a lifelong friend, professional collaborator, and one of the finest trial lawyers around. There is no doubt in my mind we will continue to work together both on

legal cases and through his one-of-a-kind trial advocacy program," George managing partner Keith Wesley said in a statement.

Muir, who is based in Washington, D.C., is "a trusted senior adviser" on cybersecurity who also has experience with automotive companies, but is "very deep" in financial services, healthcare, retail, and telecom industries, McDonough noted.

"She's just got a lot of varied pieces of the puzzle that when they come together make her very valuable for any large company with huge threats to their business," she said. "But also she's very knowledgeable about governance issues and information about — how do they protect their information while continuing to do business?"

McDonough said the firm wants to continue growing across its existing footprint and doesn't plan to open any new offices at the moment. She said California likely remains the firm's highest-need area.

"There's so much litigation there, so much demand," she said. "You really need experienced, seasoned, California-barred trial attorneys, and you want to get the best lawyers you can."

Representatives for Bowman and Brooke and Sidley Austin did not immediately respond to requests for comment on the moves.