

30th Anniversary  
**ATLANTA  
 BUSINESS  
 CHRONICLE**

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# City's legal profession has grown tremendously

Atlanta Business Chronicle is celebrating its 30th anniversary in 2008, marking our first edition published June 5, 1978. Each week during the year we will publish a 30th anniversary-related story looking back at people, companies and events that have had the most impact shaping our city and region's business.

Did you hear the one about the city where lawyers were multiplying like crazy?

It's no joke. Atlanta's legal profession has grown tremendously during the past two decades, with some of the largest firms more than doubling their number of attorneys in town.

In 1988, Morris, Manning & Martin LLP had 41 attorneys in Atlanta; today it has about 156.

Paul, Hastings, Janofsky & Walker LLP had 40 attorneys in Atlanta in 1988. Today it has about 106.

Other big-growth firms include Alston & Bird LLP (172 attorneys in Atlanta in 1988, and about 430 today); Sutherland Asbill & Brennan LLP (105 attorneys in Atlanta in 1988 and about 238 today); King & Spalding LLP (192 attorneys in Atlanta in 1988 and about 420 today); Kilpatrick Stockton LLP

(138 attorneys in Atlanta in 1988 when it was known as Kilpatrick & Cody, and about 285 today); and McKenna Long & Aldridge LLP (79 attorneys in Atlanta in 1988 when it was known as Long, Aldridge & Norman, and about 160 today).

Long, Aldridge & Norman was established in 1974 with four attorneys and became one of the fastest-growing firms in the Southeast. In 2002, when it merged with Washington, D.C.'s McKenna & Cuneo LLP to form McKenna Long & Aldridge.

Morris, Manning & Martin was founded in 1976 as an eight-attorney split off from Stack & O'Brien. Today it's the city's No. 8 law

## Legal action

Some of Atlanta's largest law firms have doubled their number of attorneys in Atlanta in the past 20 years.

Law firm	Number of attorneys in Atlanta 1988*	Number of attorneys in Atlanta May 2008**	Percent change
Morris, Manning & Martin LLP.....	41	156	280%
Paul, Hastings, Janofsky & Walker LLP .....	40	106	165%
Alston & Bird LLP.....	172	430	150%
Sutherland Asbill & Brennan LLP.....	105	238	127%
King & Spalding LLP.....	192	420	119%
Kilpatrick Stockton LLP.....	138 <sup>1</sup>	285	106%
McKenna Long & Aldridge LLP .....	79 <sup>2</sup>	160	102%
Troutman Sanders LLP .....	136	253	86%
Arnall Golden Gregory LLP.....	84	144	71%
Smith, Gambrell & Russell LLP.....	95	152	60%
Swift, Currie, McGhee & Hiers LLP .....	50	80	60%

<sup>1</sup>Then Kilpatrick & Cody <sup>2</sup>Then Long, Aldridge & Norman

\* Source: Top 20 Atlanta Law Firms, Atlanta Business Chronicle, April 11, 1988.

\*\* Source: Atlanta's Top 25 Law Firms, Atlanta Business Chronicle, June 13, 2008.

firm ranked by attorneys in town.

Paul, Hastings, Janofsky & Walker set up shop in 1980, followed by Drew Eckl & Farnham in 1983, Hunton & Williams LLP in 1988 and Hall, Booth, Smith and Slover P.C. in 1989.

Jones Day entered the Atlanta market in 1989 through a merger with Hansell & Post, then the city's No. 4 firm. Today Jones Day is the city's No. 11 firm ranked by attorneys in town.

"Big law firm merger on the way?" read the headline of a front-page story in Atlanta Business Chronicle on March 6, 1989, which reported "Hansell & Post and Jones Day Reavis & Pogue, the country's third-largest firm, have had preliminary contacts regarding a merger, but both firms stress that street speculation about an imminent deal is premature." The deal was formally announced in May 1989.

The 1990s saw the entry of other firms, in-

cluding Columbia, S.C.'s Nelson Mullins Riley & Scarborough LLP (1992) and Miami's Greenberg Traurig LLP (1998), which acquired 11-lawyer Atlanta entertainment law firm Katz, Smith & Cohen.

In 1993, Womble Carlyle Sandridge & Rice PLLC opened in Atlanta with a two-partner office at the One Ninety One Peachtree Tower downtown. Three years later in 1996 it expanded its Atlanta presence by merging with Parker, Johnson, Cook & Dunlevie, a specialist in business litigation and corporate law. Today the firm has some 60 attorneys in Atlanta.

Atlanta lost a big player in 1993, when what had been the 10th-largest firm, Hurt, Richardson, Garner, Todd & Cadenhead, broke up.

In 1996, the Atlanta office of Seyfarth Shaw LLP opened and today it has some 77 attorneys. Then early in 1997, Atlanta's then-oldest law firm, Kilpatrick & Cody, merged with Winston-Salem, N.C.'s Petree Stockton.

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 Looking Back: '78-'08