



Portfolio Media, Inc. | 111 West 19th Street, 5th floor | New York, NY 10011 | www.law360.com
Phone: +1 646 783 7100 | Fax: +1 646 783 7161 | customerservice@law360.com

Tucker Ellis Adds Liquor, Cannabis Regulatory Pro In Chicago

By **Lauraann Wood**

Law360 (October 21, 2020, 7:05 PM EDT) -- Tucker Ellis LLP announced that it has hired an attorney who guides breweries and cannabis dispensaries through state-level and federal regulatory regimes to help bolster the firm's business department in Chicago.

Ashley Brandt serves as outside counsel for clients across several industries but focuses particularly on business related to alcoholic beverages and cannabis, such as breweries and dispensaries. He joined Tucker Ellis earlier this month as a member of the firm's corporate, mergers and acquisitions and securities practice group after working at Goldstein & McClintock LLLP for more than four years.



Ashley Brandt

Brandt told Law360 that he moved to Tucker Ellis not only to join a group of friends who'd previously joined the firm but to also tap into a network of colleagues who can offer support when his work touches other areas of law.

"Now I have access to an [intellectual property] department that I didn't have before," Brandt said as an example. "I've got ... an excess to 50 to 60 breweries that I represent who are absolutely spectacular clients and wonderful people, and I want to be able to turn work around faster for them."

Brandt advises his clients through every aspect of their businesses but said counseling his alcohol-related clients through their regulatory duties is the big focal point of his practice. He said he enjoys the work because he likes helping them with the "tricky issues" that come up in a three-tiered regulatory system where manufacturers, wholesalers and distributors aren't allowed to mix with one another.

"In any other industry you can have a manufacturer give a lot of incentives and buy equipment for a retailer and help them out, and in alcohol that is very much prohibited," he said.

Brandt also helps clients in business matters including entity formation, branding, financing, equipment leasing and purchasing and negotiating agreements with cultivators, wholesalers and distributors.

He said having several years of experience performing regulatory work laid the foundation for him to enter and practice in this area of the law. And while his regulatory experience also helped his practice grow, Brandt said that growth was also partly due to being "in the right place at the right time."

"I very much had a lot of people around me" surrounding the 2008 economic downturn who were interested in trying new things and pursuing new careers, Brandt said. Many of those people were friends who wanted to get into the beer brewing business, "and in helping them my practice grew," he said, noting that the evolution of his legal work in the cannabis industry took a similar trajectory.

Brandt said he enjoys his practice not only because of his genuine interest in controlled substances and humans' interaction with them but because it continuously presents opportunities to learn new things and meet new people.

"Everything about the law is if you treat it right and do well you can continue to learn something new every day," he said. "I can't imagine something more fun than dealing with this area."

Brandt graduated from Northwestern University School of Law in 2003. In 2004, he worked for a year as a state appellate defender, according to his LinkedIn profile. He entered private civil practice in 2005, when he worked for one year as a licensing and litigation attorney at Conklin & Conklin LLC, his profile said.

He landed at Foran Glennon Palandech Ponzi & Rudloff PC in 2006 and focused on commercial litigation and contracting work for the firm for four years before moving to Clark Hill PLC in January 2010, where he performed commercial litigation, business contracting and lien work for nearly two years, according to his LinkedIn profile.

Brandt joined Freeborn & Peters LLP in September 2011 as a partner in the firm's business and food and beverage group, where he performed regulatory and trademark work while also helping clients with their marketing, technology and commercial contracting, according to his LinkedIn profile. He'd worked at Freeborn & Peters for about five years before he joined Goldstein & McClintock in Sept. 2016, his profile said.

--Editing by Jay Jackson Jr.

All Content © 2003-2020, Portfolio Media, Inc.