

Business, immigration firms merge, form 20-lawyer office

Dunn & Davison doubles size by joining with McCrummen

BY STEVE VOCKRODT | STAFF WRITER

Kansas City law firm Dunn & Davison LLC has doubled in size from its inception in 2009 by merging with one of the area's better known immigration practices.

The deal with The McCrummen Immigration Law Group, announced Jan. 3, brings Dunn & Davison to 20 lawyers, with five partners. It was at 10 lawyers when it started 18 months ago. No lawyers from either firm defected.

The merged firm will be called Dunn & Davison, though the McCrummen group can continue to use its name and be a division of Dunn & Davison.

On its face, the merger represents an unlikely marriage of an immigration firm, normally the province of boutique practices, with a business law firm.

But it's a relationship that makes sense.

"Especially firms that have some international presence, if you have some business where you constantly run across the need for your

clients in your law firm, the need for moving employees around, then immigration always comes into play," said Leon Versfeld, an immigration lawyer with Versfeld & Hugo LLC.

A prior relationship between partners at the firms and the need for business clients doing work overseas facilitated the combination.

"We do a fairly large construction practice, and for various reasons, we have found ourselves dealing with Spanish-language legislation or putting people in Abu Dhabi for six months and eight months at a time, and we needed immigration legal expertise," said Brian Dunn, managing partner of Dunn & Davison.

Dunn and partner Ron Holt approached Roger McCrummen, founder of McCrummen Immigration Law Group, for a client matter in August, and the discussion evolved into merger talks. McCrummen worked with Dunn & Davison partner Tom Stoll at Kurlbaum & Stoll before it dissolved six years ago.

McCrummen brings an at-times

eclectic client base, particularly with the firm's international asylum.

The firm represented a Russian environmentalist who obtained documents outlining the nation's nuclear weapons programs and later was severely beaten by government agents.

When seeking asylum before a U.S. judge, McCrummen's client discovered that during that beating, a 5-inch knife was broken off in his posterior, where he carried it for months, unbeknownst to him but for the pain it caused.

"He just figured it was bruises and stuff," McCrummen said. "You could see very clearly on the X-ray the outline of this hunting knife."

That helped persuade the judge.

McCrummen also has big companies in his portfolio, including Black & Veatch, Sprint Nextel Corp. and Seaboard Corp.

Dunn & Davison is a business firm that has banking, bankruptcy, corporate, environmental and higher education practices.

"We're looking to become a full-service firm," Dunn said. "And this is a step in that direction."



McCrummen



Dunn