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## On a Growth Binge, Kean Miller Adds Team From Probate Boutique in Houston

**Kean Miller, a Baton Rouge-founded firm has added three lawyers from MacIntyre, McCulloch & Stanfield in Houston, in the latest move in its aggressive Texas expansion.**

**BY BRENDA SAPINO JEFFREYS**

### What You Need to Know

- Kean Miller has hired three lawyers from Houston probate boutique MacIntyre, McCulloch & Stanfield in Houston.
- That adds a Texas-based probate litigation and administration practice group.
- The Louisiana-based firm has brought on eight lawyers since last October, nearly doubling the lawyer head count in Houston.

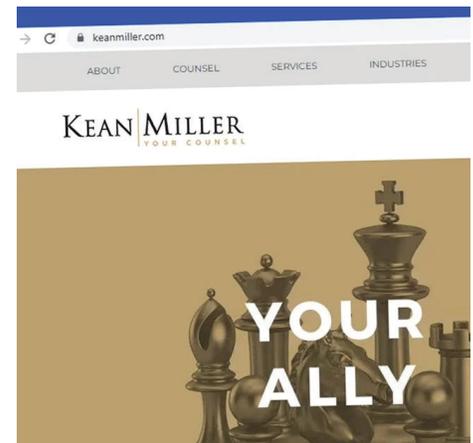
[Kean Miller](#) has added a three-lawyer probate team, a new practice for the firm in Texas, as the Baton Rouge-founded firm continues aggressive expansion of its Texas operations.

The three lawyers who started at Kean Miller on Monday in the new Texas-based probate litigation and administration practice group came from Houston boutique MacIntyre,

McCulloch & Stanfield. Robert MacIntyre and Cameron McCulloch joined Kean Miller as partners, while Laurel Smith joined as an associate.

Since last October, the firm has added Balch & Bingham bankruptcy lawyers Lloyd Lim and Rachel Kubanda, who joined Kean Miller as partners in January, along with associate Mack Wilson, who came from Paul Hastings on Monday. In November, the firm brought on offshore litigators and emergency response partner Tim Strickland and senior counsel Stacey Norstrud, both from Schouest, Bamdas, Soshea & BenMaier.

The lateral hires over the last four months has nearly doubled the lawyer head count in Houston, with at least a couple more lawyers expected to join in the near future.



Screenshot of Kean Miller's website.

John Jakuback, the office administrative partner in Houston, said the recent hiring shows the firm's commitment to Texas. The firm also has an office in The Woodlands.

Jakuback said he and the probate lawyers had been talking for several months. MacIntyre said the firm's lease was up, so they started considering a move, and Kean Miller presented them with a "spectacular opportunity" to join the firm.

“They recognize the growth potential of Houston and Texas. This practice area is booming, and Cameron and I were intrigued by the possibilities that Kean Miller presented to us,” he said.

McCulloch said the “really long courtship” was valuable, because they spent a lot of time with Kean Miller lawyers to make sure it was a fit from a cultural standpoint.

The group, McCulloch said, represents high-net-worth individuals and banks, and their work includes estate planning, litigation, and estate administration.

MacIntyre sees great cross-selling opportunities.

“Everybody has an aunt who needs a will, or somebody who passed away and they need an estate administered [or] a will probated,” he said.

MacIntyre said he and McCulloch formed their boutique 15 years ago, after leaving Thompson & Knight, where they were getting pressured to raise their billing rates, which was “slowly choking off their practice.”

Once they formed their boutique, he said, business started coming back immediately, much of it due to referrals from other firms.

McCulloch said they continue to have a good relationship with lawyers at Thompson & Knight, now Holland & Knight, but the firm 15 years ago didn’t see their probate practice as a growth area they wanted to pursue. In contrast, he said, regional firm Kean Miller values the practice because it spins off a lot of work.

MacIntyre said Kean Miller did not ask them to change their billing rates.

With 15 lawyers in Houston and five in The Woodlands, Kean Miller is looking to add more in Texas, Jakuback said, and he sees more hiring in Texas, including some litigators. The firm’s space in downtown Houston can expand large enough to accommodate 43 lawyers, he said.

Robert Stanfield, the other name partner and founder of MacIntyre McCulloch, now has a solo practice in Houston. He said he really liked the people at Kean Miller, but it wasn’t a fit for him at this time in his career.

Because he wants to spend more time with a grandson in Dallas, he said he is focusing on administration and estate planning and will do less fiduciary litigation.



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