

Signature Resolution Expands To East Coast With Ga. Litigator

By Lynn LaRowe

Law360 (February 12, 2024, 2:50 PM EST) -- California-based alternative dispute resolution service Signature Resolution announced Monday that it has added a neutral to its ranks who retired from the Atlanta office of Barnes & Thornburg LLP, marking its expansion to the East Coast.

Jim Leonard is an experienced litigator with extensive expertise in insurance-related matters who has both law firm and in-house counsel roles in his lengthy work history, a statement from the firm said.

Dario Higuchi, founding partner and managing member of Signature Resolution, told Law360 Pulse on Monday, "As we continue to evolve and expand our mediation footprint, we're thrilled to announce the addition of Jim Leonard, who is based in Atlanta."

"With such unique experience, he will be able to provide much value to cases involving insurance coverage and insurance bad faith disputes," Higuchi said in an email. "At this juncture, while Mr. Leonard's practice has been established virtually, he is available both in person and via Zoom for any mediation and arbitrations."

Founded in 2017, Signature Resolution has California offices in Century City, Los Angeles, Oakland and San Diego.

Higuchi said the firm is committed to establishing a presence on the East Coast and that Leonard's hiring "underscores our proactive approach to identifying talent and opportunities in growing in areas of the country where we can truly make a difference."

"We're excited about the possibilities this expansion brings, and, together with our neutrals, we remain dedicated to delivering exceptional dispute resolution services across the country," Higuchi added.

Leonard was a partner at Barnes & Thornburg for more than 13 years, according to his LinkedIn profile. The Barnes & Thornburg website lists him as a retired of counsel who "focused his practice in the areas of insurance coverage advice and litigation on behalf of policyholders" and calls him a "formidable litigator and veteran insurance professional."

Leonard said in a statement from the firm, "I am thrilled to embark on this exciting journey with



Jim Leonard

Signature Resolution, where I bring over 40 years of experience as a trusted business adviser and litigator."

"My passion for making a meaningful impact through words has guided my career, and as a mediator, I am excited to contribute empathy, understanding and constructive solutions to promptly and effectively resolve client issues," Leonard said. "Together with the rest of the esteemed neutrals on this panel, I look forward to shaping a future of thoughtful and impactful dispute resolution."

Before joining Barnes & Thornburg, Leonard was a partner at Kilpatrick Stockton LLP for 11 years before it became Kilpatrick Townsend & Stockton LLP through a merger, according to his LinkedIn profile. Before that, Leonard served in-house at MagMutual, a large medical and hospital insurer, where he managed the legal and claims departments for nine years, his LinkedIn page shows.

Prior to joining MagMutual, Leonard served for several years as general counsel at Newton Medical Group in San Francisco and worked as a litigator at Hughes & Associates in Dallas before that, the firm said.

Leonard earned his law degree from the Southern Methodist University School of Law, now the Dedman School of Law, and holds a bachelor's degree from Southern Methodist University.

--Editing by Robert Rudinger.