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Milbank Partner Leaves BigLaw To Start Enviro Boutique

By **Liz McKenzie**

Law360, New York (July 08, 2010) – A former litigation partner at Milbank Tweed Hadley & McCloy LLP has broken away to form a new environmental litigation boutique in Los Angeles.

Gregory Evans, who counts corporate giants such as Nike and Sherwin-Williams Co. as clients, opened Integer Law Corp. on Friday.

Frustrated with how larger firms handled business in the downturn, Evans decided to build a firm focused more on clients than profit margins, he said.

“I first started thinking about doing this when our economy took a nosedive,” he said. “There was a failure that I detected, a failure of the legal marketplace to respond to the pain that businesses were feeling.”

Integer, he said, will depart from the BigLaw model, using a smaller number of attorneys and maintaining creative and flexible billing solutions.

“The old model is out of step with what business needs today,” he said. “Downsizing, avoiding the constant push to generate the next billable hour allows you the time to really know your client’s case and to fully embrace its cause,” he said.

Evans said he would prefer to keep the firm, which currently has four attorneys, small.

“It doesn’t take a standing army to win the cases and to win them efficiently,” he said. “We’re not going down that highly leveraged, high number of services and, consequently, costly legal services road.”

The new firm will also be creative when it comes to billing and aim to provide flexibility in hourly rates, the amount of hours that can be billed to a client and on contingency fee agreements, Evans said.

“We are in the legal business to serve clients and not to maximize profits,” he said.

Evans, who was at Milbank for four years and the head of litigation at Orrick Herrington & Sutcliffe LLP in San Francisco before that, has represented some of the world’s leading companies in civil and criminal litigation.

He recently acted as the chief environmental attorney for Asarco LLC in the largest environmental bankruptcy in the U.S. history.

Evans said the firm’s model is already attracting business, noting that he has already received a case from Nike and other clients.

“I’ll have the benefit of serving these clients with a new model during a difficult economic time,” he said.

Sherwin-Williams environmental attorney Don McConnell said Evans’ litigation expertise is worth following.

“We’ll follow Greg anywhere he practices law,” McConnell said. “He has an unblemished, winning record in many high-stakes cases for us. In our environmental cases, we need top people like Greg who put us first, know the law and get us the best results. Big firms often get in the way of this. Greg is an extremely valuable asset to my practice group.”