

Baker Donelson Boosts Labor Group With Ex-Ogletree Atty

By **Raphael Pope-Sussman**

Law360, New York (November 07, 2012, 6:34 PM ET) -- Baker Donelson Bearman Caldwell & Berkowitz PC has nabbed a veteran labor and employment attorney from Ogletree Deakins Nash Smoak & Stewart PC, bolstering Baker's employment practice in Tennessee.

Frederick J. Lewis, who arrived at Baker Donelson on Oct. 22, works in the firm's offices in Memphis and Knoxville, where he serves as senior counsel.

A distinguished attorney in the field of labor and employment law, Lewis has been recognized by "The Best Lawyers in America" and "Mid-South Super Lawyers." A fellow of the American College of Labor and Employment Lawyers and the Tennessee Bar Foundation, he brings to Baker decades of experience with labor disputes and employment litigation.

"Through a long and outstanding career, Fred has earned a stellar reputation as a leader in labor and employment law," said Jennifer Keller, chair of Baker Donelson's labor and employment department. "We're extremely proud to welcome someone of his caliber to our team."

Lewis said he became interested in labor law while enrolled in a master of laws program at Georgetown, where he studied during a stint in the U.S. Navy JAG Corps. After his service with JAG, Lewis joined McKnight Hudson Lewis & Henderson, where he spent thirty years. He eventually left the firm, along with several other lawyers, to form Lewis Fischer Henderson, which later merged with Ogletree.

"Fred's experience is a strong complement to our vibrant and growing labor and employment practice in Knoxville," said R. Culver Schmid, who serves as managing shareholder of Baker Donelson's Knoxville office. "We're committed to being a leading partner for Knoxville businesses, and adding attorneys who are recognized leaders in their field, such as Fred, is an important part of fulfilling that commitment."

Lewis, who was born and raised in eastern Tennessee, said he was drawn to Baker in part because it offered him the chance to work in Knoxville, where he attended college and law school at the University of Tennessee. But the main draw of Baker was the people, he added.

"I think more than anything it was the personalities," Lewis said. "You kind of take it as a given that a firm of that stature is going to have people who know what they're doing and do it very well. But I've known some of these people for 40 years and they are a very compatible group."

When the possibility of Lewis' moving to Baker came up, the decision was easy.

"They were a very logical group to talk with," Lewis said. "And we had a very short conversation because we knew each other very well."

Lewis is looking forward to helping expand Baker's employment practice in the eastern part of Tennessee, a region he said had been traditionally "underserved in the employment law part of the business."

An avid water-skier and a self-professed "snappy dresser" and "good dancer," Lewis seems to have a streak of fun in him. Perhaps that's why he appears so sanguine about joining Baker.

"It's an opportunity to do what I do with people that I enjoy," he said.

--Editing by Eydie Cubarrubia.

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