

Special Counsel LEGAL STAFFING AND SOLUTIONS

When MPS Group (NYSE: MPS) wanted to boost awareness of Special Counsel, its legal-staffing unit, they called AXIA.

As public-relations experts, the AXIA team knew that the best way to create exposure was to establish company spokespersons as "subject-matter experts" on legal trends, staffing and employment. AXIA contacted influential reporters who covered the industry and reviewed editorial calendars, presenting editors with timely and relevant story ideas.

The result was significant earned media coverage for Special Counsel, including *The Florida Times-Union*, *Jacksonville Business Journal*, *Financial News* and *Daily Record*, *Jacksonville Lawyer Magazine*, *Small Firm Business*, *American Lawyer Magazine*, *Legal Secretary Today*, *Law Office Computing*, *Washington Business Journal*, *Washington Times*, *Metropolitan Corporate Counsel* and *Legal Times*.

Making partner move difficult at restr...

BY JOE BAUGH
STAFF WRITER

JACKSONVILLE—When Douglas Ward graduated from University of Florida law school in 1971, he was "really delighted" with his \$11,000 annual salary as a new associate attorney.

But for Ward, now the managing director of Southbank-based Red Tiersers P.A., and other managing directors for firms around the city, the compensation structure for lawyers, particularly associates, is evolving—sometimes steadily, but increasingly in fits and starts.

Put simply: Graduating law school and becoming an associate lawyer at firms across the country, including Jacksonville, isn't what it used to be.

The hours are longer, though the pay is more, and achieving an equity partner status—still considered the pinnacle of a legal career—takes longer than ever before, said several local managing directors and experts on national lawyer employment trends.

Many junior associates may never become an equity partner, instead advancing to a non-equity-earning partner position. Some associate lawyers have come temporarily to migrate from

The shift is the result of changes in the industry that began more than a decade ago, coinciding with the Internet technology boom, one national observer of the industry said.

"Law firms began to change their organizational structures overall," said Heidi Nadler, vice president of Special Counsel Inc., a national lawyer and legal staffing company. "It was a move, quite frankly, to operate more like a business with more managed corporate levels."

"I think many firms realized that if they kept people on traditional firm promotion paths, they'd have places full of chiefs, no Indians," Nadler said.

The mid-1990s also marked the latest wave of law-firm consolidation, which brought increasing numbers of law firms into the state, regional and national arenas, Nadler said. With fewer firms in the marketplace, that meant fewer spots for equity-earning partners.

The size also forced growing firms to look at ways of controlling costs. Personnel costs are the overwhelming primary

"The overhead in a law firm has increased with the increase in law firm consolidation. The average national law firm now has 100 attorneys, up from 50 in 1980, and the average annual salary for an attorney is \$135,000, up from \$60,000 in 1980," the company stated.

The company stated that some large law firms began to ratchet annual \$14,000 for this year's hires, who will begin work in July.

Local directors said

Cultivating assets

Training is an investment, not an expense



Ray Park, training coordinator for BSA America, said the company sponsored one trainee this year.

The company brings in 10 people from out of state to the center in Jacksonville each month. The center has a 100-hour program that includes a 10-week intensive training program. The program is designed to provide a solid foundation for the legal profession. The program is designed to provide a solid foundation for the legal profession. The program is designed to provide a solid foundation for the legal profession.

Hot legal market leads Special Counsel south

By Bradley Parsons
Staff Writer

Florida's growing demand for attorneys and paralegals has led Jacksonville-based Special Counsel, a legal staffing firm, to open new offices in Miami and Tampa.

The new offices will give Special Counsel, a unit of MPS Group, Inc., a presence in 30 market areas across the country. The firm's president, John Marshall, said Florida's legal job market is steadily expanding.

"The market is relatively consistent in Florida. The firms aren't as dependent on fluctuations in markets like New York and Washington D.C.," said

Orlando are not money centers. The need for attorneys and paralegals is focused more around real estate and commercial law.

The expansion is largely based on simple demographics. Tampa and Miami are two of the fastest growing communities in the country. Factor in a state economy that is outpacing national growth and the decision was a no-brainer, said Marshall.

But Marshall looks for more than just a population explosion when deciding where to expand. A growing economy usually translates to a healthy legal market. For instance,



Special Counsel President John Marshall says Jacksonville's legal market is stronger than that of most

PARALEGALS AS PROFIT CENTERS

Are You Utilizing Your Paralegals Effectively?

Paralegals play a key role in both private law firms and corporate legal units. If utilized effectively, paralegals have proven to be invaluable players in the position of legal assistants in a number of ways.

Paralegals support attorneys in their daily business by acting as liaisons between attorneys and their clients, as well as courts and governmental bodies. Talented paralegals also can offer expertise in the multi-faceted practice areas where they have received specialized training. If used successfully, paralegals can allow law firms to increase the amount of legal services and the number of goals for your firm.

- PARALEGAL RESPONSIBILITIES**
- Litigation
 - Prepare deposition transcripts
 - Review legal, financial and legislative records
 - File and case management
 - Litigation support
 - Prepare notices of motion
 - Prepare certificates of service
 - Prepare deposition notices
 - Prepare memoranda
 - Prepare discovery requests
 - Prepare affidavits and affidavits
 - Trial preparation
 - Draft complaints, answers and counterclaims
 - Review and summarize medical records
 - System document review and document coding/indexing
 - Research
 - Check intake
 - Act as liaison with clients
 - Case-checking
 - Drafting contracts
 - Prepare admission statements

- CORPORATE**
- Corporate handovering
 - Draft press statements
 - Draft and review contracts
 - Case alignment review
 - Maintain corporate minutes books
 - Prepare articles of incorporation, bylaws and resolutions
 - Prepare closing documents
 - Billable time

- REAL ESTATE**
- Obtain title information
 - Prepare purchase documents
 - Prepare contracts of sale
 - Prepare closing documents
 - Prepare post-closing documents
 - Mortgage
 - Review title books
 - Prepare various applications

- INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY**
- Patent and trademark checking
 - Prepare office actions
 - Trademark research, prosecution and litigation
 - Patent and trademark searches
 - Prepare licensing agreements and agreements

Professional development for paralegals as it is to attend outside training seminars, your

7. FAMILY OR MENIAL LEAVE
A key attorney will be taking leave of absence from the firm, company due to a family, medical or other personal leave scenario. Rather than overhaul an already understaffed staff, bring on an experienced temporary attorney to cover the workload during your

8. QUANT-LEGAL WORK
Temporary attorneys are prime candidates to handle compliance, human resources, contracts and regulatory work. These candidates provide exceptional insight to legal and human resources departments, as well as attend contract and procurement

9. SPECIAL NEEDS
The law firm has a "special need" in a particular practice area and needs the expertise of a specialist to assist in a specific matter. This is a common temporary attorney to handle the daily job. Whether the particular need is in the area of EEO/A, securities, technology or another specialized area, a seasoned expert can assist in your handling of such matters. The "specialist provider" has extensive understanding of a particular practice area and therefore adds value to the law firm's client.

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Media Coverage