

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

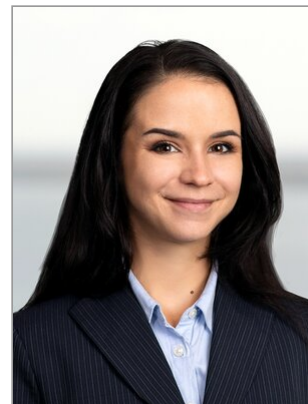
## Shumaker Adds Community Associations Attorney In Florida

By **Jack Rodgers**

Law360 (December 2, 2022, 4:22 PM EST) -- Shumaker Loop & Kendrick LLP has added a senior attorney to its community associations group who most recently spent almost five years with Southeastern firm Kubicki Draper working on insurance defense.

Based in Tampa, Florida, Jessica Prats joins the firm office as a senior associate, after working as a Kubicki Draper shareholder, a firm with 12 offices in Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi and Florida. Her near-decade of experience also includes almost three and a half years with Cole Scott & Kissane PA, according to her LinkedIn profile.

Jonathan J. Ellis, the firm's community associations business sector chairman, said in a statement that he was looking forward to welcoming Prats to the team.



Jessica L. Prats

"Her personality, talent and experience perfectly align with the strengths, values and vision we maintain at Shumaker and for our clients," he said in a statement.

A Stetson University College of Law graduate, Prats began practicing with Cole Scott and began work on first-party property insurance defense issues, the firm said. She has produced and written a number of articles on a range of topics including cast iron plumbing litigation and hurricane-related claims, the firm said.

In an interview with Law360 Friday, Prats said the atmosphere in Florida around insurance defense litigation had grown intense and involved and that she wanted to take a new role and scale back on litigation.

Community association work is a different area of the law than what Prats practiced previously, she said. In her new role, Prats will work generally as a general counsel for different community associations, she said. Those issues will range from drafting documents like community association bylaws to other contracts.

"We don't do a lot of litigation in this position because most condo associations and homeowners associations have general liability insurance and under those insurance policies, if they get sued by somebody, the insurance company will pay for the defense," she said. "And usually the defense counsel who take that are the people who I used to work with."

Prats said when she first graduated, she was concerned about where she'd practice law. She took the first job she could in the insurance defense litigation space and has worked hard to maintain a career in the field.

"From there I just kind of stuck around, I honed expertise in that area of the law and then it just kind of got to a point where I had 170 cases that I was handling all by myself and all the clients I was working with wanted everything done at that very second," she said. "And then with Covid and the Supreme Court issuing all these trial orders, these attorneys and these parties are being forced to go to trial when they're not ready."

If she were to have stayed with Kubicki Draper, she would have had three or four trials scheduled for the same week in November, across different parts of the state, she said.

But for Prats, she enjoyed her ability to do research and educate herself about clients issues and the industry.

"Just being able to have the time, the grace and the space, to dive into a nuanced issue and really kind of get in there and figure out how to solve a problem that may be a matter of first impression," she said. "We never had that at the prior firms. We were not allowed to bill for research, we weren't allowed to spend a lot of time on things where here it's just the complete opposite and it's wonderful."

--Editing by Alex Hubbard.

---

All Content © 2003-2022, Portfolio Media, Inc.