

Boutique Haber Law Adds 2 Partners As Fla. Demand Grows

By **Madison Arnold**

Law360 (May 5, 2022, 1:33 PM EDT) -- Miami boutique Haber Law picked up two new partners, an associate attorney and other staff in its latest round of hires to accommodate a "significant increase" in business.

The firm announced Tuesday that its newest partners are transactional attorney Harold "Hal" Lewis and commercial litigation attorney Jessica L. Kopas. They are just the latest hires from the 20-attorney firm, which saw a string of additions last year.

"What drew me to the firm, part of it was the growth. You can see that the firm is growing and that's a very positive sign in Miami in this environment," Lewis said in an interview with Law360 Pulse on Thursday. "There's been some recent lawyers who have joined the firm that have very, very high reputations in the community, not that [Haber Law doesn't] already. But there's been some good talent that's been coming into the firm and I think that's continuing with Jessica and myself. And that's the viewpoint I have. A growing firm is where you want to move to."

Haber Law has only four core practice groups. Those are complex business litigation; construction law, including design and construction defects litigation; real estate and transactional law; and condominium association and HOA law.

The firm also dabbles in areas such as aviation law, bankruptcy and creditors' rights and family law.

"We are blessed because the areas we practice in are so, I would say, well coordinated with what South Florida has," David B. Haber, managing and founding shareholder, said in an interview with Law360 Pulse on Thursday. "Our four core practice areas fit in very nicely, not only into the economy, but into the entire growth of South Florida. And we are blessed to have those four practice areas, including real estate, and I would say that they feed off of one another."

The hires are in response to Florida's recent growth in both business and residents, the firm said. That's triggered a busy real estate and construction market, with condominiums, office buildings and retail shops being built rapidly, Haber said in a news release announcing the hires.

"Development and construction will logically give rise to many more construction disputes. Additionally, with the influx of new businesses and notable financial firms to South Florida, business disputes and litigation will be on the rise. The net effect of all this economic growth on the practice of law is a corresponding increase in demand for legal services in each of our firm's four core practice groups. The firm is perfectly situated to expand to meet the needs of existing and new clients," Haber said.

Lewis came from Pathman Lewis LLP where he was a founding and co-managing shareholder. He will be the new chair for the firm's real estate and transactional law practice group.

He has more than 35 years of experience in multiple areas of law but has a particular focus on real estate, finance and corporate matters. Those include helping clients with matters such as real estate and asset-based financing, acquisitions and development, leasing, condominiums and the design and implementation of ownership structures like partnerships and limited liability companies, the firm said.

The addition of Lewis will bolster Haber Law's ability to handle large and complex transactions in instances that deal with multifamily, office, industrial, hotel and residential properties.

Associate Matthew Holtz will also join Lewis' practice group and comes from Lewis' previous firm.

"[Lewis] is very well respected in the legal community, especially amongst real estate lawyers and bankers and developers. And that gives us a tremendous added capacity to expand our real estate practice, as well as increased the sophistication of the real estate deals we are able to handle for our clients. With respect to Jessica, she is an experienced trial attorney who has proven herself in her years of practice to be skilled at complex commercial litigation," Haber told Law360 Pulse.

Kopas was previously a partner at Conrad & Scherer LLP in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. Her experience is in trial and arbitration work, the firm said.

"What I love about the firm is it's focused on clients and due diligence in reacting to clients and meeting the clients' needs. I think that sometimes we can get lost as lawyers in our own cases. But I think that the philosophy at Haber Law that resonated with me is how responsive we are to the clients in meeting their needs," Kopas said in an interview with Law360 Pulse.

She has successfully litigated several high-profile cases involving a billion-dollar South Florida Ponzi scheme. That scheme involved falsified structured settlements as well as instances of bank fraud.

Kopas' clients include Fortune 500 companies, which she has represented in disputes both in and out of court.

"Jessica is well-known as a fierce advocate and brilliant attorney with an excellent reputation. We are also very impressed with her continuing commitment to public service in helping mentor students in the underprivileged community of Broward County," Haber shared.

Haber Law also added two paralegals, Marlin Perez and Evelyn Morejon-Daher, as well as a legal assistant, Lori Vergara, in the round of hiring.

In October, the firm added Steve Davis, co-chair of the business litigation department from Boies Schiller Flexner LLP and Justin Stoner Miller as of counsel from Daniels Kashtan Downs Robertson & McGirney PA.

Last May, Haber Law saw another large expansion in the addition of Melissa Groisman as an of counsel, Ariella Gutman as a senior associate and Annie Schneider as an associate, as well as the elevation of commercial litigator Rebecca Newman Casamayor to partner.

--Additional reporting by Matt Perez. Editing by Alyssa Miller.

Update: This story was updated to include comments from Lewis, Kopas and Haber.