

Pennsylvania Powerhouse: Buchanan Ingersoll

By **Matt Fair**

Law360 (August 4, 2021, 2:25 PM EDT) -- Capitalizing on its deep roots in the state since first opening its doors in Pittsburgh more than 150 years ago, Buchanan Ingersoll & Rooney PC's work representing major players in the state's historically strong energy industry helped earn it a spot among Law360's 2021 Pennsylvania Powerhouses.

As the energy industry in Pennsylvania has evolved from the oil boom of the mid-1800s to the Marcellus Shale play of the last two decades, Buchanan Ingersoll, one of five firms to be named as Law360's Pennsylvania Powerhouses, has grown right alongside it as the firm helped clients shepherd major transactions and notch key courtroom victories.

Outside of energy, the firm has built strong practices around other legacy industries in the Keystone State, including financial services, through clients like Pittsburgh-based PNC Bank NA, and has grown to service newer entrants into the state's economy like the health care and pharmaceutical sectors.

"The lawyers back then serviced all those historic industries, and all the biggest companies in Pittsburgh, and to this day part of our core strengths continue to be energy and financial institutions along with health care and life sciences," firm CEO Joseph Dougherty told Law360.

Over the last year, the firm's strength representing the energy industry manifested itself as attorneys defeated claims from a former director at Rice Energy Inc., now a part of EQT Corp., that he was fired for raising concerns about potential securities fraud at the company. Instead, a federal judge agreed in June that the director had failed to show that he even believed that securities fraud was taking place or was likely to take place.

On the transactional side, the firm represented Lola Energy PetroCo LLC in acquiring natural gas leases in Butler County covering 22,000 acres, as well as 48 producing wells and 18 other wells waiting to be fracked, from the defunct EdgeMarc Energy Holdings LLC.

According to Jaime Tuite, who heads the firm's office in Pittsburgh, the deal brought together attorneys from the oil and gas group as well as from the finance, real estate, and labor and employment groups in order to make sure it got across the finish line.

"This is another example highlighting our energy focus," she said, "and I think it also shows how our



teams work together across different sections to really be able to support the client and to be able to assist with a large acquisition like that."

In terms of its expansion into other areas of Pennsylvania's economy, attorneys based out of Buchanan Ingersoll's office in Pittsburgh recently represented seed-stage investor Innovation Works in a deal with Allegheny Health Network to establish a new health care and life sciences accelerator known as AlphaLab Health.

In addition to AlphaLab joining Pittsburgh's vibrant health care sector, Tuite said it was part of a burgeoning technology and venture capital scene in the area.

"It's really focused on the life sciences sector to try and help cultivate more medical technologies," she said. "It's cool in the sense that it shows what's going on in Pittsburgh with the goal of drawing more entrepreneurs to the area and building more companies."

The firm has come a long way from its origins in 1850, when Rep. Moses Hampton and his son opened their law practice in Pittsburgh.

After decades as a mostly local outfit, the firm eventually expanded across the entirety of Pennsylvania. It opened an office in Philadelphia in 1985 that has since grown to comprise just over 60 attorneys. It opened a third office in the state capital, Harrisburg, in 1988 that now includes between 30 and 40 attorneys, and serves as home base for Buchanan Ingersoll's government relations practice. The firm is the only one of the five Pennsylvania Powerhouses named by Law360 for this year to maintain a presence in Harrisburg.

Jayson Wolfgang, who serves as the head of the Harrisburg office, said that Buchanan Ingersoll's presence in the capital city gave it a leg up representing clients before administrative bodies, such as the Public Utility Commission or the Environmental Hearing Board, or in navigating regulatory agencies.

"The way I think of it is we kind of have all three branches of state government covered," he said, "whether it's the judicial system through our litigation group, the executive branch through our work before state agencies, and then the Legislature through our governmental relations practice."

Helping to bolster the firm's reputation in Pennsylvania is the number of lawyers who have been drawn from Buchanan Ingersoll's ranks to serve on both the state and federal bench. Among the firm luminaries presiding in courts across the state are Justice Christine Donohue of the Pennsylvania Supreme Court, President Judge P. Kevin Brobson of the Pennsylvania Commonwealth Court, and Chief U.S. District Judge Mark Hornak and Senior U.S. District Judge Joy Flowers Conti of the Western District of Pennsylvania.

Tuite said she recalled hearing the firm's general counsel speak when Judge Hornak was sworn in as chief back in 2018.

"He joked that Buchanan Ingersoll is known as a training ground for judges," she said.

As for the firm's future, Dougherty said that Buchanan Ingersoll was in clear growth mode in 2021.

"We're very much in growth mode, and I'm looking to expand in all three of our Pennsylvania markets,"

he said. "Under our current strategic plan we have built health care, energy, financial services, life sciences, and we want to grow our benches to make sure we have all the right areas of expertise in those industry groups."

--Editing by Adam LoBelia.

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