

## Nelson Mullins Continues Products Liability Expansion in Baltimore, Nashville

On Monday, the firm announced four lateral partners, including a three-partner group from Goodell, DeVries, Leech & Dann.

By Dan Roe  
May 10, 2021

After adding two litigators from Miles & Stockbridge in March, Nelson Mullins Riley & Scarborough continued its litigation group hiring by adding six attorneys in Baltimore and Nashville, Tennessee, the Am Law 100 firm announced Monday.

The incoming attorneys have experience in pharmaceutical and medical device litigation as well as catastrophic personal injury defense. Their hiring is part of a two-part, long-term strategy to expand the South Carolina-based firm's 427-lawyer litigation practice with homegrown talent and laterals with first-chair trial experience, said practice leader David Dukes.

"We're seeing a lot of [lateral] activity in the first-chair trial space," Dukes said in an interview. "When I interview folks—really good firms and lawyers—they feel they need more of a national footprint. That was a strategy we implemented 15 or 20 years ago; we're ahead of the game."

Five of the six laterals arrived from the Baltimore-based Goodell, DeVries, Leech & Dann, including partners Thomas Cullen, Kali Book and Ericka Downie, counsel John Maxa, and associate Ryan Cullen.

Cullen, a litigator with more than 30 years of experience in complex pharmaceutical, products liability and toxic tort litigation, will split his time between Nelson Mullins' Nashville and Baltimore offices. In an interview, he said his team sought the ability to expand its presence throughout the country.

"What we're seeing right now is a trend upward where our cases are coming out of dormancy," he said. "We're seeing more cases getting scheduled for trial; our dates may be real trial dates and deadlines going forward. I see it as an exciting time."



(L-R) Litigation practice leader David Dukes, Baltimore litigation lead Michael Brown, and incoming partner Thomas Cullen and Kate Skagerberg. Courtesy photo

Two months ago, Nelson Mullins hired Miles & Stockbridge partner Alicia Ritchie to bolster its Baltimore trial practice; counsel Jonathan Huber joined Ritchie in the move.

Baltimore litigation lead Michael Brown said the office will continue to grow as the demand for products liability litigators continues.

"We started that office back in 2018 with 21 lawyers; we're now up to 35 lawyers," Brown said in an interview. "A lot of that growth has been in the products area. We're going to keep getting increased demand and more opportunities to do products work around the country."

The firm also looked to expand in Nashville with the hiring of Houston, Texas-based Beck Redden trial lawyer Kate Skagerberg, who is relocating to the Music City. Skagerberg represents product manufacturers in individually filed lawsuits and multidistrict litigation.

"I really see the floodgates starting to open," Skagerberg said in an interview. "I think the second half of the year we'll be spending in courthouses across America."

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