

Pashman Stein Hires 4 Partners From Norris McLaughlin

The group is led by Daniel Guadalupe, who has spent 30 years at Norris McLaughlin, including most recently as its litigation practice co-chairman.

By David Gialanella

Pashman Stein Walder Hayden has brought on four new partners from fellow New Jersey firm Norris McLaughlin, including Daniel Guadalupe, who had spent 30 years at Norris, including most recently as its litigation practice co-chairman.

Guadalupe, along with Deanna Koestel, Keith McDonald and Oren Chaplin, are joining Hackensack-based Pashman Stein as of April 1.

Guadalupe and Koestel will co-chair a construction litigation practice at their new firm, while McDonald handles commercial and employment litigation, and Chaplin handles corporate work.

“They bring good business, they bring good expertise with them,” managing partner Michael Stein said of the laterals. “I see each of the four of them as being real potential leaders of the firm.”

Stein added, “Each of these lawyers has a book a business,” and “to bring in young originators is not a easy thing to do.”



Daniel Guadalupe



Deanna Koestel



Oren Chaplin



Keith McDonald

The group didn’t exactly bring new practice areas to the firm, but “I felt like they belonged at our firm,” and the added depth in construction litigation “is meaningful to us because, though we handle construction litigation matters, we have lost construction litigation bids because of the perception that” the practice lacks significant depth.

Chaplin, meanwhile, is “a purebred corporate guy, and that’s an area where we’ve been trying to grow, so I’m really excited about him coming on, because I see him, along with the corporate folks we already have, really getting traction,” Stein said.

Guadalupe, reached separately, said Pashman Stein’s growth and

its “commitment to give back to the community” through the Justice Gary S. Stein Public Interest Center and other undertakings were draws for his group.

The additions push Pashman Stein’s attorney head count to about 70.

“It’s exciting because [Pashman Stein] keeps growing and the firm has an interest in areas that I have an interest in,” Guadalupe said, calling the move the “next phase of my career.”

In addition to “building up their construction practice” and bringing his arbitration practice to Pashman Stein, Guadalupe said “as a former president of the Hispanic Bar [Association of New Jersey], I’ve

always been very involved in the community,” and pointed to the firm’s “philosophy that the law is a vehicle not only to serve private clients but to give back.” Guadalupe said he has reached out to colleagues from HBA-NJ to find ways to collaborate with the firm, which he said also is “committed to diversity and inclusion.”

Guadalupe, who represents pharmaceutical companies, national food manufacturers, and, on the government side, the city of Perth Amboy and its downtown improvement district, joined Norris McLaughlin in 1991 from Orloff, Lowenbach, Stifelman & Siegel, and became litigation co-chairman three years ago.

Guadalupe said Norris McLaughlin “is an excellent firm and will continue to be an excellent firm.”

Norris McLaughlin managing partner John Vanarthos, reached by phone, said firm partner Robert Mahoney might retake his role as litigation practice co-chairman in Guadalupe’s absence, though “there are a lot of young stars in our litigation department” and “we definitely have the strength there and the willingness” to fill that void. “We have to turn lemons into lemonade where we can.”

“On a personal note, I’m very sorry to see them go,” he said of the laterals. “They’re very good lawyers, they’re very good friends.”

“Their departure is something that we’ll focus on, in terms of their skill set and their revenue,” but “I’m not concerned” about the firm overall, Vanarthos said.

He said Norris McLaughlin retains the capability to handle the construction litigation and other areas of work that the four laterals will no longer be present to service, and the firm has added some 14 laterals over the past year across its New Jersey, Pennsylvania and New York offices in banking and finance, co-op and condo law, intellectual property, liquor law and corporate law.

The firm’s year-over-year gross revenue was essentially flat, “which I think is a success” given the pandemic, Vanarthos said, and profits “ha[ve] gone considerably higher” because of lower expenses. Culturally, COVID-19 “has been a shock,” but financially the firm “did better than we originally feared,” he said.

‘Struck by the Menschiness’

Guadalupe and Stein met through Linda Berthold of recruiting firm Haley Stuart Group, though he had previously crossed paths with Michael Stein, as well as with Gary Stein. The elder Stein was a policy director for Gov. Tom Kean, and Guadalupe noted that he worked on *Friends of Governor Kean v. New Jersey Election Law Enforcement Commission*. (Kean would later nominate Stein to the New Jersey Supreme Court, where he served for 17 years.)

When Michael Stein and Guadalupe met late last year, “he and I just hit off,” Stein said. “That’s where interest begins and ends—the character, the personality, the fit.” The other attorneys met Stein as well. “It was just this sense of kismet, this high energy. I was just struck by the menschiness of the group,” Stein said of the meeting.

Pashman Stein indeed has grown, thanks in part to the 2016 merger of firms Pashman Stein and Walder Hayden, and the firm **added several laterals last year**, including former presiding Appellate Division Judge Ellen Koblitiz and well-known defense attorney Raymond Brown.

In 2019, the firm **launched the Stein Center**.

Guadalupe noted how law firms’ social consciousness has become a major consideration for laterals. “I see it in the younger generation of lawyers. ... In private practice, there used to be a time when you only focused on the firm’s clients, but I think the younger generation is seeing, correctly and wisely, that the practice of law can also make a difference in social justice areas.”

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