

US arbitrator to double up as professor and of counsel

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Troy Harris

Troy Harris, who left the Georgia Office of King and Spalding two years ago to return to academia, has taken up a position as of counsel at Detroit firm Miller Canfield, in addition to his full-time teaching post at a local university.

Harris, 49, is assistant professor of law at the University of Detroit Mercy, teaching international commercial arbitration, sales, contracts and construction law. He said he decided to rejoin a firm “to enhance my experience and credibility. I believe it is important to keep one foot in each camp, so to speak, and to be credible with both academics and practitioners.”

He says having an active practice also enhances his teaching. “Students and colleagues at the university respond well to real-world hypotheticals and my practice provides a ready supply of new scholarship ideas.”

He says that Miller Canfield is “the oldest, largest and most prestigious firm in Detroit”, a city which is “at the centre of the worldwide manufacturing industry.

“Many people are surprised to learn that, if Michigan were a separate country, its economy would be roughly the same size as that of Taiwan. My aim is to help build a practice focused on international disputes in the manufacturing industry, and Miller Canfield’s existing expertise in that space is a perfect fit.”

Harris is a fellow of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators and a member of the executive committee of its North American Branch. He is also an arbitrator on the commercial panel of the American Arbitration Association.

During a decade with King & Spalding, he gained experience of a broad range of arbitrations, representing parties in complex disputes in the construction, manufacturing, energy, and transportation sectors.

He has also represented the American and Swiss Arbitration Associations as *amici curiae* in proceedings before a Fifth Circuit US appellate court “involving a collateral attack upon an international arbitration award”.

Harris was recently added to the roster of the US State Department's Fulbright specialist programme in the area of international arbitration, which promotes collaboration between US academics and their counterparts overseas.

John Hinckley, a former colleague of Harris at King & Spalding who co-authored a book on international construction arbitration with him, predicts that he will become a "highly valued" member of Miller Canfield's international arbitration team.

"Troy is able to work effectively with parties and counsel in complex arbitration proceedings," Hinckley says. "He is an exceptionally talented international arbitration scholar and will continue to be a sought after international arbitrator."

Dean of the University of Detroit Mercy law school, Lloyd Semple, says: "Troy is an important and highly regarded member of our faculty and an excellent teacher and scholar. I have granted him permission to assume this of counsel position upon his representation to me that his professional activities are related to his major academic interests and enrich his capacity as a scholar and a teacher, that they are also of service to the legal profession and the public and do not unduly interfere with his responsibilities as a faculty member, all as required under the ABA Standards."

The chair of Miller Canfield's international dispute resolution practice, Fred Acomb, says: "Troy is a great addition and a valuable resource to clients. He brings not only scholarship in the area, but also considerable real-world experience."

Harris began his career as a law clerk at the US Kansas District Court and then worked as an associate at a firm in Georgia before embarking on the road of academia, teaching at Cornell Law School in New York and at Emory Law School in Georgia.