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Shumaker Adds Partner, Senior Atty In Sarasota

By **Madison Arnold**

Law360 (April 28, 2022, 12:32 PM EDT) -- Shumaker Loop & Kendrick LLP added a partner and a senior attorney in its Sarasota, Florida, office to better accommodate what the firm says is a growing need for legal services in the community.

Ashley Hodson joined Shumaker as its newest partner in the wealth strategies services line while Alicia Lewis is now a senior attorney in the real estate and development service line. The two were hired on to help with the demand that comes with increased housing, tourism and population growth in the city, the firm said.

Hodson's experience lies within complex estate planning, trust and estate administration and federal income, estate, gift and generation-skipping transfer tax planning, the firm said. She has also worked on homestead issues, preparation of federal estate and gift tax returns, IRS audits of federal estate tax returns, fiduciary duties and post-mortem tax planning.



Ashley Hodson

"With more people choosing to retire in Sarasota, there is a greater demand for wealth planning," Cheryl Gordon, partner and wealth strategies regional service line leader, said in a statement. "Ashley has stood out as a top attorney in this field, and we are honored to have her join the firm as partner. Shumaker is dedicated and committed to having women reach the highest levels of leadership to create stronger, more diverse teams."

Hodson wasn't immediately available for an interview Thursday.

Hodson previously worked as a partner at Shutts & Bowen LLP's Sarasota office. While she was there, she was appointed to the Twelfth Circuit Judicial Nominating Commission by Gov. Ron DeSantis, according to a Shutts & Bowen news release from August.

She is a graduate of Stetson University College of Law and earned a master of laws degree in taxation from the University of Denver Sturm College of Law, according to her Florida Bar online profile.

Lewis will help the firm with its increased demand for real estate and development projects. She'll be helping clients in an area where there is a need for affordable housing with the median sales price of a single-family home at \$500,000 and a median rent of \$1,588 a month, the firm said.

Lewis' new city is also seeing a commercial boom with new development projects planned, particularly in places like downtown.

Her practice revolves around land use, zoning, government procurement, public private partnerships, affordable housing, environmental law, entitlement due diligence, community outreach and municipal government law, the firm said.

"You get to be involved in so many different things. So a part of my job is being a lobbyist. Part of it is understanding municipal law and then the other part is being a salesperson, because I'm pitching real estate development projects to the community, to elected officials, to staff. No day is ever the same and I just feel grateful that I get to be one of those lawyers that can say that," Lewis told Law360 in an interview.

Lewis represents real estate developers and private property owners on matters such as amendments, rezoning, site plan approvals, platting, variances, special exceptions, and code enforcement matters.

"Alicia works with a wide range of clients seeking to do business both in the private and public sectors and counsel clients on the proper strategies for successful interactions with city and county government agencies and officials," Jan Pitchford, partner and real estate and development regional service line leader, said in a statement.

Lewis was most recently a partner at Kelley Kronenberg, according to her LinkedIn profile. She spent a year there after working more than six years as a senior attorney at Greenspoon Marder LLP.

She said she was looking to move her practice from South Florida, where she was previously located, over to the west coast of Florida. That ultimately led her to Shumaker, which Lewis said has a reputation for retaining attorneys.

"At this point in my career, that's what's important," Lewis said. "I was looking for my permanent home and a new challenge at this mid-point in my career, and I'm just grateful that I found it at a place like Shumaker."

She is a graduate of the University of Alabama Law School and earned a master's degree in public administration from the University of Alabama Birmingham, her profile said. Her bachelor's degree in political science and government came from Auburn University.

Shumaker has more than 270 lawyers and advisers in 10 offices across the country. The firm has four Florida locations, which include Tampa, Tallahassee and Dade City.

--Editing by Alyssa Miller.

Update: This story was updated to include comments from Lewis.