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Women-owned firm heads out on its own

Scharf, Banks, Marmor uses latest technology for corporate clients

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Stephanie A. Scharf said the launch of a new law firm Friday will allow her and her colleagues to use the latest technology to serve corporate clients.

The law firm of Scharf, Banks, Marmor LLC consists of 10 lawyers.

Nine of the lawyers with the new firm, including Scharf, Theodore L. Banks and Sarah R. Marmor, most recently worked at Schoeman, Updike & Kaufman LLP, a New York law firm.

In 2007, Scharf left Jenner & Block LLP and opened Schoeman, Updike & Kaufman's Chicago office. That office did business here with four names, Schoeman, Updike, Kaufman & Scharf.

When asked about forming the new firm, Scharf said, "It was just a natural evolution to become an independent firm. We are a collegial office with a focus on technology."

"We are using state-of-the-art computer technology, including cloud computing, just to enable us to be responsive to clients with the latest software for all of our applications," Banks said.

The other lawyers who joined the new firm from Schoeman, Updike & Kaufman are Eric F. Quandt, David W. Austin, Marilyn J. Chimes, Deirdre A. Fox, Joseph M. Paolucci and George D. Sax.

Both Banks and Charles B. Updike, a Schoeman, Updike & Kaufman partner, called the departure of the nine lawyers amicable.

"We wish them well," Updike said. "We think they are fine lawyers."

The other lawyer who joined the new firm is Stacy S. Jakobe, who previously practiced at Jenner & Block, Scharf said.

Scharf and Marmor are the new firm's managing partners, she said.

"It's not unique to be a women-owned firm," Scharf said. "But we are one of the largest women-owned firms in Chicago serving corporate clients."

The new firm concentrates on complex litigation, compliance and corporate governance, employment, life sciences and antitrust. Clients include large national and international businesses along with some smaller businesses, Scharf said.



Stephanie A. Scharf

The new firm plans to hire about two more lawyers within the next month, she said.

Banks previously worked at Kraft Foods Inc., serving as associate general counsel and later as chief counsel, global compliance.

"I developed an understanding of what the client really needs," he said. "It is part of our philosophy to try to address the concerns of the clients."

The new firm includes lawyers with unusual specialty skills, Scharf said. For instance, Chimes became a doctor of veterinary medicine and conducted scientific research before she started practicing law.



Theodore L. Banks

Scharf said she earned a doctorate in behavioral sciences/psychology with special training in statistical analysis and research.

Both Chimes and Fox are registered patent attorneys with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office.

"We're very comfortable with scientific and technical issues, either in counseling or litigation," Scharf said.

The new firm remains in the same office suite at 333 W. Wacker Drive that the lawyers worked in while with their former firm, Scharf said.

"It's been a seamless transition and it's been seamless for our clients," she said