

Bracewell Swipes Managing Partner From Pillsbury Winthrop

By Daphne Zhang

Law360 (July 8, 2020, 10:11 PM EDT) -- Bracewell LLP has hired away the former managing partner from Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman LLP's Houston office to bolster the firm's nationwide expansion of its litigation group.

Vincent E. Morgan, 47, joined Bracewell's Houston office last week as a partner on its litigation team, ending his 18 years of practice at Pillsbury. He has been temporarily working from home due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Morgan said he was attracted by Bracewell's collaborative culture, strength in energy and health care sectors, and prominent presence in Texas.



Vincent E. Morgan

Morgan told Law360 on Wednesday he is aiming to help Bracewell build up a full insurance legal service for the firm's corporate clients and looking forward to helping them with everything from submitting coverage claims to insurance disputes litigation.

The new partner said most large firms representing insurance companies nowadays get conflicts that prevent them from acting on behalf of policyholders. And though practice conflict was never a big issue for him at Pillsbury, "every now and then we'd run into an issue," Morgan said. "Sometimes it was because we had conflicts with our corporate clients. Sometimes there was an insurance company conflict."

Morgan said he is thrilled to join a conflict-free firm that does not represent carriers and that has synergy with its corporate clients. "There are only a handful of insurance companies, but Bracewell has thousands of corporate clients," he said.

"We can tell any client that calls, 'Yeah, we can help you.' We don't have to worry about it. We don't have to be anxious if we take this matter, is it going to hurt our ability to work for that insurance company?"

Morgan called his joining Bracewell a "marrying of two houses together," since he had already done coverage work for many companies that Bracewell represents.

The partner said he has enjoyed working with policyholders who are deeply invested in their insurance coverage issues. "It's always fun to work with clients that really do care about how their matters get handled and how they turn out," he said.

Morgan — currently working with businesses on COVID-19 loss claims — has helped companies get billion-dollar recoveries for catastrophic claims. He represents policyholders in all areas of business insurance, ranging from property and business interruption, commercial general liability and directors' and officers' liability to cyber and intellectual property insurance, among others. He also advises clients on risk management issues, such as contractual indemnity and insurance procurement structures.

Morgan said Wednesday he appreciates working at a firm with the right culture fit.

"One of the most important things that matter a lot to me is a cultural fit," he said. "Everybody I talk to who has worked at Bracewell in the past or works here now just raves about this place from a cultural standpoint."

Stephen B. Crain, chair of Bracewell's litigation section, said in an interview Wednesday Bracewell "operates very much as an old-fashioned law firm" that is highly collaborative, and "the notion of competing for client credit is not something that our firm contemplates or tolerates."

Crain said Bracewell is focused on pure commercial litigation between corporate parties and adding a senior trial partner like Morgan is always a bonus for the firm.

"It's rare because folks like Vince don't come along very often. He really bolsters a practice that we barely have our toes in and accelerates it like a rocket ship for us," Crain said.

Crain said the firm has a larger "roster of clients domestically and internationally," all of whom have insurance issues.

"It is just eminently logical to bring in a specialist who can serve our existing clients in a thing they need," he said.

--Editing by Janice Carter Brown.