

NEWS RELEASES

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Husch Blackwell's Higher Ed Practice to Add Three Partners in Chicago

The Higher Education practice group of Husch Blackwell, one of the largest such practices in the U.S., announced today that it is adding six lawyers to its team. Ellen M. Babbitt, Peter G. Land and Scott L. Warner joined Husch Blackwell's Chicago office as partners. The trio has a deep understanding of the higher education legal and regulatory landscape and collectively possesses seven decades of experience working with colleges, universities, and other institutions of higher learning on their toughest, most complex challenges. In addition to these arrivals, two associates and one senior counsel will join the team as well, all based in Chicago.

The group's arrival underscores the rapid growth of Husch Blackwell's Higher Education practice, which now numbers over 20 attorneys whose primary practice is serving institutions of higher education. Their arrival also further builds out the Higher Education group's recent expansion in Chicago. In late 2016 the firm welcomed Thomas Cline, former Northwestern University General Counsel, and Julie Miceli, the former Deputy General Counsel for Higher Education and Federal Student Aid at the U.S. Department of Education.

"Ellen, Pete and Scott are nationally recognized leaders in higher ed law," said Hayley Hanson, the head of Husch Blackwell's Higher Education practice group. "Their joining our team builds upon the strengths we have developed over the last few years. There is simply no legal or regulatory challenge affecting higher education institutions that we aren't equipped to handle."

For nearly four decades, Babbitt has counseled educational institutions in matters involving tenure, academic freedom, accreditation, internal investigation, ADA accessibility, program closure, and codes of conduct. She represents virtually all categories of higher education institutions in government investigations, lawsuits, and administrative proceedings

scrutinizing compliance with statutory, governance, and accreditation standards. She currently serves on the Board of Directors of the Associated Colleges of Illinois and is a former Board member of the National Association of College and University Attorneys (NACUA).

Land advocates on behalf of all kinds of higher education institutions in court and government agency proceedings, mediations, and arbitrations. His lead-counsel experience touches on a broad array of disputes, including employment discrimination and harassment cases, faculty terminations and tenure disputes, Title IX sexual assault litigation, institutional governance issues, First Amendment disputes, student matters, school and program closings, non-compete agreement and trade secret disputes, and defamation and privacy issues. He also has extensive experience handling sensitive internal investigations, preparing confidential and privileged reports, and providing decision-makers sound judgment in addressing investigative findings. Pete also counsels clients in connection with employment and student disputes, policy drafting, and training. Pete is a Board Member of the Chicagoland Title IX Consortium, a NACUA member, and a member of the Association of Workplace Investigators.

A former in-house attorney for a major research university, Warner represents higher education institutions in a wide range of governance, faculty, student, and general employment matters. He has extensive experience advising governing boards, senior administrators, and institutional committees in addressing complex and high-stakes situations, including faculty tenure and discipline proceedings; investigations of alleged discrimination or other misconduct by senior administrators, faculty, and students; and other matters that require a strategic approach and close coordination with multiple institutional constituencies. He also represents institutions in a wide range of litigation matters and agency proceedings, including U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights investigations and compliance reviews and a broad range of litigation matters in state and federal courts. He currently serves on NACUA's Board of Directors.