

## Coleman Leaves Weil, Gotshal to Open Yetter & Warden Office in Austin

**Gregory S. Coleman**, head of **Weil, Gotshal & Manges'** national appellate litigation practice and Texas' first solicitor general, will leave Weil, Gotshal's Austin office on March 23 to join litigation boutique **Yetter & Warden** as a partner.

On March 26, Coleman will open an Austin office for 23-lawyer Yetter & Warden and build an appellate practice for the firm.

Yetter & Warden partner **David Warden** explains his Houston-based firm is getting much more with Coleman than simply one of Texas' premier appellate lawyers.

"It's a big deal because he is a top quality person, and while his expertise has been in appellate work, the kind of experience you have in appellate work — briefing cases and writing readable briefs — is useful in other stages of litigation, and I think he wants to do that," Warden says. "He's just a top quality guy; he happens to do appellate work."

Coleman, who joined Weil, Gotshal in Austin in 2001, says he got to know Yetter & Warden partners Paul Yetter and Warden while working together on appeals in two suits and he was impressed by their firm and their practice.

"I have really seen the benefits of the litigation boutique and the flexibility and the level of service they can provide their clients," Coleman says.

Coleman says he expects to hire a few lawyers in Austin to help him build an appellate group at Yetter & Warden, but he declines to say if anyone else from Weil, Gotshal in Austin will join him at his new firm. "It's too early to say, but it's not outside the realm of possibility," Coleman notes.

Coleman declines to discuss work he may bring with him to Yetter &

Warden, but Yetter says the firm and Coleman already share clients including GE Capital Group and American Airlines Co.

Currently, Coleman is working with Yetter on an appeal to the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals for GE Capital Group in *Canatxx Energy Ventures Inc. v. GE Capital Group*.

Yetter says Coleman will be the firm's first appellate specialist, but lawyers at the firm have always done some appeals.

"As I look at it, what Greg and I do is exactly the same. We both do litigation. His focus tends to be toward the end of the litigation and mine tends to be toward the start," Yetter says, adding that the combination will allow the firm to give clients good service from start to finish.

Coleman was an associate with Weil, Gotshal in Houston in 1999 when then-Texas Attorney General **John Cornyn** hired him to become the state's first solicitor general. He was the lead appellate lawyer for Texas in high-profile federal cases including the *Ruiz v. Estelle* prison reform litigation, the *Hopwood v. Texas* affirmative action suit involving law school admissions at the University of Texas School of Law, and litigation challenging fees paid to lawyers representing Texas in a suit against Big Tobacco.

Coleman returned to Weil, Gotshal in 2001 to head the New York-based firm's national appellate practice, and he says he built the group to about 10 full-time appellate lawyers.

At Weil, Gotshal, Coleman's most recent U.S. Supreme Court appeals include *ExxonMobil Corp. v. Saudi Basic Industries Corp.* and *Sereboff v. Mid Atlantic Medical Services*.

**Glenn West**, the partner in charge of Weil, Gotshal's Dallas office and a member of the firm's management committee, did not immediately return a telephone call seeking comment.

In 2000, *Texas Lawyer* named Coleman, then Texas' solicitor general, one of 10 up-and-coming lawyers in the state.