

## Press Release

# Akerman's Litigation Bench Expands in West Palm Beach with Grasford Smith

February 18, 2020

Akerman LLP, a top 100 U.S. law firm serving clients across the Americas, today announced that Grasford Smith has joined the firm's national Litigation Practice Group in West Palm Beach. He joins from Jones Foster P.A., bringing a wide array of experience in complex commercial litigation. Smith has particular expertise resolving matters in the financial services, real estate, hospitality, retail, and maritime industries.

"We are committed to growing our national litigation team with people who are deeply rooted in their communities and skilled to address our clients' needs," said Lawrence Rochefort, chair of Akerman's Litigation Practice Group. "Grasford is widely respected in the Florida legal community and he brings vast knowledge in various areas of litigation that will be an incredible benefit to our clients, who come from a diverse set of industries."

Smith focuses his practice on complex commercial litigation and intellectual property litigation. He has experience representing a diverse range of clients, including Fortune 500 companies, government agencies, athletic leagues, technology companies, and a U.S. Congressman, in addition to a variety of small and medium-sized businesses. Smith also handles local and national dispute matters concerning corporate governance, government enforcement actions, non-compete and

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### Related People

Joel S. Forman  
Robin N. Johnson  
Anthony W. Morris  
Lawrence P. Rochefort  
Joseph G. Silver  
Grasford W. Smith  
Philip Touitou

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### Related Work

Litigation

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### Related Offices

West Palm Beach

confidentiality agreements, trade secrets, real estate matters, construction defects, franchises, product liability, intellectual property, eminent domain, and disciplinary/admission matters before the Florida Bar.

Smith is an active member of the West Palm Beach business and legal communities. He currently sits on the board of directors of the American Heart Association, Anquan Boldin Foundation, and Urban League of Palm Beach County. Additionally, he served on the City of West Palm Beach Mayor's Transition Team Committee and the Economic Development & Jobs Policy Subcommittee in 2019. On the legal front, Smith actively holds leadership roles with The Florida Bar, Palm Beach County Bar Association, Florida Supreme Court, and Legal Aid Society of Palm Beach County. He also currently serves as president of the National Bar Association's Virgil Hawkins Florida Chapter, vice chair of the National Bar Association's Minority Partners Division, president-elect of Palm Beach County's Black Chamber of Commerce, and past president of the F. Malcolm Cunningham Sr. Bar Association.

Smith is the latest lateral partner to further strengthen Akerman's national litigation bench. In New York, Joel Forman brings decades of experience resolving securities civil litigation and government enforcement cases, while Philip Touitou and Joseph Silver add specialized skills in professional liability to the firm's litigation offering. The Honorable Ruben Castillo, former Chief Judge for the United States District Court, Northern District of Illinois, joined the firm's growing Chicago office upon retiring from the bench. In Atlanta, a newly established and fast-growing market, Anthony Morris and Robin Johnson focus their practices on commercial litigation.

### **About Akerman**

Akerman LLP is a top 100 U.S. law firm recognized among the most forward thinking firms in the industry by *Financial Times*. Its more than 700

lawyers and business professionals collaborate with the world's most successful enterprises and entrepreneurs to navigate change, seize opportunities, and help drive innovation and growth. Akerman is known for its results in middle market M&A and complex disputes, and for helping clients achieve their most important business objectives in the financial services, real estate and other dynamic sectors across the United States and Latin America.

Akerman's Litigation Practice Group has vast experience in a wide range of civil and criminal litigation, including class action defense, securities and corporate litigation, banking, white collar crime and government investigations, insurance, and real estate. The team is ranked tier one nationally by *U.S. News – Best Lawyers* in several categories including Commercial Litigation and Appellate.