



NEWS RELEASE

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Blalock Walters Expands, Adds Two New Practice Groups.

BRADENTON, Florida – January 15, 2010 - Blalock, Walters, Held & Johnson, P.A. announces the addition of two new practice groups – labor & employment law and immigration law. This expertise benefits the firm's existing clients, as well as supports the rapid growth in new clients the firm has experienced in recent years.

"The continued growth of Blalock Walters, particularly in this challenging business environment, is exciting," stated Cliff Walters, managing partner. "These two new practice groups are critical elements in our future growth strategy. While other firms are being forced to downsize in this economy, Blalock Walters is adding new specialty areas and personnel to support their efforts. We are pleased to be able to hire forward-thinking attorneys who bring a fresh approach to the practice of law."

While one of Manatee County's oldest law firms, Blalock Walters average attorney age is actually becoming younger. This trend at Blalock Walters is both strategic and purposeful, ensuring that the firm builds a strong foundation for the future. It is a formula that benefits the firm's client base by expanding services and adding highly skilled resources.

To support Blalock Walters' expansion into these two practice areas, Matthew Westerman recently joined the firm as a principal. Westerman brings unique expertise in these specialty areas, having successfully represented businesses and individuals in numerous labor and employment issues, as well as immigration and naturalization matters.

Westerman graduated magna cum laude with a Juris Doctor from the Stetson University College of Law. He is a 1994 graduate of the University of Central Florida with a B.A. in psychology. He holds memberships in the Florida Bar, the Manatee County Bar Association, the St. Petersburg Bar Association, as well as the Labor and Employment Law Section of the Florida Bar. He is also a member of the American Immigration Lawyers Association and the Sarasota-Manatee and Suncoast Chapters of the Society of Human Resource Management. Westerman is licensed to practice before all Florida State Courts, as well as the United States District Court and Middle and Southern Districts of Florida.

"I am honored to join Blalock Walters and to become a member of this community. Blalock Walters offers a great opportunity to work alongside some of the most talented professionals in the state of Florida, which only enhances the services I provide to my clients," said



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Westerman. I look forward to playing a vital role in Blalock Walters' growth in Southwest Florida."

Blalock Walters is a full-service law firm built on a foundation of integrity and hard work. As the largest firm in Manatee County and the fourth largest firm in the Sarasota/Bradenton market, they serve a wide range of large and small clients in diverse industries. For more than 80 years, the firm has served as a trusted adviser in resolving the legal needs of individuals, leading businesses and other institutions throughout Southwest Florida and beyond. www.blalockwalters.com.

For more information about Blalock Walters or to arrange an interview, please contact Tricia Lewis at 941-351-0024 or email tlewis@grapeinc.com. Grapevine Communications is an award-winning advertising, marketing and public relations firm based in Sarasota and serving clients nationwide.

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