

## State of the Market - 2004 Winter

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### Southern California

by Claudia Spielman, Esq.

Winter is a wonderful time for job-hunting attorneys. Fall recruiting season is over, and the firms have already selected their precious summer associates. Now is the time for firms to focus on lateral hiring. With the New Year, an upturn in the economy, and new business, firms need to bring in new lateral hires -- making this the busiest time of the year. Each day we are getting more and more **job openings**. Firms have work that needs to be done and summer associates won't be available until late May/early June. So, they call us to help them find some fresh blood. If you've been toying with the idea of moving firms, now is the best time to get that resume together and start looking.

**Los Angeles** firms are much busier hiring than they were in fall 2003. The key practice area to be in right now is clearly **real estate**. Nearly every firm we work with is hiring in this area. The market is so strong that almost any corporate attorney (with the right credentials) who has worked on a couple of real estate matters *instantly* becomes marketable. Real Estate attorneys with 1-6 years of experience are getting multiple offers (and attorneys with strong credentials who have less than 1 year are also getting multiple interviews). Many firms do not require the California Bar. They are more concerned with the sophistication of your practice. Consequently, this is the hottest practice area for out of state attorneys. Senior associates should not feel they are unmarketable. Quite the contrary! In fact, we are performing a search for a strong **Orange County** firm that is seeking real estate attorneys who graduated law school between 1985 and 1995!

In the second half of 2003, **labor and employment attorneys** were in real demand. It was the busiest practice area. It has tapered off a bit, but is still quite strong. Firms are looking for employment attorneys at all levels in **Los Angeles, Orange County** and **San Diego**. Attorneys with strong educational and professional credentials with 2-6 years of experience remain the most marketable. However, we are also seeking *senior employment attorneys* with at least 8 years of experience for a fabulous partnership opportunity in **Los Angeles**. This opportunity is with one of the best firms to work for period.

As always, **litigators are in demand**. As long as you graduated from a top tier law school (and performed decently well there) and/or worked at a big firm, you pretty much will have no problem finding another job. In fact, we are getting multiple interviews and call backs for junior litigation candidates who were laid off or are currently not working. While being a member of the California Bar makes the search a lot easier, not all firms require admission. If you are a strong candidate with 1-5 years of experience, you shouldn't have too much of a problem. The hottest practice areas are as follows: **commercial, securities, product liability, insurance coverage** and **construction**.

**Intellectual Property** law is not as hot as it is in the Bay Area, although it truly depends on what your science background is. For instance, **San Diego** historically has a thriving biotech and chemistry prosecution practice;

however, electrical engineers are in demand there as well. Several firms have told us they are always interested in seeing a strong EE candidate. Prosecutors with 1-6 years in a large or boutique firm are the most marketable. In **Los Angeles** and **Orange County**, prosecutors with electrical engineering backgrounds and strong academic and professional credentials at most levels are likely to get multiple interviews. IP litigation is hotter than prosecution, but again, this practice area is much hotter in the Bay Area. IP litigators with PTO admission, technical backgrounds (particularly engineers) are getting multiple interviews. Being a member of the California Bar will give you more options, although firms rarely turn away a strong patent litigation resume. Litigators with 2-6 years of experience remain the most marketable. Of course, senior patent litigators with portable business will be looked at seriously by most firms. Nearly every firm is trying to bulk up their IP practice. We are seeing more and more IP boutiques merge with general practice ("GP") firms. IP clients tend to have a lot of money and are often involved in complex, high-stakes litigation. Firms like IP clients because they can bill them at high rates and for long hours. Firms are in the business of making money, so they need the talent to get the job done. I strongly encourage IP boutiques to talk with us about possibly merging with a GP firm. You will likely make more money, have more stability, and work on bigger and better cases. Large GP firms can provide you with a national or global presence - enhancing your ability to bring in sophisticated clients and making you a far more marketable attorney in the long run.

**Corporate attorneys** have been waiting to hear some good news, and finally it's arrived...Yes, the market has improved and I only see it getting better. Corporate attorneys at all levels who have strong academic and professional credentials are busy interviewing. We are seeing a huge push for attorneys having **securities** experience. Those of you who graduated in 2001 - 2003, don't get excited just yet, unless (and this is a big unless) you have strong corporate experience. For instance, 2001 graduates working for a large firm's corporate practice and who were forced to work on litigation or bankruptcy matters are still going to have a hard time. We are seeing a real need for corporate attorneys who have worked on sophisticated deals. I encourage every corporate attorney to put together a deal sheet - firms want to see it and it will help you get that interview. There are excellent opportunities throughout Southern California, including beautiful **Santa Barbara**. Senior corporate attorneys should not feel they are no longer marketable. We are seeing the market improve for you as well, and in fact, have a couple of senior associates without business interviewing with mid-sized firms. Those corporate attorneys with portable business, even as little as \$100,000, are in demand. I am currently working with a corporate partner who has much less than a million in portable business and this person has at least 10 interviews.

Although BCG Attorney Search may not post a large number of **bankruptcy openings**, do not be discouraged. Many firms are always on the lookout for a strong bankruptcy candidate and will hire one if the opportunity presents itself. In fact, we often find positions for attorneys who have completed their bankruptcy clerkship positions with law firms looking to hire junior bankruptcy attorneys. Top tier law school graduates with 1-6 years of bankruptcy experience are quite marketable. California Bar membership is not an obstacle for strong candidates. Corporate attorneys who have some bankruptcy experience are extremely marketable and should speak to us about our openings.

**Environmental** is a steady practice area. We have a few solid **environmental openings** for junior associates from large firms who have practical experience. We are finding a big push for senior environmental litigators with books of business. Ties to California and Bar membership tend to be crucial in finding a position in this practice area.

Health care is a good practice area - although I believe it's much stronger on the East Coast. On the transactional side, firms are pretty busy and are interested in seeing a strong health care candidate - particularly in **Los Angeles** and **San Diego**. Health care/medical malpractice litigators are not as popular as their transactional counterparts. However, if you are a senior litigator with experience in medical malpractice defense and would have an interest in moving to **Las Vegas**, we have an excellent opportunity for you.

Firms are trying to beef up their partner ranks, and we are still seeing a lot of practice group movement in various practice areas, particularly **IP, real estate, corporate, and bankruptcy**. We are also seeing a need for partners with business in the following practices: **litigation, environmental and employment**. We currently have a large number of partners interviewing at firms, and are finding that partners with a book of business of at least \$400,000 are receiving multiple interviews. Partner activity is strong due to the economy: Firms simply need more people with business to generate work and make more profits. Most firms are currently seeking partners with a minimum of \$400,000 and they are actively recruiting partners with significant books of business valued in excess of \$1,000,000.

As you can see, 2004 is going to be a good year for all of us. The market is definitely on the rise, and the future only looks good. After the few tough years we've experience, I think we deserve it. Although firms are looking, there is a lot of competition still and the search process can take some time. I always advise my candidates that the search process can take anywhere from 2-6 months, sometimes longer. Of course, there are always the few lucky ones who have perfect timing and are able to get a new and better job within a month - but that is the exception rather than the rule. For you partners out there, the process can take a long time - even when you have a substantial book of business. Firms do not want to repeat the mistakes they made in the late 90's and early 2000's. They are still cautious about who they bring on as partner and/or of counsel. The good news is that those who are able to obtain a position in this market have a very good career ahead of them. If you have any questions about this article and would like to speak with a recruiter about the Southern California market, feel free to give Jennifer McKee, Ted Bavly or myself (Claudia Spielman) a call at 800-298-6440.

## Northern California

by [James Fant](#)

The **San Francisco legal market** is showing strong signs of incipient recovery. After a mini-Ice Age for some practice areas, the sun is starting to shine again and melt the permafrost. This is an exciting -- and welcome -- development. It may be time to peer outside and check some of the new opportunities that we are working on here. At most large firms, attorneys are reporting that more work is available, and hours are rising even faster than the national debt.

The Bay Area bounce seems to be faster than in other geographic areas, no doubt due to the greater height of its stomach-churning fall. It is easy to overstate - we are still in a hirer's market for talent - but happier days are already upon us.

### Corporate

For the first time in a long time, there are multiple **corporate opportunities** at firms of all stripes. Most of these are for general corporate or securities attorneys; M&A practices still lag the group. Instead of the odd opportunity, this appears to be the start of a promising pattern. Most of these openings appeared *before* the vacancies caused by the annual post-bonus exodus. What this means in practical terms is that there are likely to be even more openings in the next few weeks as associates leave their freshly-feathered nests. So if you've been contemplating a move, now is the **time to get in touch**.

It's common knowledge that some firms heavily thinned the ranks of junior associates during the business drought. Naturally, many of the current openings are for junior associates, who virtually became an endangered species at some firms. Senior associates were of course also hard hit: the good news is that some firms are looking for more seasoned corporate associates as well (usually up to their seventh year). All

of the above applies to San Francisco and Silicon Valley, which has begun the slow process of rebirth. It may be winter from a strictly meteorological perspective, but spring is definitely in the air as far as hiring goes.

Regular readers of this quarterly market update will note with satisfaction that I predicted this turn of events last June. To learn more about what the future holds, without astrology, tarot, or the need for a 900 number, call us. A final prediction: this year will be far stronger than anyone expects. You read it here first.

## Real Estate

The dire shortage of elite real estate attorneys in San Francisco continues. If you are working at a BigLaw firm, and are pondering a move to the City by the Bay, now is the time to, at the very least, test your marketability here. The partner/associate ratio has become extremely top heavy at some firms - another product of the recession - and opportunities abound. There are also a number of attractive, 'lifestyle'-type boutiques that may be a good fit for some of you. If your experience tends more to the finance side of the equation (because, for instance, you are coming from a New York or LA firm that is heavily into finance), fret not: there are also opportunities for you here.

## Litigation

**Litigation continues to be a strong practice area** as far as hiring goes. In fact, the demand for new hires has shown no sign of dwindling. This is especially true for securities litigators, but it also applies to general commercial, antitrust, employment, and even white collar crime. Are there more alleged white collar criminals running around now, or are they simply more frightened after the Enron debacle? You be the judge. If Martha Stewart is clapped into leg irons by the end of the year (n.b.: regardless of her guilt or presumed innocence), watch this practice area continue to soar. Environmental litigators continue to lag the pack since the EPA was abolished. You hadn't heard?

'Soft' IP litigation has continued to be soft, but if you have a scientific background, there are plenty of desirable opportunities, regardless of your art.

## Patent

Patent practices are, on average, about where corporate practices were in the final quarter of '03 - trending upwards, but not yet in a full-swing recovery. Most of the openings have been for EE prosecutors, because that is the area that was hardest hit in the last couple of years. Strong writing samples - preferably in the form of issued patents -- remain *de rigueur*, and big firm (or top boutique) training and experience is essential.

## Sacramento

The frenzy that was Sacramento-area legal hiring in 2003 has cooled considerably. Nevertheless, it is still possible to make a move to one of the most attractive lifestyle markets in California -- particularly if you are coming from another, larger legal market, such as LA or San Francisco, and either grew up in Sacramento or have some ties to the area. This sounds like a lot of qualifications but in truth, a move here is eminently doable if you work with a recruiter that has actually met with the firms and done business with them.

Moreover, Sacramento should pull in another strong year as the area goes from strength to strength. The fundamentals remain sound.

## The Northeast

by Carey Bertolet, Esq.

In New York City, there is a general increase in both the *number* of firms with active openings, as well as the *level of aggressiveness* with which firms are seeking to supplement their ranks. Although New York firms continue to require excellent professional and academic credentials, we are seeing firms with several active openings, often across various practices areas.

As always, firms are looking for excellent controversy lawyers, especially in the areas of intellectual property litigation, commercial litigation, bankruptcy and employment. We are currently working on several very attractive niche positions, including a workers compensation litigation defense position, several employment discrimination litigation positions, and an international arbitration position. This represents somewhat of a shift to demands for more specialized associates, and we anticipate this trend will continue.

Structured finance, asset-backed securitization and derivatives are the corporate specialties currently commanding the most attention. Additionally, increased deal flow throughout New York is apparent by the improved amount of associate lateral hiring among securities and mergers and acquisitions departments. Importantly, however, this need has not lessened the credentials many firms still require for associates, including having large law firm experience and extraordinary academic credentials.

There are an **increasing number of opportunities for real estate** lawyers with large firm experience, especially those with real estate finance experience. Bankruptcy associates are still highly in demand.

The other major trend is the **opening of new New York City offices** or significant expansion of non-New York based firms into Manhattan. Many of these firms are working with BCG to facilitate this expansion. These types of opportunities are the most attractive and well-suited to a lawyer who is entrepreneurial in nature and who understands how much potential exists in a ground floor opportunity.

## New Jersey

New Jersey opportunities reflect more diversity than virtually any other. Specifically, New Jersey's big players are hiring across the board—from Princeton to Newark, from corporate finance to employment litigation. The candidates with the most vitality are those with large New Jersey or New York firm experience. Because of New Jersey's admissions requirements, attorneys already admitted in New Jersey have a distinct advantage.

## Philadelphia

Philadelphia firms remain more fully entrenched in their litigation practices than any other practice group. Although there has been a distinct upturn in intellectual property, general commercial litigators and employment lawyers are most in demand. Additionally, this is an excellent time for real estate lawyers looking to move laterally.

## Boston

The corporate market is still licking its wounds in Boston, but litigation is starting to boom. The relevant dynamic in the Boston market is identifying those firms who are actually and aggressively recruiting, and we are pleased to report that number is on the rise. Specifically, for intellectual property prosecution, litigation, and general litigation associates, Boston is an open and vibrant market assuming that it's navigated by someone with a clear understanding of who is doing the hiring.



## Washington DC Metro Region

The Washington DC region has rebounded and now exhibits a much better [legal job market](#) than 2002 and 2003. Of course, some practice groups are doing much better than others and the firms are still demanding to see candidates with strong academic credentials and solid experience.

The region still enjoys one of the lowest, if not the lowest, unemployment rates of any major region in the United States. But the [legal job](#) market has not enjoyed the incredibly low unemployment rate seen in other sectors. In fact, it is said often that the current high unemployment rate has been more severe on white collar workers, such as lawyers.

The last three months have certainly shown an increase in demand for well-credentialed lawyers. In fact, we have had more job orders from law firms and more candidates interviewing during the month of December in 2003 than 2002. January got off to a roaring start, and we believe it will continue for the rest of 2004.

As detailed in our last state of the market report, the creation of a new federal agency, the enactment of the Medicare Bill, and the recent crises in the energy market has caused firms to look for candidates with specialized expertise. But the engine of the legal market recovery has been litigation and securities law practices. We have multiple listings for commercial litigators and those with enforcement and regulatory experience in securities law. Again, most of the firms demand strong academic success and solid experience. There are several firms looking to add insurance coverage litigators as well. IP litigators with electrical engineering background are still sought after.

Because of the unique position of the [DC legal market](#), which is home to various government regulatory agencies, certain practices have begun to see more of a demand for strong candidates, including healthcare, energy and, again, securities law. There also is some interest in employee benefit lawyers. International trade lawyers with experience on representing foreign entities will find their services are also in more demand than in recent past.

Although corporate and M&A associates will still find the market challenging, openings in these areas have started to trickle in. Because there so few jobs in these practice areas, firm can afford to be highly selective and would only entertain hiring someone who has an outstanding resume.

One practice area we have had success in placing people in recently is internet privacy law, which has been a part of the trademark practice in the past. This is a specialized field and only those with actual experience, in addition to academic success, are being considered by firms.

Of course, partners with a significant book of business are always in demand. We have some firms who will consider partners with \$500,000 or less in business. Of course, partners with at least \$1,000,000 in portable business will find a firm of their choice. In some practice areas that are currently experiencing difficulty attracting work - such as corporate, M&A, capital markets, project finance, and telecommunications - the required book of business is quite modest. Because the trend in the law firm marketplace is consolidation, we would suggest that now is the right time for those partners inclined to move to do so.

In summary, the turn around has begun and we expect the market to continuously improve in the Washington DC metro region. We certainly do not expect the market to experience the explosive growth of the late 1990's and 2000, but all indications are that 2004 should be a significant improvement from 2002 and 2003 to carry us to an even better 2005.

## The Southeast

by Raffaele Murdocca, Esq.

## ATLANTA - The Atlanta market is a hot bed of activity.

**Commercial Real Estate** is by far the busiest area of lateral hiring throughout the city. From small to very large, it seems that every law firm in Atlanta needs one and in some cases two commercial real estate associates. If you are a lending or finance associate with some real estate experience and are interested in making a switch to the real estate area, now is the time to make your move. Firms in Atlanta are looking for associates to have anywhere between 2 to 6 years of experience in this practice area, and we can definitely get you multiple job offers if you have 2 to 4 years of experience. Firms are looking for experience with acquisition & disposition of property, leasing, lending or affordable housing work. We can not pick up the phone fast enough from all the firms **calling our office to assist them** with their real estate associate positions.

**Corporate and Securities** is still trying to make a comeback. As the economy continues to improve and more deals are done out of New York, Atlanta and the rest of the southeast market will follow close behind. There *are* positions with very reputable firms available now, but we believe that within 2 to 4 months, young general corporate associates will be one of the most sought-after commodities in the marketplace. The reason for this is that over the last 3 years, corporate has been extremely slow and many associates were either laid off and went to smaller firms without the sophistication of deal work seen at the large firms or switched professions or moved into other practice areas like bankruptcy or litigation. As a result, there are very few corporate associates with 2 to 4 years of experience. If you are one of the few who were able to stay in the corporate group, we are predicting that there **will be many opportunities available to you** within the coming months.

**Litigation** is still seeing tremendous activity. The areas of complex commercial, employment, product liability, ERISA, bankruptcy, construction and securities litigation are all areas where lateral placements are being made every day. Although we are seeing an overabundance of junior litigation associates with less than 2 years of experience, most of the firms are more interested in candidates that have more experience, in the realm of 2 to 6 years. Those with less years of experience are fighting an uphill battle because there are very few positions and a lot of highly credentialed candidates flooding the market. However, for all years of experience, if you have top credentials and/or extensive courtroom experience, there is likely a place for you -- you just have to know where to look. We predict that this area will be busy for months to come.

**Other practice areas** - Atlanta has seen its first junior associate tax position in 3 years. We predict that as the corporate work increases, we are going to see a sharp rise in the need for tax attorneys with an LLM. We are seeing fewer bankruptcy positions than just 3 months ago. However, if you have Ch. 11 bankruptcy experience, there will always be a place for you at some respected firms in Atlanta. We are seeing a bit of a slow down with Intellectual Property on the litigation and prosecution side unless you have an electrical engineering degree, an advanced degree or book of business.

## CHARLOTTE - The calm before the storm

The Charlotte market seems to be picking up on the transactional side more than any other areas. Firms are looking for capital markets, asset securitization, M&A, Chapter 11 bankruptcy, tax, debt finance and real estate associates. Basically, any practice area related to the banking industry is very active. We believe this is only the beginning and we expect to see much more activity in this area for months to come. The firms in Charlotte and throughout North Carolina are all looking for partners with portable business on the transactional side to grow an existing practice group or to venture into new practice areas.

## TENNESSE - Wait and see.

The Tennessee market seems to be in somewhat of a holding pattern. There are just a couple of positions available in certain practice areas throughout the state. Instead of laying off associates, the firms are keeping them happy by loading them up with work and job security. When there is a position, the firms are being very

cautious in their lateral hiring and they have much higher expectations of interviewees than in years past. We believe there are a number of outstanding candidates who are moving to Tennessee from major cities from the Midwest and Northeastern states. In talking with firms and candidates it seems the harsh weather this winter is moving attorneys and their families to the warmth of the south.

## Florida

by [Evan Jowers, Esq.](#)

### Real Estate:

As has been the case for the past year, this segment of the market is very active right now. Any associate at even the most junior or senior levels can find numerous opportunities at Florida's top firms. A number of firms are willing to take real estate laterals who are more junior or senior than would be ideal. Many of these firms also expect the candidates to come from out of state.

However, firms in Florida are not following the lead of other regions of the country in hiring corporate associates who are willing to switch to real estate positions. Florida firms are also, for the most part, not loosening their academic and large firm background requirements.

The most marketable real estate attorneys in Florida are on the development side. A few Florida-based firms, as well as the relatively small New York, Philadelphia, D.C. and Chicago-based satellite offices do concentrate on finance side real estate, but the majority of the positions available are development oriented.

Because the majority of positions are development oriented, it is harder for an attorney with only corporate experience to transition into the number of real estate positions available.

### Corporate:

There are a few positions available now, which represents a big change from the conditions of the past year, when corporate attorney openings were scarce. However, the large Florida-based firms and a few New York-based satellite offices are now hiring M&A, banking and finance associates. Banking seems to be the strongest area in Florida's relatively small corporate sector.

### Litigation:

South Florida has a large need for junior to mid-level litigators. Just recently, two different large market based satellite offices have announced 3-4 openings at one time for junior to mid-level litigators. The number of openings in litigation has tripled in the past 6 weeks.

### IP:

Florida has a relatively small IP market. However, this will be changing in the future as the Scripps biotech firm out of San Diego, CA has agreed to move a large part of its operation to Palm Beach County. There is a strong movement underway from political leaders in Florida to attract more IP work in the state and create the state's own version of the "Silicon Valley". A few Florida based firms do have small but active IP departments, but the number of positions available has always been scarce. A number of firms are looking for attorneys with business in this field.

### Health Care:



This market is very small in Florida. It seems like I always have a few qualified candidates looking, but there are no positions available. When an opening does exist, it is highly sought after.

## Salaries:

There is a mini salary war going on in Miami right now!

Up until a few weeks ago, the top of the market first year pay was 105k. White & Case just raised the salaries to 115k for first years and Greenberg Traurig and Stearns Weaver immediately followed suit and raised their first year pay to approximately 110k.

Most interesting with the White & Case pay raises is that 4th and 5th year associates will be earning 147k and 165k, respectively.

It is doubtful that other Florida firms will match White & Case at the mid-level, but the bar has been raised and it will be interesting to see whether a number of firms will at least significantly adjust their mid level compensation packages

## The Southwest

by Robert Kinney, Esq.

### Texas

The pace of [hiring in Texas](#) is strong. Lateral opportunities for well-credentialed associate candidates from out of state are present in this market, and for the first time we are also seeing interest in candidates who are transactional in nature. In Houston, in addition to numerous [openings for litigation associates](#) with general commercial litigation and labor & employment experience, we are currently working on a search for a 1999 corporate and securities associate with a top firm. Firms that are in the hiring mode are still able to be quite selective, and competition is tough for the positions we have advertised, but the good news is that when we find the right candidate for the position, we typically know we have found her/him. Firms are selective, but they know what they want to the letter in most cases, and so do we. In Dallas, we also have a number of positions open for labor & employment associates and litigation associates, but we are also hearing from client firms who say they need associates with strong transactional experience, particularly banking and debt finance experience at the moment.

### Arizona

This market continues to amaze us. There are not many firms in Phoenix, but the ones there seem to have no shortage of work in the litigation area, particularly bad faith insurance litigation, but also in general commercial litigation. That said, firms are still being very selective. This is an attractive place to live, after all. Nevertheless, attorneys in the 1998-2002 classes who might want to make a switch to Phoenix or who are already in Phoenix and might want to move to a more dynamic platform are strongly encouraged to get in touch with us. In addition, we also have needs in a few of our client firms for experienced litigation associates or counsel with up to 7 or 8 years experience. In addition to the needs in the litigation-related law practice, we have also seen recent interest in strong mid-level associates, particularly candidates with real estate transaction experience. As always in this market, the Arizona bar exam should be behind you or you should have firm plans for taking the next bar exam. There is no reciprocity between Arizona and other jurisdictions.

## The Midwest

by Jamie Bailey

## CHICAGO

An overall boom in activity for our [Chicago office](#) in January has us excited about the prospects for lateral hiring in the New Year. Firms have completed their hiring projections for 2004 and lateral hiring is definitely on the rise.

### ***Real Estate is Hot***

We have seen a marked increase in activity in the real estate area, perhaps due to larger lease transactions bringing about new commercial real estate development projects in Chicago. Several of the largest law firms and accounting firms in Chicago have signed on as 4-500,000 square foot anchor tenants in new office buildings in the Central Business District. The condo market also continues to expand. In fact, Trump has begun marketing his new 90-story condominium building on Michigan Avenue.

Many prestigious law firms, as well as smaller firms and real estate boutiques, have contacted us looking for real estate associates with anywhere from 2-5 years of commercial real estate experience and exposure to finance, lending, acquisitions and dispositions. In particular, the larger firms would look favorably on associates who have New York experience and, of course, excellent academic records, and may even consider more senior-level associates with substantial experience.

### ***The Health Care Surge***

We have seen a surge of activity in the health care area, particularly at the partner level, where large firms are seeking to establish or expand existing health care practices with partners who have large health care provider representation. Health care partners looking to transition their book in Chicago should call our Chicago office. We are working with a number of prestigious firms who are at the beginning stages of expansion in this area, as well as firms that have prominent practices and are continuing to add strategically. Portable books can range anywhere from \$500,000 to \$1-\$2 million. If you are a health partner with a portable book looking to make a move, we would be interested in speaking with you about the exciting opportunities in Chicago. [Please call our Chicago office](#) at 312/321-9411.

### ***Litigation Still Strong***

Some of the most prestigious firms in the country, as well as top litigation boutiques in Chicago, continue to bombard our office with requests for highly skilled commercial litigators with anywhere from 2-5 years of experience. Although most of the positions call for exposure to a wide range of litigation matters, some of our positions are looking for specific experience - i.e., construction, mass torts, consumer trade and bankruptcy litigation. Prior clerkship, deposition experience, extensive motion practice, first/second chair trial experience and appellate exposure are what most of these firms are looking for. Large law firm experience and excellent academics are a plus. Of course, qualified candidates must be able to exhibit strong research, writing and analytical skills.

### ***Bankruptcy - Bill, Bill, Bill!***

There are a few prestigious international firms in Chicago handling massive bankruptcies and the departments in these firms have almost doubled in size over the past 2 years. In fact, one prestigious firm billed in excess of \$50 million on a particular bankruptcy last year alone! This activity continues, but these are

the only firms which seem to be supplementing their bankruptcy practices at this time. Whereas in 2002 and 2003 we saw a remarkable need for **bankruptcy attorneys in Chicago**, the request for bankruptcy attorneys has somewhat slowed, but nevertheless remains at a high level. If you are a bankruptcy associate, or a corporate or litigation associate with exposure to bankruptcy transactions and anywhere from 1-6 years of experience and possess a willingness to work hard for a demanding practice, you should contact our office.

### ***Intellectual Property - EE's; CS; Ph.D.'s; Chemists; Biochemists Apply Now!***

Intellectual property practices in Chicago, particularly at the larger general practice firms and the smaller boutique firms, remain busy. With respect to patent prosecution, generally our openings are at the 2-5 year level and, not surprisingly, most firms are still seeking highly qualified EE's. However, we've also seen increased requests for associates with CS backgrounds. Perhaps the greatest increase can be seen in the need for associates with backgrounds in chemistry, organic chemistry, chemical engineering, biochemistry and biology. And in particular, if you have expertise in nanotechnology with an EE, ME, CE or physics background, please contact us immediately.

Patent litigators with 1-5 years of experience and backgrounds in CS, EE, chemistry, pharmacology or toxicology **should call us for immediate consideration**.

**As always, candidates with Ph.D.'s will be given priority consideration, as most firms covet skilled attorneys with this high level of training.**

### ***Partners with Business***

Firms consistently rely on us to send them highly skilled partners with business. BCG understands the common factors that give rise to a partner's decision to leave a firm, and since the firms with which we work are very diverse, we are able to effectively and efficiently service partners who are motivated to transition to a new firm.

Most recently, we have been receiving calls from mid-size to large firms seeking partners in a wide range of areas, including health care, commercial litigation, corporate transactional and intellectual property, real estate, environmental and labor and employment. Generally, depending on the practice, larger national and international firms are requiring well over a \$1 million in portables. However, we have seen a number of smaller to mid-size, and even some large firms, consider service partners (particularly in the transactional area) from prestigious international firms with portables ranging between \$250,000 and \$500,000.

If you are a partner in the early stages of your search and investigating your options, please **call our Chicago office** at 312/321-9411 to discuss our approach to the partner placement process, your goals for the growth of your practice, and how we can assist you to strategically transition your practice to a new firm.

## **DENVER**

Last quarter, we reported a decline in **litigation in Denver**. We are happy to report that a few Denver firms have opened new searches at the 2-5 year level and are seeking associates who have strong litigation skills, including deposition experience and excellent research and writing skills. The corporate area continues to be slow, but interestingly, we do have a few senior associate securities positions. Associates with real estate, ERISA and IP litigation and prosecution (with EE background) are also encouraged to apply.

As we have reported in the past, Colorado firms are continually seeking to acquire partners who are well established in the community with portable business in a variety of areas, including litigation, labor and employment, corporate transactions, real estate, tax, employee benefits, and environmental law. A minimum

book of \$200,000 is generally required.

## **MINNEAPOLIS**

IP is thriving in Minneapolis and a few top firms there and prestigious boutiques continue to expand their already impressive IP practices, seeking patent litigators at the 2-5 year level and prosecutors with anywhere from 2-6 years of experience. Backgrounds in chemical, EE and ME preferred.

## **DETROIT AND GRAND RAPIDS**

Detroit firms are seeking qualified associates in a number of key areas, including junior health care associates, litigators at the 4-6 year level and environmental associates. IP candidates with 2-5 years prosecution experience and exposure to transactional experience with an EE or other technical degree should also apply now.

## **CINCINNATI AND CLEVELAND**

Partners with business are highly sought after by select Cincinnati firms seeking to expand in commercial law, litigation, finance, health care, real estate, labor and employment, tax and ERISA. We are also seeing a need for litigators at the 2-5 year level.

If you are pursuing opportunities in Cleveland, we are seeing the strongest needs in bankruptcy at the 2-5 year level and employment for associates anywhere from 3-7 years of experience.

## **Other**

### **Alaska**

by Robert Kinney, Esq.

The market in Alaska is interesting. We do not always report on this market because, for the most part, it is a fairly flat environment for legal hiring. The firms in this state know that there is a large contingent of people who would not want to live anywhere else. In addition, there are typically enough people wanting to come home to the 49th state after receiving their legal education in the Lower 48. Finally, salaries are lower to reflect both the lower billable rates that the firms here charge for their time and also as a reflection of the supply of attorney candidates. Despite these shortcomings, there are a few top-shelf firms in Anchorage who wish to differentiate themselves from the maddening crowd and thus insist on hiring only associates who would cut it in any of the white shoe firms in San Francisco, Chicago, New York, or Houston. It is these firms that are our clients and we would love to hear from associates who may have a yearning to live in Alaska. At present, we are recruiting for a mid-level corporate position with one of the state's better firms. If you have several years corporate transactional experience, including experience with traditional public securities offerings and M&A transactions, and you have a thick coat, plenty of blubber, or both, call us.

### **Europe**

by [Carey Bertolet, Esq.](#)

BCG is currently undertaking several searches for high-level United States lawyers who want to practice in Europe, London in particular. Lawyers from large, prestigious firms and with good academic credentials who are interested in working in Europe should contact us immediately. Fluency in languages other than English is mandatory for positions in countries other than the United Kingdom.