

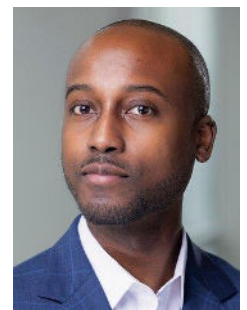
Phillips Lytle Adds Ex-Kirkland Litigation Partner In Chicago

By Tracey Read

Law360 (August 30, 2023, 3:34 PM EDT) -- Buffalo, New York-based Phillips Lytle LLP said Wednesday it has continued expanding its national litigation practice by adding a Kirkland & Ellis LLP partner in Chicago.

Jaran R. Moten, a litigator known for resolving a broad range of complex commercial disputes, joined the MidLaw firm Aug. 5.

Moten said that although he's grateful for his time at the larger firm, he could not pass up the chance to work again with former Kirkland litigation partners Joel A. Blanchet and John R. Worth, who both now work at Phillips Lytle.



Jaran R. Moten

"Joel and John were definitely the magnet that drew me in, but what sealed the deal was meeting the full team," Moten told Law360 Pulse on Wednesday.

Moten represents Fortune 500 companies on mass and toxic tort cases, private equity firms on disputes arising from mergers and acquisitions, distressed companies in bankruptcy litigation proceedings, and a variety of clients on sophisticated commercial matters. His industry experience includes technology, pharmaceutical, medical and dental devices, energy, telecommunications, retail, containerboard and packaging, petrochemical, and financial services.

"We have known and worked with Jaran for many years. He is a versatile lawyer, with a hard-earned set of litigation skills, great trial instincts and an easy charm that attracts people to him," Worth said in a statement. "Jaran's exceptional litigation abilities together with his proven leadership skills and entrepreneurial mindset — only strengthen further Phillips Lytle's reputation in Chicago and nationally."

In August 2022, Phillips Lytle brought in Worth to lead its new Chicago office. Worth was a trial lawyer and commercial litigator for Kirkland for over a decade.

Worth told Law360 at the time that he followed the lead of Blanchet, who left Kirkland's New York City office for Phillips Lytle in 2016. Worth's practice focuses mostly on commercial litigation and other disputes in the petrochemical and oil and gas space. Blanchet also has clients in that space.

Meanwhile, a fourth former Kirkland partner, Peter A. Bellacosa, joined Phillips Lytle in 2018.

Moten said his goals include doing his part to help the Chicago office grow smartly.

"We want to increase in size fairly quickly, but we want to do it the right way," he said. "We don't want to rush to increase in size at the expense of getting the best feet in the door. But I will tell you that we have a serious focus on finding very good talent of the highest-caliber lawyers and building a larger team so that we can handle both the work that we've already brought in and the work that we foresee bringing in the future."

Currently, the Chicago office consists of two full-time partners — Moten and Worth — two full-time associates, and two full-time paralegals. There are also a handful of other attorneys who split their time between Chicago and other offices, Moten said.

Moten, a Kirkland litigation partner for more than four years, first joined that firm in 2012 as a summer associate.

Moten earned his law degree magna cum laude from Washington University in St. Louis School of Law, where he served as senior editor of the Washington University Law Review. He attended college at the University of Kansas, where he graduated with honors in philosophy.

"Hiring an accomplished attorney like Jaran represents a significant early success in our efforts to support our clients through an expansion of the Chicago office," Phillips Lytle managing partner Kevin M. Hogan said in the statement.

Besides Chicago, Phillips Lytle has offices across New York state, in Washington, D.C., and in Canada.

--Additional reporting by Rachel Rippetoe. Editing by Alyssa Miller.