

Dykema Opens Houston Office with Addition of Business Litigation Attorneys

Houston – February 14, 2022 – Dykema, a leading national law firm, today announced that it is expanding its presence in Texas with a new Houston office. The office, which is Dykema's 14th nationwide, has come to fruition with the recent joining of top business litigators Isaac Villarreal and Andy Green.

Villarreal and Green establish the office alongside existing Dykema Senior Counsels Nicholas Zugaro and Basil Umari who have been affiliated with the Dallas office but will now sit in Houston. Also joining the Houston office is commercial litigation associate Amanda D. Gordon, who worked closely with Villarreal and Green at their former firm. In addition to these five resident Houston attorneys, several other attorneys from Dykema's Texas offices regularly practice in Houston and will split their time between offices.

“Dykema is committed to expanding its platform and deepening our already robust footprint in Texas,” said Len Wolfe, Dykema's Chair and CEO. “Houston is a key market for our clients and a hub for several areas where we have strong practices including oil and gas, healthcare, life sciences, bankruptcy, and major commercial litigation. Our new presence here will allow us to leverage our large national platform to better serve our clients in the state and serve Houston's greater business community. Further, both Isaac and Andy have deep Houston roots and excellent local legal reputations so are well-poised to help us continue our Houston expansion.”

This move comes just weeks after Dykema announced an office opening in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, adding seven seasoned capital markets lawyers and marking the firm's first footprint in that

state.

Villarreal, Green, and Gordon previously practiced in the Houston office of Dallas-based firm McCathern, Shokouhi, Evans, Grinke. They work together as a litigation team, with Villarreal serving as a trial lawyer and Green focusing on all pre-trial aspects of litigation. They counsel a wide range of clients in Houston and Texas, from small businesses to Fortune 500 companies.

“For years, we sought the right team to build a Houston office and we have finally found that team,” added Chris Kratovil, Managing Member of Dykema’s Houston and Dallas offices. “Dykema has litigators that have practiced against Isaac, Andy, and Amanda, so we know first-hand how talented they are and how well their practices complement our platform. To say that we are very excited for them to join Basil and Nick to found our Houston office is an understatement.”

Advancing Dykema’s National and Texas Strategy

As a premier firm with Midwestern roots, Dykema has developed a national footprint focused on serving Fortune 1000 and middle-market companies. Building on its roots and driven by the needs of its clients, the firm has extended its platform nationally by developing sophisticated practices in areas including automotive, consumer financial services, energy, electric distribution, infrastructure finance, intellectual property, and pharmaceutical/medical device litigation. With more than 380 lawyers and government policy advisors, Dykema continues to engage in strategic expansion discussions with leading attorneys who can add further depth to key practices.

Throughout 2021, Dykema strategically added bench strength in key regional markets including Austin, Chicago, Dallas, Detroit, Lansing, and Washington, D.C.

Houston as the fourth-largest city in the United States and the largest legal market in Texas is a natural addition for

Dykema's team of top-ranked practitioners. While Houston is widely known for its importance in the global energy market and the oil and gas industry, it is also a diversified legal market that counts healthcare and life sciences as its second-biggest economic sector. In the legal industry, the Bankruptcy Court for the Houston Division of the Southern District of Texas has emerged as the "go-to" federal district for major bankruptcies alongside Delaware and the Southern District of New York. It is also a major commercial litigation hub and a venue where the firm regularly handles litigation matters.

About the Lawyers

Isaac Villarreal is a seasoned litigator with more than 10 years of experience in business and complex commercial matters. He has served as the first-chair counsel in at least 50 trials and arbitrations and has won a substantial majority of those cases. Villarreal helps clients navigate contract claims and business torts, real estate and construction matters, liens and bond claims, collections, and probate and estate disputes. He counsels midmarket and closely held businesses in the region, often serving as outside counsel for these entities. Villarreal also handles transactional matters on behalf of his clients.

Villarreal is a member of several bar associations, including the State Bar of Texas' Alternative Dispute Resolution and Litigation Section, and is active in Houston's Hispanic legal community. He received an M.A. and B.A. from Southwest Texas State University and a J.D., magna cum laude, from Thurgood Marshall School of Law at Texas Southern University.

Andy Green handles commercial litigation and transactional matters on behalf of businesses in the real estate, construction, energy, and financial services sectors. His practice focuses primarily on civil litigation, along with occasional transactional matters including commercial finance and corporate funding and formations. Green is also a

certified mediator and has completed training with the A.A. White Dispute Resolution Center at the University of Houston.

Green has an active pro bono practice and has worked with the Houston Volunteer Lawyers Program and the Houston Chapter of Amigos de las Americas. Green received a J.D. from Fordham University School of Law and a B.A. from the University of Notre Dame.

Basil A. Umari has more than 20 years of experience representing debtors, liquidating trustees, official creditors' committees, secured creditors, unsecured creditors, equity holders, officers and directors, patent holders, landlords, tenants, and asset purchasers in corporate bankruptcy matters. He also has extensive experience in bankruptcy litigation representing liquidating trustees in litigation trusts and companies in preference actions and claims objections brought by trustees.

Umari earned a J.D., with honors, from the University of Texas School of Law and a B.A., cum laude, from Amherst College.

Nicholas Zugaro represents clients in a range of industries – including oil and gas, healthcare, construction, food service, retail, and manufacturing – across all stages of corporate bankruptcy matters. He has extensive experience in bankruptcy litigation and has prosecuted and defended numerous companies in preference actions and claims objections brought by trustees. He has also tried numerous complex commercial cases to juries and the bench in state and federal court.

Zugaro earned a J.D., cum laude, from the University of Houston Law Center, and a B.S. from Texas A&M University.

Amanda Gordon handles all aspects of commercial and business litigation from client origination through trial. She is also a certified mediator in both civil and family law.

Gordon earned a J.D. from South Texas College of Law and a

B.S. in Psychology from the University of Houston.

About Dykema

Dykema serves business entities worldwide on a wide range of complex legal issues. Dykema lawyers and other professionals in 14 U.S. offices work in close partnership with clients – from start-ups to Fortune 100 companies – to deliver outstanding results, unparalleled service, and exceptional value in every engagement.