

Veteran Houston Bankruptcy Principal Joins McKool Smith

By **Clark Mindock**

Law360 (May 11, 2020, 8:53 PM EDT) -- McKool Smith PC has added a veteran bankruptcy attorney to its Houston office who's hit the ground running during a busy season spurred in part by the COVID-19 pandemic.

John Sparacino joined the firm on May 1 as a principal after seven years with Vorys Sater Seymour and Pease LLP, where he was a partner. He told Law360 Monday the move had been in the works since November.

Sparacino said he hopes the new firm will allow him to have broader input in bankruptcy litigation than he had in past positions.



John Sparacino

"I think it will get me exposure to the biggest Chapter 11 cases filed in the U.S.," he said, adding he hopes to take on a "more prominent role" in big cases and to help guide the direction of big litigation.

Sparacino said he has brought some corporate oil and gas clients with him to McKool Smith.

He said while the move is exciting, it's been anything but easy given the high number of bankruptcy cases popping up with the coronavirus pandemic disrupting businesses across the country and globe. Shifting firms during the pandemic has been hectic, he said.

"New matters are flying in daily, if not more frequently than that," he said. "It would have been a logistical headache and an incredibly busy time even without the transition issues but then you add in the transition issues. It's a busy, challenging time but we're getting through."

In addition to the corporate oil and gas clients, Sparacino said he is bringing along at least two Houston-area bankruptcy trustee clients in the move, Rodney Tow and Chris Quinn.

His broader work has involved a range of clients, including secured and unsecured creditors, ad hoc creditors' committees, statutory creditors' committees, companies reorganizing under Chapter 11, as well as purchasers of distressed assets and companies.

David Sochia, the managing principal at McKool Smith, said Sparacino's deep connections in Texas will help to provide the firm's clients with a range of services.

"We're very excited about John's arrival to the firm. He has an outstanding reputation and is well connected in the Houston and broader Texas bankruptcy bar," Sochia said in a statement. "Our clients will benefit from John's significant experience in bankruptcy and distressed business matters, including restructurings, complex workouts, and creditors' rights litigation. He also has considerable experience in the energy, oil and gas, and financial services sectors, which complements our firm's practice offerings."

Before working at Vorys Sater, Sparacino was a partner at Andrews Kurth LLP.

He is a graduate of the University of Houston Law Center and completed his undergraduate degree at the University of Texas at Austin.

--Editing by Janice Carter Brown.