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Barnes & Thornburg Enhances Legal Operations Amidst Growing Demand

New Chief Legal Operations Officer Jared Applegate leads multidisciplinary team focused on delivering value above and beyond what clients expect

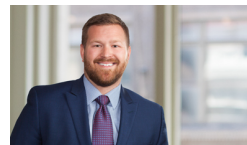
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INDIANAPOLIS – Continuing its strong commitment to building sustainable, outcome-driven partnerships with clients, Barnes & Thornburg has announced the formal launch of its Legal Operations Department focused on maintaining and growing the firm’s pricing, scoping and matter management capabilities. The department will be led by Chief Legal Operations Officer (CLOO) Jared Applegate, who previously served as the firm’s director of pricing.

In his new role, Applegate will bring together in-house legal executives collaborating with the firm’s attorneys and full-time legal project management professionals, pricing professionals and technology products to address day-to-day business and legal challenges. The department, comprised of professionals with client-focused specialties, will oversee several legal operations functions, including pricing and alternative fee arrangements; budget control and forecasting; billing best practices; matter management software; customized client reports and dashboards; and attorney training and professional development, among others.

“Barnes & Thornburg has long recognized that clients need more than

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BT ValueWorks

just great legal work – we’re always exploring new ways to efficiently solve client problems and improve quality,” said Applegate. “This was a purposeful move to clearly demonstrate to clients that we understand their pressures and can help them more easily reach their goals.”

Applegate is the co-creator of Barnes & Thornburg’s award-winning [BT ValueWorks](#) program, a suite of pricing, process and technology solutions that bring greater value, efficiency and predictability to the delivery of legal services. Since launching in 2016, BT ValueWorks has become the firm’s fastest-growing client development initiative and will remain the flagship effort of the department. To date, more than 200 of the firm’s attorneys are trained and engaged in the program, which amounted to more than 370 client-focused projects and more than \$100 million in revenue in 2018 under active matter management.

The Evolving Legal Marketplace

“We’re in a buyer’s market focused on value – clients are demanding more from their outside legal counsel, as measured by efficiency, cost effectiveness and predictability,” said Allen Chichester, chief marketing officer at Barnes & Thornburg. “We’ve been making great strides in each of these areas, but having a proactive, systematic client and legal operations program helps us overcome the decision-making inertia that plagues so many other law firms.”

Legal industry studies bear out this trend. According to the [2018 Corporate Legal Department Efficiency Report](#) by *Thomson Reuters*, there are growing demands of and expectations on corporate legal departments, to increase productivity despite budget constraints and limited resources. Similarly, Georgetown Law and *Thomson Reuters’ 2019 Report on the State of the Legal Market* urges law firms to “jettison some long-held assumptions and ... imagine a new model of how the legal market now works” with changing client needs, expectations and behaviors.

Aligning With Client Legal Operations

The handling of operational activities has been transferring from general counsel and attorneys to operations managers, according to the 2018 survey by *Thomson Reuters*. Operations managers saw a steady increase in responsibility across several categories, and 29 percent of legal department leaders indicated they have someone managing their operations, up from 21 percent in 2016.

“Creating a dedicated department at the C-suite level is a natural outgrowth of our legal operations initiative. We’ve been working with client-side legal operations personnel for years and this move is calculated to mirror our client counterparts and their approach,” said Steven Merkel, Barnes & Thornburg’s chief operating officer. “Offering legal operations capabilities at a highly sophisticated level fits seamlessly with our focus on dramatically improving our client service.”

About Jared Applegate

Applegate is a certified trainer in legal project management by LawVision and an Accredited Legal Pricing Professional with True Value Partnering

Institute. He has spoken extensively on the topics of legal pricing and innovation, including appearances at the Corporate Legal Operations Consortium, Associate of Corporate Counsel, Thomson Reuters Legal Executive Institute, Legal Marketing Association's P3 Conference, and Briefings 5P Conference in London.

With more than 600 attorneys and other legal professionals, Barnes & Thornburg is one of the largest law firms in the country. The firm serves clients worldwide from 14 offices in Atlanta, California, Chicago, Delaware, Indiana, Michigan, Minneapolis, Ohio, Texas and Washington, D.C.