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## Law firm hires its 10th lateral of the year

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The Chicago office of Quarles & Brady LLP acquired its 10th lateral hire of 2010 this week and seventh lateral partner of the year.

Eight of those lateral hires have come from bigger law firms.

Altogether, 13 lawyers have joined the Chicago office of Quarles & Brady this year, according to the firm, an increase of 21 percent, and it's only the beginning of June. (Three of those are first-year associates.)

Asked how the office acquired so many laterals in recent months, the office's managing partner, D. Scott Watson, said: "There has been a lot of upheaval in the legal profession in the last 18 months to two years. I think that caused people to be more open to looking at other firms, other platforms."

"I think we have an excellent platform for a lot of people" and "our billing rate structure is lower than a lot of the bigger firms in town. For some people and particularly for some clients, I think that's important. I think clients are looking at billing rates."

But Quarles & Brady is not just hoping for lawyers to find it, Watson said.

"We've really been focused in this office on recruiting for a couple years, probably about three years. This year, a lot of good things have come together for us," he said.

The office started 2010 with 62 lawyers and now has 75. Last year, in the depths of

the recession when many law firms were shedding lawyers, the Chicago office added six to eight lawyers, he added.

The Chicago office of Quarles & Brady has been expanding since 2007. "We were probably 42 or 43 lawyers at the beginning of 2007," Watson said.

Law firm consultant Joel F. Henning of Joel Henning & Associates said: "For some regional firms that are doing well, it's a buyer's market for lateral partners and experienced associates from large national and international firms."

"This is because some of these large firms are continuing to downsize," he said. "The continuing downsizing is only partly to trim costs. It's also to focus on investing in their core practices and disinvesting in those practices that may be profitable but not strategic to a particular firm. I have seen other regional firms use this opportunity to pick up good lawyers with good practices."

The latest lateral partner to join the office of Quarles & Brady is Lisa J. Acevedo, who this week joined the Health Law practice group. She came from Foley & Lardner LLP.

Watson listed the other laterals to join Quarles' Chicago office this year as follows:

- N. Rosie Rosenbaum, partner in insurance recovery, from McDermott, Will & Emery LLP.
- Adrienne C. Mazura, partner in labor and employment, from DLA Piper.

- Tracy L. Bradford Farley, partner in labor and employment, from DLA Piper.

- Sanford M. Stein, partner in environmental law and government relations, from Drinker, Biddle & Reath LLP.

- Lawrence W. Falbe, partner in environmental law, from Drinker, Biddle & Reath;

- Kathleen J. Swan, partner in corporate services, from Drinker, Biddle & Reath.

- Edward M. Roney, associate in intellectual property, from Cook Alex Ltd.

- Brian A. Hartstein, associate in labor and employment, from DLA Piper.

- Amber Liu, attorney in corporate services, from Grandfield Law Offices in Beijing, China.

Liu is part of Quarles & Brady's China initiative, Watson said. She advises Chinese companies that want to do work in the U.S. and American companies that want to do work in China.

Based in Milwaukee, Quarles & Brady has seven offices in the U.S. with about 450 lawyers. The Chicago office is now the third largest, after Milwaukee and Phoenix.

Asked if the Chicago office has a size it wants to be, Watson said, "We'd like to get in that hundred range in the next two to four years" with "good people who are going to stay and add to the practice."

As other advantages to Quarles & Brady, Watson cited the firm's culture of "practice as a firm rather than as individual attorneys," and its new, more spacious office at 300 N. LaSalle St. right on the Chicago River.