

Daily Report Feature: Taylor English Expands Employment and Litigation Practices

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In The Trenches: *By Meredith Hobbs, Staff Reporter* Taylor English Duma has added five new attorneys, including three labor and employment practitioners. ERISA lawyer Carlton C. Pilger joined the firm's labor and employment practice Jan. 14 as a partner from Miller & Martin. Randy C. Gepp, an employment litigator with 30 years of trial experience, joined as a partner in December from Hollowell, Foster & Gepp, where he was a name partner. Lauren H. Zeldin joined as an associate in December from Ashe Rafuse & Hill. Two litigators have also joined the firm. Edward C. Henderson Jr. joined from a solo practice as counsel, and Natalie N. Mark joined from Clifford Chance in Washington as an associate. The new additions give the firm 77 lawyers, according to its founder, Marc A. Taylor, almost five years after opening its doors. Taylor said that is the size he's envisioned for the firm. "It's a size where we have enough breadth and depth of talent that we can represent Fortune 1000 companies but are still nimble and responsive. We all know each other at 75 attorneys, which would not be the case at 200 or 300," he said. The growth has continued despite the recession; Taylor said the firm had 51 lawyers at the beginning of last year. With Pilger, Gepp and Zeldin, Taylor English has expanded its labor and employment practice to 18 attorneys, making up about a fourth of its total lawyer head count, after starting with one—Taylor—when the firm launched in April 2005. Labor and employment law is a price-sensitive area, since disputes generally are not bet-the-company cases, said Ilene W. Berman, who heads Taylor English's labor and employment practice. "Clients aren't going to pay \$600 an hour for defending an EEOC charge," she said. That makes labor and employment law a logical practice for Taylor English, which pitches itself as a firm offering seasoned partners with more flexible fee structures and lower rates than at larger firms. "That's what we were built on in 2005," Berman said. Berman said clients range from start-ups and small employers to a couple of Fortune 100 companies. Mid-size companies with \$10 million to \$20 million in revenue are typical clients for the practice, she said. Pilger is the firm's first ERISA lawyer. "We've had many inquiries over the past three years for employee benefits counsel and have not had one," said Berman. Before Miller & Martin, Pilger worked with Berman and Joseph M. English, one of the firm's name partners, at Fisher & Phillips. Berman said Gepp's addition raises the profile of the firm's labor and employment practice. "He's one of the most well-known employment trial lawyers in town," she said. Taylor said the firm's growth has been driven by litigation work, adding that increased demand for securities litigation defense prompted Mark's recruitment. "We've accumulated a tremendous amount of litigation talent over the past year," Taylor said. Henderson will handle plaintiffs' contingency litigation for businesses as well as defense work, said Taylor.

ATTORNEYS

Randy C. Gepp

Natalie N. Mark

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“I think it's a huge opportunity. Every Fortune 100 and 500 company has that category of cases,” he said.