

Crowell & Moring Adds Labor And Employment Partner

By Irene Spezzamonte

Law360 (February 25, 2022, 5:28 PM EST) -- Crowell & Moring LLP has added a new partner to its litigation and labor and employment groups who has more than 20 years of experience in commercial and employment law.

The firm announced Wednesday that trial attorney Christopher J. Banks recently joined the San Francisco office, where he will work on issues including contract disputes, wage and hour issues and claims brought under California's Private Attorney General Act.



Christopher Banks

"A lot of what I do is at the intersection of employment, commercial and intellectual property law as I try to protect a company's most important assets, and because that's what I practice it is great to be at Crowell because there are low walls between groups and we can do everything together," Banks told Law360.

Banks joins Crowell & Moring after a 19-year tenure at Morgan Lewis & Bockius LLP, where he represented Japanese pharmaceutical company Asahi Kasei Pharma Corp. as its lead trial counsel during a three-month trial in 2011. The trial resulted in the largest contested jury verdict at the time, Crowell & Moring said.

"Chris' presence will deepen our bench strength to handle our clients' sophisticated large-scale labor and employment litigation matters on the West Coast and beyond," said Kris Meade, co-chair of Crowell & Moring's labor and employment group.

Banks said he gravitated toward employment law at Morgan Lewis because the firm brought him into cases that were close to going to trial or had some unique aspects that made them different from other employment cases. That is how he learned and practiced more employment law while also using his commercial law expertise during his final seven years at the BigLaw firm, he said.

Banks said he enjoyed being exposed to employment law because it gave him the opportunity to know his clients better and allowed him to do a lot of proactive work with them, something he didn't engage in much as a commercial law attorney.

"I consider a lot of what I do working on business divorces: people who used to get along, they used to be working together and now for whatever reason, they are either having trouble working together or they got officially split," Banks said.

Banks said a lot comes into play when he helps businesses deal with these separations, including contractual and noncompete issues.

"Chris brings a valuable blend of commercial litigation and labor and employment experience that strengthens our existing capabilities," said Jennifer Romano, co-chair of Crowell & Moring's litigation group.

Banks earned his bachelor's degree from the University of Nebraska and his law degree from Georgetown University Law Center.

He was named an Attorney of the Year by The Recorder in 2011 and made the Winning Litigators Hot List by the National Law Journal in 2012. Banks was also included in the Daily Journal's list of the top 20 lawyers in California under 40 in 2013.

--Editing by Amy Rowe.