

Mover Of The Week

Leshaw Leaves Greenberg To Launch His Solo Practice

By Stephanie Gleason



Jim Leshaw lives on an island off the coast of Florida. His preferred method for commuting the nine miles from his home on Key Biscayne to the Miami offices of Greenberg Traurig LLC? Bicycle.

That's nine miles across three bridges (two over the Biscayne Bay and one over the Miami River) through another island (Virginia Key), along the mainland beach-front and into downtown Miami.

"I've always done things differently," Mr. Leshaw said in an interview this week.

So maybe his next career move shouldn't come as a surprise. After 25 years with Greenberg Traurig, including many during which he served as the law firm's Florida head of restructuring, Jim Leshaw decided to leave and start his own law practice—Leshaw Law.

And the new firm, well, it's "a little bit different business model than most other smaller law firms," he said.

For starters, Mr. Leshaw is the only attorney, which is all he wants for now. Small is really the goal, he said. That's because he'd like to be able to handle mediations throughout the U.S. on a conflict-free basis, something that just wasn't possible at a firm the size of Greenberg Traurig.

"I was just looking to do something a little different than what I'd been doing," Mr. Leshaw said of his desire to take on more mediation work, and his employment with Greenberg was preventing him. But it's work he really enjoys. "It's fun because you actually see a tangible result," Mr. Leshaw said of mediations, and "you know exactly what the result is."

Mr. Leshaw would like the makeup of his work at the new firm to be 50% mediations or arbitrations and 50% general business matters, he said.

It's not been quite two weeks since he moved into the new offices (one in Miami and one in Key Biscayne, which he said is an actual office—not his house), and so far, so good. He's already done some mediation work and has been contacted by a Mexican company about acting as its in-house counsel on an acquisition, he said.

Working with Latin American companies is an area of expertise for the attorney. Mr. Leshaw has helped companies restructure in countries whose bankruptcy laws date back to the Napoleonic Code, he said. In El Salvador and Guatemala, he helped file the first bankruptcies those countries had ever seen, he said.

Mr. Leshaw has been involved in numerous high-profile restructurings on American soil, including those of Avianca S.A. and TransEastern Properties Inc. (which led to the Touse Inc. bankruptcy). He even served as Burt Reynolds's attorney during the actor's mid-1990s Chapter 11 case.

More than 25 years after he became a bankruptcy attorney "purely by accident," Mr. Leshaw is on to the next thing. But one thing's for sure: It'll be different from what everyone else is doing.

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Networking

A selected listing of recent appointments and announcements in U.S. bankruptcy law practice, compiled by Dow Jones's *DBR Small Cap* staff.

Sean Dailey has joined the New York office of law firm **Chadbourne & Parke LLP** and will be of counsel in the private funds group. He has experience in private fund restructurings and capital markets, and he has advised clients in the media and telecommunications industries. Most recently, Mr. Dailey worked with the **Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP** law firm.

Brian P. Major has joined advisory firm **AlixPartners** as a managing director with the enterprise improvement group. Mr. Major, who's worked in product development, has helped clients with restructurings, turnarounds and portfolio optimization. Most recently, he worked as vice president and partner with **A.T. Kearney's** operations group.

Cynthia Norton has been appointed as a judge for the **U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the Western District of Missouri**. Judge Norton most recently practiced bankruptcy law at the **Grimes & Rebein LC** firm, which she helped found and has been involved with since 1996. She is a fellow of the American College of Bankruptcy.

DBR Small Cap's Networking column welcomes news releases from those working in the corporate bankruptcy industry. The column will appear each Friday. Items for Networking may be emailed to Melanie Cohen at melanie.cohen@dowjones.com.