

PRESS RELEASE

Baker Donelson Adds Tallahassee Location for Third Florida Office

April 30, 2014

(Tallahassee, Florida / April 30, 2014) Baker Donelson has opened an office in Tallahassee, marking the law firm's third new location in Florida in three years.

The Firm's Chairman and Chief Executive Officer Ben C. Adams notes that expanding into Tallahassee allows Baker Donelson to better serve its clients and positions the Firm for continued growth in Florida.

"As a full-service law firm with a well-established footprint across the Southeast, having a strong presence in Florida makes sense for Baker Donelson," said Mr. Adams. "Tallahassee is the next step in expanding our presence in the state and strengthens our ability to meet the needs of our clients who do business in Florida."

Baker Donelson first entered Florida in November 2011 through a merger with the Orlando firm of Litchford & Christopher, then added a Fort Lauderdale location in August of 2013.

With the addition of the Tallahassee office, Baker Donelson now has 20 offices in seven states across the Southeast, Texas and Washington, D.C.

The Firm is launching the Tallahassee office with the addition of a team of three attorneys: Kelly Overstreet Johnson, Dena H. Sokolow and Russell B. Buchanan. Ms. Johnson, a past president of The Florida Bar, will be the office managing shareholder. Both Ms. Johnson and Ms. Sokolow are Tallahassee natives.

Ms. Johnson said, "Joining Baker Donelson gives us the opportunity to offer our clients broader representation through a full-service law firm that has the ability to serve virtually any legal need. We're proud to become part of a firm with the national reputation that Baker Donelson enjoys, and we know our clients will benefit from the client-focused philosophy and increased resources this move allows us to provide them."

Ms. Johnson joins as shareholder and a member of the Firm's business litigation and employment litigation groups, where she handles a variety of cases in commercial, real estate and employment discrimination defense matters. With more than 32 years' experience in litigating matters within the state and federal courts, she has litigated cases involving breach of contract, claims for deceptive and unfair trade practices, defense of employment-related claims before the EEOC and Florida Commission on Human Relations, real estate litigation involving foreclosures and breach of guaranty agreements, claims for fraud in the inducement, and defending matters brought under the False Claims Act including actions involving Medicaid reimbursement. Since 2006, Ms. Johnson has been recognized in *The Best Lawyers in America*® and listed in *Florida Super Lawyers*. She was named *Best Lawyers'* 2014 Tallahassee Employment Law – Management "Lawyer of the Year." In 2013, Ms. Johnson was named to *Florida Trend's* "Legal Elite Hall of Fame" for being named to the annual "Legal Elite" list for ten consecutive years.

Ms. Sokolow also joins Baker Donelson as shareholder and as a member of the Firm's labor and employment group. She has more than 20 years of experience counseling and defending employers and management on a wide range of labor and employment matters. Her litigation experience includes arbitrations, class and collective actions, single and multiple plaintiff lawsuits, arbitrations and administrative proceedings involving employment discrimination and harassment, retaliation, wage and hour, state whistleblower claims and

common law claims. With a practice spanning Florida, Georgia, Alabama and beyond, Ms. Sokolow has handled virtually every type of discrimination case at either the federal, state or agency level, including sexual harassment, race, sex, pregnancy, disability, religion, age, national origin and retaliation. She is a member of the State Bars of Florida, Georgia and Alabama and the American Bar Association. Ms. Sokolow previously owned and ran an HR consulting business. In 2013, she was named to *Florida Trend's* "Legal Elite" in the area of Labor & Employment Law.

Mr. Buchanan joins the Firm as an associate in the business litigation group, where he focuses his practice on real estate, bankruptcy and litigation. His real estate practice includes commercial acquisitions, development and refinancing transactions. His litigation practice is primarily focused on complex commercial and real estate litigation involving contract disputes, employment disputes, real estate development disputes, workout agreements, construction and lien disputes, condominium disputes, title insurance disputes, commercial evictions and foreclosures. Mr. Buchanan's bankruptcy practice is focused on creditor representation. He represents financial institutions, lenders and other creditors in Chapter 7, 11, 13 and 15 proceedings. While attending the Florida State University College of Law, Mr. Buchanan served as a law clerk for John McCain's Presidential campaign, where he researched and wrote memoranda on various aspects of federal and Florida election and administrative law.