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Husch Blackwell Named CLOC's Inaugural Legal Innovation in Operations Project Award Winner

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Husch Blackwell is pleased to announce that the Corporate Legal Operations Consortium (CLOC), a member-run organization comprised of legal operations professionals, has selected the firm to be showcased as one of its 2020 Legal Innovation in Operations (LIO) Project designees. CLOC launched the LIO Project this year to honor those law firms that have achieved innovation and design excellence in legal operations.

CLOC received numerous submissions for the inaugural LIO Project award, ultimately choosing three firms for the showcase honor.

Husch Blackwell's submission focused on the firm's design and implementation of an approach to manage the Marley-Wylain Company's portfolio of asbestos-related litigation. The project took as its touchstone the client's main objectives— to decrease legal spend and reduce risk that also provided long-term protection. Husch Blackwell's Asbestos Defense Solutions Team was chosen to serve as national coordinating counsel (NCC) by Marley-Wylain starting May 1, 2019, and after just ten months in operation, the team's initiative posted results that vastly outperformed the client's prior efforts, including over a 30 percent reduction in legal costs.

"At the heart of our approach is getting the incentives properly aligned," said J.Y. Miller, the Husch Blackwell partner in charge of the Marley-Wylain representation. "We designed a fixed-fee approach to our role as NCC, one that gave the client certainty around costs while rewarding our ability to manage resources and garner results."

The project was supported by industry-leading processes and technology. The firm's information technology professionals developed a customized and

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integrated digital environment for the client, named the HB Vault, that manages data spanning hundreds of fields for thousands of claims, includes a file system compatible with client resources and syncs with Husch Blackwell's proprietary e-billing portal.

"The strategy behind our initiative is to identify, prioritize and address the biggest risks first," said Miller. "This is only possible when you're able to blend legal know-how with technology in order to leverage the information buried in large sets of data. We are able to see in real time how priorities need to shift to address emerging issues, and we are able to share that with the client immediately. Like all successful initiatives, this was truly a collaboration with the client."

Husch Blackwell's designation as a 2020 LIO Project award winner comes close on the heels of back-to-back Value Champion recognitions from the Association of Corporate Counsel (ACC), a program that identifies, celebrates and publicizes successful law department value initiatives and collaborations between clients and their legal service providers.

Husch Blackwell is believed to be the only law firm to date to be recognized by both the CLOC LIO Project and ACC Value Champion award series for its ability to implement legal solutions that cut spending, improve predictability and achieve better outcomes.

"Our brand is expressed in the promise we make to clients to listen closely, learn their businesses, understand their goals, and ultimately, to be a good steward of their resources," said Angela Quinn, Husch Blackwell's Chief Client & Inclusion Officer. "It is very satisfying to be recognized by CLOC for its inaugural LIO Project—it goes to the heart of what we do."

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