

Law360 Highlights New Partner Trio in Florida Offices

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By: Kathleen O. Berkey, AICP, David K. Blattner, Susan Z. Jorgensen, Carolyn C. Meadows, Marielle E. Westerman

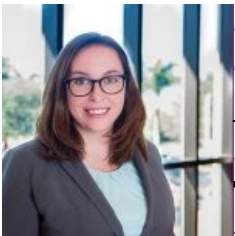


David
Blattner



Marielle
Westerman

In an October 4th article titled *“Becker & Poliakoff Lands Partner Trio In Fla. Offices,”* Law360 took note of Becker’s continued, fast-paced growth in key practice areas including real estate, community associations, development, zoning and land use, as well as business litigation.



Kathleen O.
Berkey

The story reported that **David K. Blattner**, **Marielle Westerman** and **Kathleen O. Berkey**, also a certified land planner, have joined our Fort Lauderdale, Tampa and Fort Myers offices, respectively. Along with the shareholders, **Carolyn C. Meadows** has joined as an associate in the firm’s community association practice in Tampa and **Susan Z. Jorgensen** has joined as of counsel in the firm’s business litigation and appellate practices in Fort Lauderdale, it said.

The article quoted Managing Shareholder **Gary Rosen**, who said, “We are excited to kick off the fourth quarter with the arrival of these top-tier, distinguished attorneys. This an opportune time to bring on Kathleen, David, Susan, Marielle and Carolyn, who will expand the range of capabilities that we offer clients at Becker.”



Carolyn C.
Meadows

David Blattner, who spent time as a summer associate at Becker during law school, told Law360 that the move was “a homecoming of sorts.”

After working for a decade and a half at a rival firm and then moving to solo practice work and smaller firms, David was drawn back to the firm where he started his law career, he told the paper.



Susan Z.
Jorgensen

“I’ve had the chance to compare and contrast big firms and small firms, and the last few years, I’ve realized how much I need and miss having resources and colleagues around to commiserate with, to kick things around with and also to be able to have other departments and experienced people from other fields of practice to be able to service my clients,” he said. “I haven’t been able to do that for a long time and I need it.”

As a transactional real estate attorney, David represents developers, lenders and investors as well as both landlords and tenants. Just before his move to Becker he handled an acquisition of additional property and refinancing of an auto dealership in Broward County, Florida, involving a large company with properties all over the state.



Continuing that work, he has already leveraged the firm’s talent in another Florida office as part of that company’s search for more property, he told Law360.

Marielle Westerman, an attorney whose work focuses on community associations, said she the move to Becker was an easy choice.

“Joining Becker allowed to me to focus on what I enjoy most about being an attorney and my strengths, which are practicing law and developing business, and to do so with such talented colleagues is sort of the icing on the cake for me,” she said. “The support that we get, the training, and the reach we have through the state and the country is just unparalleled.”

Marielle told the paper about a recent victory where she reached a settlement on behalf of a client after a battle with what she described as “one of the most difficult insurers in Florida” related to a sinkhole claim. Now, she said, she will be working to help her client figure out repairs, address contract issues, budgeting and other community association needs.

Katie Berkey also joined our community association practice where she handles day-to-day community association matters such as voting, elections and maintenance responsibility. Katie is also a certified land planner and assists clients in land-use issues related to their property or surrounding areas.

“I joined the firm because I wanted to grow my practice amongst the best — the

leaders in their respective practice groups, across local bars, the state bar,” she told Law360. “There are highly talented folks in our firm and I wanted to work amongst them.”

Katie is currently advising a community association regarding adjacent parcels of land that are intended to be subsequent phases of a project as the association works through rezoning while it looks to redevelop for commercial use.