Fred Franke, Jack Beckett

And

Franke Beckett LLC

Are Pleased to Announce

The Admission of Two Partners:

Deborah F. Howe

&

Jonathan G. Lasley

And They Are Pleased to Announce That

Hannah M. Coffin

&

Regan T. Caton

Have Become Associated with The Firm

The Expansion of the Firm

Franke Beckett LLC announces the addition of two partners, Deborah F. Howe and Jonathan G. Lasley, and two new associates, Hannah M. Coffin and Regan T. Caton

The new partners will add to our existing "bench strength." Deb Howe and Jon Lasley are seasoned estates and trusts lawyers, both with extensive experience assisting individuals and families with their estate planning needs. Keeping with the firm practice, Deb and Jon write articles and teach courses for lawyers. Both have worked on important legislative initiatives for the Maryland State Bar Association.

The new associates are coming to the firm after serving as law clerks for Circuit Court Judges and have strong academic credentials.

Our Firm Culture and Why It Is Important to Clients

There are four defining attributes imbedded in the DNA of our firm:

(1) We are an estates and trusts firm. The law of estates and trusts is largely a world unto itself with its own rules and practices. It requires a concentrated focus.

(2) We keep a broad perspective while practicing in a specialized practice niche. We "do it all" – estate planning, administration, and fiduciary litigation. By handling all facets of the estates and trusts practice, the quality of each lawyer's advice is strengthened.

(3) We work as a team. We do not just give lip-service to intra-firm collaboration, but we follow a business model to achieve it and make it a habit.

(4) Our culture fosters a deep understanding of our practice focus. The practice of law, like medicine, engineering, and other professions, is a learned profession. Our lawyers regularly research, write law articles and teach courses for lawyers and judges. These activities keep the firm at the forefront of legal developments.

Our Broad Scope Within a Focused Practice Area

Of course, there are other lawyers and law firms that have an estates and trusts focus. Many of those lawyers and firms, however, concentrate on one, or perhaps only a few aspects of a broader estates and trusts practice. We find that there is an important relationship among all facets of a broader practice that includes planning, administration, and fiduciary litigation. Our firm strikes a balance between a broad practice experience while maintaining a relatively narrow niche.

Collaboration is our Standard

Our firm follows a "one-firm" system where the client is treated as a client of the firm, not of any individual attorney. Some firms operate as a collection of individual lawyers who each have separate clients while sharing staff and space. Other firms, particularly the very large firms, may be organized by separate practice areas but the lawyers tend to become isolated from the other practice areas. Our approach discourages siloing and territorial disputes and keeps the focus where it belongs: on the client.

A Dedication to Legal Scholarship

The firm encourages writing for professional journals and presenting continuing education courses for lawyers. These are not merely extracurricular activities, they are a fundamental characteristic of our firm. These activities deepen and expand the firm's collective understanding of the law of estates and trusts.

The Expansion Continues Our Focus on Client Services

The expansion of the firm strengthens, but does not change, our firm culture. It is the unique combination of its defining attributes that enables the firm to bring the collective resources of the firm to each individual client engagement. We look forward to continuing to work with our current clients and to assist new clients. We also welcome the opportunity to continue to work with lawyers and financial advisors to assist their clients in their estate planning and/or fiduciary litigation needs.

DEBORAH F. HOWE, PARTNER

Deb has handled a broad range of estate and trust matters for firm clients. In planning matters, she has created simple estate plans that protect minor children, CRUTS to lessen the impact of an income event, SLATS, ILITs, and other irrevocable trusts to preserve the high estate tax exclusion amount, special needs trusts to preserve the beneficiary's benefit eligibility, family business plans that provide a structure to pass on expertise and control to future generations, and revocable trusts to protect the client in the event of disability.

In her litigation practice, Deb represents clients in a wide range of actions including caveat proceedings, trustee removals, declaratory judgment actions involving constructive trusts, and guardianships--contested and uncontested.

Within the area of trust and estate administration, Deb has petitioned for probate, prepared and filed inventories and accounts, prepared and filed estate and fiduciary income tax returns, and advised fiduciaries on various administrative decisions.

Keeping with the firm culture, Deb has written and presented on estate and trust topics. She is listed as a *Maryland SuperLawyer* "Rising Star".

In response to the COVID-19 Pandemic, Deb closely followed Governor Hogan's emergency executive orders permitting remote witnessing and notarization of estate planning documents. As a result, the firm was able to continue serving our clients throughout the pandemic by using video conferencing techniques that accomplished our clients planning objectives while keeping them safe. As the state of emergency neared an end, Deb worked with the Estates and Trusts Section of the Maryland State Bar Association to craft a permanent, legislative solution that would allow remote witnessing and notarization of estate planning documents.

Deb received her JD from Washington & Lee University (*cum laude*), and her BA from Hillsdale College (*cum laude*) in English and Philosophy.

Jonathan G. Lasley, Partner

Jon has been practicing trust and estate law in Maryland for over twenty-six years. During that time, he has developed a deep appreciation for the importance of meeting each client's individual needs, and for helping clients and their loved ones navigate difficult transitions, both through sensitive planning and the conscientious administration of estates and trusts. He brings a sophisticated understanding of estate and gift planning – including marital issues, business succession, and unusual assets – and estate and trust administration to Franke Beckett's clients.

Jon is a Fellow of the American College of Trust and Estate Counsel (ACTEC), and a past Chair of the Estate and Trust Law Section of the Maryland State Bar Association (MSBA). He is committed to improving the accessibility and equity of trust and estate law, and is actively involved in Maryland legislative matters. In that capacity, Jon has played a major role in the development of Maryland's elective share statute, the addition of exemption portability to the Maryland estate tax, the development of procedures for the remote execution of documents during the pandemic, and other aspects of the Maryland estate, trust, and taxations statutes.

Jon speaks and writes frequently about estates and trusts topics including, among others, spousal rights in inheritance, legislation impacting Maryland estate and trust law, will and trust drafting, and planning strategies. He is a member of the Real Property, Trust and Estate Section of the American Bar Association and the Estate and Trust, and the Taxation Sections of the MSBA. He is listed in *Maryland SuperLawyers*.

Jon received his JD and MA in Public Policy Studies from Duke University, and his BA from Colorado College. A native of Bethesda, he has lived in and near Annapolis for almost thirty years.

Hannah M. Coffin, Associate

Hannah joined Franke Beckett as an associate attorney in September 2021. Prior to joining the firm, she served as a judicial clerk for the Honorable Pamela K. Alban on the Circuit Court for Anne Arundel County, Maryland. The Maryland Circuit Courts are courts of general jurisdiction that generally handle more serious criminal cases and major civil cases. Clerking for a Circuit Court Judge provided her an opportunity to observe trials and trial lawyers from the perspective of the Judge.

Hannah received her law degree from the University of Maryland, Francis King Carey School of Law (*cum laude*) in 2020 and her Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Maryland, College Park in 2017 in Government and Politics, with a minor in History. She was admitted to practice in Maryland in December 2020.

Regan T. Caton, Associate

Regan joined Franke Beckett as an associate attorney in October 2021. Prior to joining the firm, Regan served as a judicial law clerk to The Honorable Alison L. Asti of the Circuit Court for Anne Arundel County, Maryland. As a clerk for a trial Judge, she was exposed to a wide variety of civil, criminal, family, and guardianship matters at various stages of litigation. Additionally, during law school, Regan worked as a law clerk at a private law firm in Prince George's County, focusing primarily on estate administration.

Regan received her law degree from the University of Maryland Francis King Carey School of Law in 2020 and her Bachelor of Arts degree from Texas A&M University (*magna cum laude*) in Psychology in 2017. Regan was admitted to practice in Maryland in December 2020.

Frederick R. Franke, Jr., Partner

Fred has practiced law with a primary focus on estates, trusts, and closely held businesses for over thirty-five years. He is a Fellow of the American College of Trust and Estate Counsel (ACTEC) and past Chair of the Estate and Trust Law Section of the Maryland State Bar Association (MSBA). Fred regularly teaches continuing legal education courses for the MSBA and writes for law reviews and other related publications.

Fred has been listed as one of Maryland *Best Lawyers* every year since 2001 and as a *SuperLawyer* since 2007. The Firm has been listed as a tier one estates and trusts *Best Law Firm* by U.S. News since 2011.

Fred received his LLM (Taxation) from George Washington University, his JD from Washington & Lee University, and his BA degree from Kenyon College.

Jack K. Beckett, Partner

Jack represents individuals, family businesses, institutional trustees, and non-profit entities in a wide array of estate planning, administration, and fiduciary litigation matters.

As part of the estate planning practice, Jack prepares estate planning documents for a range of clients, from high-net-worth individuals to those with modest estates. He has significant experience in planning for individuals with special needs. Jack also assists clients with complex business succession planning.

Jack's fiduciary litigation practice includes will contests, trust modifications, guardianships, and fiduciary removal actions. He frequently presents on fiduciary litigation topics for the Maryland State Bar Association and is listed as a *SuperLawyer* "Rising Star".

Jack received his law degree from the Washington and Lee University School of Law (*cum laude*) and his Bachelor of Arts degree from Wittenberg University (*magna cum laude*). He is currently pursuing an Executive L.L.M. in Taxation from New York University, with an expected completion date of 2023.

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The Law of Fiduciaries, Estates and Trusts
Planning Administration Litigation