

In The News

Munsch Hardt's Revenue and Profit Rose in 'Fantastic' Year

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Munsch Hardt Kopf & Harr PC has a new leader for its Austin office.

Ben Wheatley has been elected managing shareholder, taking over for David Mattka, who had held the job for two years. Mattka, who has held a number of leadership roles with the firm for 30 years, will remain with Munsch Hardt, which is headquartered in Dallas and also has an office in Houston.

Wheatley said the firm wants to grow in Austin by focusing on attracting attorneys who have 10-14 years of experience and providing the right atmosphere to act as an incubator for them to expand their practice.

"We're looking at attorneys who are in that zone where they're getting some traction on business development, and we can offer a better platform and bench depth than other firms in Texas," Wheatley said.

The firm had one of its best years in 2016, Wheatley said, and all indicators show 2017 will continue that trend.

"Our profits were up 9 percent across the board last year. It's going to be hard to match that this year but we're still projecting a strong year," Wheatley said. "All three of our [Texas] offices have a strong real estate practice and everything from [that sector] looks bright. We still expect to do well when the economy does turn down a little."

Wheatley, who has been with Munsch Hardt for five years, focuses on construction law.

Among Munsch Hardt's real estate and construction sector clients are Balfour Beatty Investments, Flintco LLC, Workman Commercial Construction Services and commercial real estate investor World Class Capital Group, which recently purchased a high-profile East Austin property.

After Mattka had taken the helm of the Austin office in January 2015, the firm's CEO told ABJ he was projecting strong growth in the Austin headcount. The Austin office relocated to the downtown Colorado Tower at 303 Colorado St. later that year.

The firm now has 13 attorneys in Austin and a total staff of 22.

"We've been courted from around the country to merge but it's not really what we've wanted to do. Staying as an independent Texas firm let's us maintain control over pricing for our services," Wheatley said. "We're playing our own game."

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