

GJTBS Welcomes Six Attorneys To The Firm...

Galloway, Johnson, Tompkins, Burr & Smith, PLC, A Gulf South Defense Firm, Welcomes Benjamin Grau, Eric J. Allen, Lindsay L. Meador, Jeremy Z. Soso, Christie L. Laporte and Jennifer L. Sinder to the Firm

New Orleans, LA, June 22, 2011- Galloway, Johnson, Tompkins, Burr & Smith, PLC, a Gulf South defense firm, is pleased to announce and introduce six attorneys who have joined the firm.

Benjamin R. Grau (Ben) of the New Orleans office maintains a diverse litigation and insurance coverage practice, with extensive experience in the State and Federal Courts of Louisiana, Texas, and across the country in complex matters primarily in the areas of general commercial litigation, construction law and construction defect litigation, insurance coverage, business interruption, premises and products liability, onshore and offshore oil and gas casualty/blowout litigation, and admiralty/maritime litigation.

Originally from New Orleans, Ben attended Jesuit High School and Tulane University, before beginning his legal career. He practiced primarily in the areas of construction, maritime, casualty, and commercial law for seven years before the winds and waters of Hurricane Katrina changed his path. After suffering the same fate as many New Orleanians, in January 2006, Ben and his family relocated to Dallas, Texas, where he was able to continue his professional development and expand his practice to include insurance coverage, business interruption, and premises and products liability law on a local, regional, and national scale. However, in January 2011, the call of home and the allure of practicing law in New Orleans led Ben to return to New Orleans.

He has earned an "AV Preeminent" rating from Martindale-Hubbell based on evaluations by his peers in Louisiana, Texas, and across the country.

He is a member of the New Orleans Bar Association, Dallas Bar Association, and Federal Bar Association, where he served as a past board member for the New Orleans chapter.

Eric J. Allen of the Houston office brings a diverse and interesting past to his practice of law. Following high school, Eric completed a five-year enlistment in the United States Navy with service aboard the aircraft carrier USS Nimitz during Operation Southern Watch and, later, at Misawa Air Base in Misawa, Japan. Mr. Allen received numerous accolades and service medals during his tour of active duty. After his honorable discharge, Eric embarked on a career in television news. He was an on-air reporter in markets such as Lubbock, Waco, Austin and Washington, D.C. He focused on investigative reporting and politics.

Related Practices

- Corporate Transactions
- Oil & Gas
- Environmental & Toxic Tort
- Insurance Defense & Coverage
- Maritime & Admiralty
- Mass Tort & Class Action
- Products Liability
- Professional Liability
- Employment Law
- Retail & Restaurant
- Subrogation
- Title Litigation
- Trucking & Transportation

Related Industries

- Maritime & Admiralty
- Maritime & Admiralty
- Insurance
- Maritime & Admiralty
- Insurance
- Maritime & Admiralty
- Insurance
- Amusements, Sports, and Recreation
- Construction
- Insurance
- Maritime & Admiralty
- Oil & Gas / Energy

After 12 years of on-air reporting, Mr. Allen turned his attention to academics and began working on his undergraduate degree. In 2006, Eric graduated *summa cum laude* with a degree in Political Science from St. Edward's University. Following his undergraduate success, and a 4.0 grade point average, Eric attended and graduated from the University of Texas School of Law with a Doctorate of Jurisprudence in 2009.

Retail & Restaurant
Trucking & Transportation

After passing the Texas bar exam in 2009, Eric began working as an associate at a law firm in Houston. Mr. Allen then joined the Houston office of Galloway, Johnson, Tompkins, Burr & Smith as an associate in April 2011. His primary practice areas include admiralty, maritime & energy matters, wrongful death, personal injury and property damage, as well as commercial disputes and litigation involving contractual indemnity and insurance.

Lindsay L. Meador joined the Lafayette office of Galloway, Johnson, Tompkins, Burr & Smith in 2011. She is from Abbeville, Louisiana. Lindsay earned her Bachelor's degree in Political Science from Loyola University in New Orleans in 2003 from which she graduated *Magna Cum Laude*. She received her Juris Doctor degree from Loyola University School of Law in 2007 and then moved back to Acadiana.

Lindsay's primary area of practice is general litigation, including insurance defense, insurance coverage, premises liability, and family law. She is licensed to practice in all Louisiana state and federal courts and is a member of the Federal Bar Association, Louisiana Bar Association, Lafayette Bar Association, and Louisiana Association of Defense Counsel.

Lindsay was awarded the 2010 Louisiana State Bar Association Young Lawyers Section Pro Bono Award for her extensive pro bono work in the Lafayette community. She also serves on the Lafayette Volunteer Lawyers Committee for the Lafayette Bar Foundation and on the executive board of the Lafayette Young Lawyers' Association.

Jeremy Z. Soso of the New Orleans office maintains a diverse litigation practice with extensive experience representing major corporations and insurance companies in the State and Federal Courts of Louisiana in the areas of premises liability, insurance coverage and insurance defense. Additionally, Jeremy uses his experience working in the construction industry diligently and efficiently to represent clients in complex construction law and construction defect litigation. He also has experience representing self-insured companies and advising them on the unique issues they face.

Christie L. Laporte, a native New Orleanian, attended Loyola University in New Orleans, where she majored in Economics and International Business; and she minored in Spanish. During her undergraduate tenure, she worked full time for her family's 5th generation plumbing company, Laporte Plumbing and Heating, Inc., and for the New Orleans based PJ's Coffee and Tea Company. Despite working full time and double majoring, Christie graduated *summa cum laude* in 4 years and earned both the Bank of Louisiana Award for the Outstanding Economics Graduate and the World Trade Center Award for the Outstanding International Business Graduate. Christie also attended Loyola on a full Academic Scholarship.

To date, Christie has 12+ years in the construction and real estate industries, where she has extensively worked in creating business plans to achieve securing debt, equity, and grant financing and performing job-cost accounting specific to the construction and real estate industries.

Christie passed the February 2011 Louisiana Bar and was admitted to practice on May 05, 2011. Thereafter, she joined the firm's Mandeville office.

Jennifer L. Sinder of the New Orleans office has 9+ years in the insurance and employer liability industries, with a majority of her practice focusing on defending insurers in catastrophic, automotive and commercial transportation cases. Jennifer has also developed extensive experience in defending insurers in premise-liability and hurricane-related cases, with a concentration in bad faith litigation.

Jennifer earned her Bachelor's degree from the University of South Florida (1995), and then went on to pursue her Master's degree in Public Administration from the E.J. Ourso College of Business at LSU (1998). Shortly thereafter, she obtained her J.D. from the Paul M. Hebert College of Law at LSU (2002).

Jennifer is a member of the Louisiana State Bar Association, New Orleans Bar Association and Federal Bar Association. As a member of the Bar, Jennifer has also applied her expertise to the New Orleans Pro Bono Project, the New Orleans Mission, Second Harvest Food Bank and the Louisiana Capital Assistance Center.

Galloway Johnson Tompkins Burr and Smith (GJTBS) is a Gulf South Regional defense firm dedicated to delivering value in legal counsel for over a generation to local, national and international clients in dozens of industries. GJTBS' recent expansions have resulted in over 90 attorneys in nine cities located in Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Florida and Missouri. GJTBS attorneys are experienced in handling insurance, Admiralty and maritime law, products liability, employer's liability, worker's compensation, general casualty, automobile liability, professional liability, construction, transportation, environmental, and energy claims, as well as corporate transactional matters.

For more information about Galloway Johnson Tompkins Burr and Smith, please visit us online at: <http://www.gjtbs.com>.

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