

NEWS & INSIGHTS

Saxton & Stump expands Pittsburgh presence with two highly credentialed litigators

FIRM NEWSPRESS RELEASE

JUNE 3, 2025



PITTSBURGH, Pa., June 3, 2025 — Just weeks after announcing the [opening of its Pittsburgh office](#), Saxton & Stump has made a substantial addition by hiring two highly credentialed Pittsburgh-area attorneys. Shareholder [Phillip R. Earnest](#) and senior counsel [Rebecca Johnson Barksdale](#) are part of Saxton & Stump's [Construction](#), [Commercial Litigation](#), and [Insurance](#) groups, working with clients on issues such as contract drafting, negotiation, claims, and litigation matters. Both joined from the Pittsburgh-based law firm of Pietragallo Gordon Alfano Bosick &

Raspanti, LLP, and are licensed to practice in Pennsylvania and West Virginia. Their addition reinforces the law firm's dedication to Pittsburgh and western Pennsylvania, enhancing the already impressive talent base in the new office.

"Phil and Becca are exceptional litigators who will strengthen our Commercial Litigation, Construction, and Insurance groups," Saxton & Stump CEO [James W. Saxton](#) said. "Phil's deep connections to the western Pennsylvania legal and business community, coupled with his outstanding reputation, make him an invaluable addition. Together with Becca's strong background, they're a perfect fit as we continue to build and expand our presence in Pittsburgh."

Earnest has nearly 30 years of experience representing clients in complex construction, commercial litigation, and insurance matters. He has tried cases in state and federal courts in Pennsylvania and West Virginia and has handled arbitration and mediation in a range of high-value disputes. He has argued before the Pennsylvania Superior Court and authored amicus briefs for the Pennsylvania Defense Institute. Earnest is a member of the Academy of Trial Lawyers of Allegheny County and has twice been appointed to serve on the Hearing Committee of the Disciplinary Board of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania. He has been recognized in *The Best Lawyers in America* since 2021 for his work in construction and insurance law. He earned his law degree from the University of Pittsburgh, a master's degree from West Virginia University, and a bachelor's degree from Penn State.

Barksdale, a Harvard Law School graduate, balances her busy practice with a strong commitment to charitable and service organizations in the Pittsburgh area. She has been named a Pennsylvania "Rising Star" in Civil Litigation by Super Lawyers since 2022, and Neighborhood Legal Services awarded her its "Partner in Justice Award" in 2025. Barksdale is a board member of the Western Pennsylvania March of Dimes Young Professionals and is a Young Lawyer Fellow for the Allegheny County Bar Foundation. She is also the president of the Delta Gamma Pittsburgh Alumnae Association. While at Harvard, she won the Paul C. Weiler Scholar Award in 2017 and 2019. She is a *magna cum laude* undergraduate of Gettysburg College.

"Saxton & Stump's reputation is already growing in Pittsburgh, and it's exciting to be part of the firm's bright future here," Earnest said. "Becca and I are eager for our clients to benefit from the firm's extensive resources and innovative approach."

Saxton & Stump's strategic growth outlook

With over 250 professionals, including more than 130 attorneys, Saxton & Stump's innovative model continues to attract highly talented and experienced attorneys, driving the growth of the law firm and its affiliate companies nationwide.

Saxton & Stump provides solutions for complex legal issues and partners with clients to create a roadmap for their success. The firm is committed to empowering clients by delivering five-star service and results-focused advice.

Related People

[Phillip R. Earnest](#)
[Rebecca Johnson Barksdale](#)

Related Services and Industries

[Construction](#)
[Commercial Litigation](#)

Insurance Law