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DOJ Commercial Fraud Attorney Joins Honigman In DC

By **Jack Rodgers**

Law360 (May 10, 2022, 3:26 PM EDT) -- Honigman LLP has added a U.S. Department of Justice litigator to its recently opened Washington, D.C. office, the firm recently announced.

Denise Barnes has spent the past seven years as a trial attorney in the fraud section of the DOJ's commercial litigation branch, the firm said May 3. Barnes will focus her practice on regulatory investigations, along with white collar compliance and complex commercial litigation.

Barnes told Law360 on Tuesday her experience at the Justice Department allowed her to work on unique and novel issues.

"I made the transition because I believe I have a true value add to private clients," she said. "I'm a great advocate, I provide a thoughtful and pragmatic approach, and I really thought that I could provide that to clients, to allow them to understand ways they can remain in compliance with their legal and ethical obligations and to the extent necessary, advise clients about how to minimize their potential exposure once an issue is identified."



Denise Barnes

Barnes earned her bachelor's degree from the University of Michigan and her law degree from Howard University School of Law.

She said her interest in investigations and white collar work began when she was studying business at Michigan. It introduced her to laws like the Sarbanes-Oxley Act, and the "importance of being a thoughtful participant in the market," she said.

"That kind of drove my interest to go to law school in the first place, to learn about how financial regulations and statutes could impact the way in which companies do business," she said. "I didn't realize that that had larger implications on investigations and white collar defense, but that was the initial reason why I wanted to go to law school."

Before joining the Justice Department, Barnes was a litigation attorney at Milbank Tweed Hadley & McCloy LLP.

Barnes is the latest Justice Department attorney to join the firm. Richard Zuckerman, who was acting assistant attorney general of the DOJ's tax division and had previously worked at Honigman for 30 years, joined last year.

Honigman opened its D.C. office in 2020. Barnes said Zuckerman's addition and the hiring of former U.S. Attorney Matthew Schneider had expanded the firm's white collar practice.

"I'm excited to join this established practice and to further expand," she said.

J. Michael Huget, chair of Honigman's litigation department, said Barnes "brings extensive experience in government investigations related to allegations arising under the False Claims Act, Anti-Kickback Statute, Stark Law, and [the Financial Institutions Reform, Recovery, and Enforcement Act]."

--Additional reporting by Aebra Coe and Justin Wise. Editing by Brian Baresch.

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