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Phone: +1 646 783 7100 | Fax: +1 646 783 7161 | customerservice@law360.com

## Tyson & Mendes Opens Philly Office With 4 Local Attys

By James Boyle

Law360 (January 17, 2024, 4:21 PM EST) -- National defense firm Tyson & Mendes has launched a new Philadelphia-area office led by four seasoned litigators who moved their practices from Rawle & Henderson.

Tyson & Mendes opened its new location on Tuesday near Villanova University in the Philadelphia suburbs, the firm announced. The office is led by managing partner Maureen Daley, who left Rawle & Henderson after more than 21 years. She is joined by fellow former Rawle & Henderson attorneys Jocelyne Peregoy, Joseph Longo and Allan Goulding.

Bob Tyson, managing partner of Tyson & Mendes, told Law360 Pulse in an interview Wednesday that having Daley lead the office played a large role in the firm's decision to open a new location in an area he said is rife with plaintiff-friendly courtrooms.



Maureen Daley

"We try to open where we see demand from clients," Tyson said. "The demand seems to be in difficult defense litigation climates. We had some recent big moves, including a new office in Texas and doubling our presence in Florida, both of which are not defense-friendly. We go where the clients need us, and we found the right person in Maureen."

Philadelphia is a legal market that suffers from what Tyson's firm calls nuclear verdicts, or plaintiff awards totaling \$10 million or more. Tyson said plaintiffs attorneys have changed their approach to the courtroom in the last 15 years, resulting in numerous sky-high verdicts that are not always proportionate to the damages.

"It is a growing problem, and we are seeing a rise in the severity and frequency," Tyson said. "A lot of these verdicts are unjust and unfair, and the plaintiffs lawyers are manipulating the juries and jury pool in different ways. They are doing a better job than the defense lawyers, and the defense has not changed quickly enough."

Tyson said plaintiffs lawyers impact the jury pool through social media campaigns that can prejudice potential jurors before they enter the courtroom. Once they are in the courtroom, Tyson said, the attorneys use jury selection to start priming them to accept exorbitantly large verdict sums.

"They used to go for sympathy," Tyson said. "Now, they go for anger and manipulate jurors to be angry at the defendants. They start planting seeds for large award numbers during jury selection. A potential juror is asked if they are comfortable with huge numbers if the evidence supports their case, and they keep hitting those numbers throughout the trial."

Tyson said his firm has an approach to counter the strategies used by plaintiffs lawyers, employed in each of Tyson & Mendes' 22 offices throughout the U.S. He emphasized that defense attorneys need to display their own humanity while countering a plaintiff's complaint, and Tyson urges the defense to have its own number for a verdict award and keep it prominent.

"The defense needs to be good human beings and show they care," Tyson said. "They are used to fighting, but stop for a minute. And having a number works for both sides. Have a counter number to present to the jury throughout the case."

Daley showed an openness to Tyson & Mendes' methods and adapting her approach, Tyson said. That, plus the obvious loyalty she displayed by staying with Rawle & Henderson for more than two decades, made hiring Daley as office managing partner a "no-brainer," Tyson said.

--Editing by Rich Mills.

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