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Drinker Biddle Adds Top Litigators To New Century City Office

LOS ANGELES – Six new lawyers, including prominent litigators George T. Caplan and Henry Shields, Jr., have joined Drinker Biddle & Reath LLP, substantially increasing the firm's presence in Los Angeles and establishing a new office in Century City. In addition to Caplan and Shields, who are joining as partners, Drinker Biddle is welcoming Kate S. Gold and Kristopher S. Davis as partners, Paul M. Gelb as counsel and Pamela K. Graham as an associate.

"We are extremely pleased that these high-quality lawyers have joined us," said Alfred W. Putnam, Jr., Chairman of Drinker Biddle. "We are interested in smart growth and investing in our future, with an eye toward continuously enhancing the quality and value of the service we provide to our clients."

Caplan and Shields, who met at Irell & Manella in 1975 and were partners there for many years, bring to Drinker Biddle an impressive background in complex commercial litigation, both in California and nationwide. They have represented a number of Fortune 100 companies in the insurance, energy, entertainment, financial services and real estate industries that have been involved in cases with alleged damages and exposure in the hundreds of millions of dollars. The move to Drinker Biddle brings together lawyers who have practiced for many years at Irell & Manella and Kaye Scholer, and who in joining the firm's other litigators in Los Angeles are part of a strategy to build one of the best and most sophisticated litigation practices locally and in the state.

"We came to Drinker Biddle because of its full breadth of corporate and securities and commercial litigation practices, in addition to its national reputation as a place for top-flight, successful litigators who work collaboratively and who are always looking out for the best interests of their clients," said Caplan. "We are proud to be a part of a comprehensive commercial practice that we intend to bring to Southern California in the coming years."

Shields agreed. "Drinker Biddle has the national platform and resources – along with the skilled and experienced lawyers – that combine to offer clients the creativity, efficiency and value that they demand," he said. "We're looking forward to continuing to build our presence in both Los Angeles and California in the coming years."

Drinker Biddle now has 10 lawyers in Los Angeles, split between its previously established Downtown office and its new Century City office. In addition to complex commercial litigation, the firm's Southern California lawyers focus on large products liability matters, class actions, labor and employment disputes and other significant business litigation. Drinker Biddle also has nearly 40 lawyers in its San Francisco office and approximately 700 lawyers in its 12 offices nationwide.

Gold, most recently with Kaye Scholer, adds even more depth to Drinker Biddle's labor and employment practice in California, presently split between Los Angeles and San Francisco. The firm offers clients more than 50 labor and employment lawyers nationwide, giving it one of the largest practices of its kind housed in a full-service firm.

Drinker Biddle Adds Six Lawyers In Los Angeles

Page 2 – December 8, 2009

“California has one of the most dynamic employment environments in the country,” said San Francisco-based partner Cheryl D. Orr, co-chair of Drinker Biddle’s Labor and Employment Practice Group. “We are excited to offer clients access to Kate’s knowledge and skill gained from practicing in that arena for so many years.”

The new Century City office is the latest move by Drinker Biddle in its strategy to provide clients with top-level service in significant litigation venues. In the past three years, small lateral groups comprising nearly 50 lawyers total have joined Drinker Biddle’s offices in San Francisco, Chicago, Delaware, Washington, D.C., Philadelphia and New Jersey.

During the past year, Drinker Biddle has also been a leader in engaging clients in particular, and the legal profession in general, during a time of significant change. It was one of the early adopters of the Association of Corporate Counsel’s Value Challenge, and it chairs the Value Challenge’s Law Firm Steering Committee. In addition, in May, the firm announced a unique – and much heralded – intensive training program for its newest lawyers that began this fall, while at the same time many of its peer law firms were deferring or dismissing first years. Most recently, the firm unveiled a new “levels” system for associates that addresses their compensation and billing rates, improving the value they can provide based on clients’ needs.

“There is no more business as usual for law firms,” said Andrew C. Kassner, Drinker Biddle’s Executive Partner. “We are listening to what our clients are saying and giving them what they want. Adding these accomplished litigators in Los Angeles is a significant part of that, as is our overall, firm-wide commitment to providing exceptional value for the best in client service.”

Brief biographies of the new Drinker Biddle lawyers in Los Angeles follow:

George T. Caplan, a partner in the Commercial Litigation Practice Group, has represented numerous major corporations and motion picture studios during his 40-year career, litigating general commercial and contract matters, as well as energy industry and construction cases, trademark and domain name infringements, First Amendment issues, securities fraud allegations, employment contracts, directors and officers liability and real estate disputes, among others. In one of his recent cases, a landmark case interpreting Proposition 64, he successfully defended an action seeking to shut down one of the largest wind turbine energy operations in the United States because of alleged violations of various laws protecting raptors. After law school, Caplan clerked for the Hon. Paul C. Weick, chief judge of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit, and then started his law practice at Irell & Manella. He also later led the Los Angeles offices of Kaye Scholer and Dewey Ballantine. Caplan has served as president of the Board of Governors of California Community Colleges and is currently a commissioner on the California Postsecondary Education Commission. He is also active in numerous civic and charitable organizations, including the Jewish Federation Council of Greater Los Angeles and the Foundation of California Community Colleges. He earned his law degree from Columbia University and his bachelor’s degree from the University of California, Berkeley.

Henry Shields, Jr., a partner in the Commercial Litigation Practice Group, focuses his practice on civil jury trials in both state and federal court, and he has represented major entertainment companies, including NBC and CBS, in cases concerning First Amendment, copyright, right of privacy and business-related issues. He is a former chair of the Ninth Circuit Judicial Conference and of its Executive Committee, and is an *ex officio* member of the Ninth Circuit Task Force on Racial, Religious and Ethnic Fairness. During his many years as a partner at Irell & Manella, Shields served on its Executive Committee. He recently was named Entertainment Lawyer of the Year by the Century City Bar Association and in 2007 was recognized as one of the “Top 100 Power

Drinker Biddle Adds Six Lawyers In Los Angeles

Page 3 – December 8, 2009

Lawyers Outside Counsel” by *Hollywood Reporter Esq.* magazine. Shields earned his J.D. from the University of California, Berkeley, where he was an editor of the *California Law Review*, and received his bachelor’s degree from Southern Illinois University.

Kristopher S. Davis, a partner in the Commercial Litigation Practice Group, counsels and represents clients in a wide variety of matters, including business, unfair competition, real estate and environmental disputes. Davis, also previously with Irell & Manella, has a broad range of experience in complex commercial litigation, particularly the entertainment and energy industries. He received both his J.D. (Order of the Coif) and his bachelor’s degree, *magna cum laude*, from the University of California, Los Angeles.

Kate S. Gold, a partner in the Labor & Employment and Commercial Litigation Practice Groups, represents a variety of clients in all types of business and employment disputes in state and federal courts, in arbitrations and before agencies. Her employment litigation experience includes defense of wrongful termination, retaliation, sexual harassment, race, age, work-related injury, family leave and disability discrimination cases, as well as defense of actions for misappropriation of trade secrets, interference with contract and unfair competition. She also has counseled numerous clients on compliance with federal and state employment laws, including pregnancy and disability leave, wage and hour, and classification of employees, as well as on employment issues in the context of the purchase and sale of businesses, and non-competition agreements. Gold earned both her J.D. and her bachelor’s degree from the University of California, Berkeley. In law school she was an editor of the *California Law Review*, and while an undergraduate, she was elected to Phi Beta Kappa. She began her legal career at Tuttle & Taylor in Los Angeles, where she was a litigation partner before moving to Kaye Scholer.

Paul M. Gelb, a counsel in the Commercial Litigation Practice Group, advises and represents clients in a wide variety of matters, including contract, unfair competition, intellectual property, securities, ERISA, pharmaceutical and employment cases. In addition, Gelb practices appellate law before the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, the California Courts of Appeal and the California Supreme Court. He began his law practice at Kaye Scholer. Gelb earned his J.D. from Columbia University Law School, where he was a Harlan Fiske Stone Scholar. He received a master’s degree from the Bernard Revel Graduate School and a bachelor’s degree, *cum laude*, from Columbia College.

Pamela K. Graham, an associate in the Commercial Litigation Practice Group, focuses her practice primarily on civil litigation, with an emphasis in complex commercial matters. Previously at Irell & Manella, she has litigated matters involving business torts, subprime mortgage disputes, securities fraud, contract disputes and tax shelters. She earned her bachelor’s degree from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and her J.D. (Order of the Coif), *magna cum laude*, from Loyola Law School in Los Angeles. After law school she clerked for the Hon. Ronald S.W. Lew of the U.S. District Court for the Central District of California.

Drinker Biddle & Reath LLP is a national law firm with 700 lawyers in 12 offices providing client service in areas such as commercial litigation, labor and employment, real estate, corporate and securities, corporate restructuring, intellectual property, government and regulatory affairs, environmental, communications litigation, products liability and mass tort litigation, health care, employee benefits and executive compensation, insurance coverage, investment management, life insurance and annuities, and private client services.