

Mayer Brown Adds Veteran Kirkland RE Partner In Chicago

By **Jake Simpson**

Law360, New York (March 15, 2013, 5:28 PM ET) -- Mayer Brown LLP has hired a longtime Kirkland & Ellis LLP real estate attorney with a subspecialty in advising private equity firms as a partner in its Chicago office, Mayer Brown said Thursday.

Brian Davis had been a Chicago-based attorney for Kirkland since 2000 and developed the firm's real estate distressed debt practice. He joined Mayer Brown on Wednesday after leaving Kirkland the previous day.

Mayer Brown, which is currently in a growth phase for its real estate practice, approached Davis with the opportunity join its global property platform, Davis said.

"Mayer has a storied history in real estate, and it's always been a well-respected brand in Chicago and internationally," he said. "I think it's a destination for anyone wanting to do transactional real estate work. It's a great opportunity for me."

Davis' practice currently focuses on distressed debt and equity transactions for a variety of real estate clients. The veteran partner advises a national client base of lenders, borrowers and investors in commercial real estate and other property sectors, he said.

Before the collapse of the housing market in 2008, Davis' workload included a significant amount of sale leasebacks and hospitality transactions. His practice will become more diverse as the market continues to recover, he said.

"This is a good opportunity to jump in at the beginning of probably a pretty good real estate recovery," Davis said.

Davis also hopes to increase the geographic scope of his practice at Mayer Brown, which has 13 foreign offices in Latin America and Asia.

"Mayer has just as many overseas real estate clients as it has U.S.-based real estate clients," he said. "I've never had the luxury the way I have now of being able to tap into foreign investors looking to invest into the U.S."

Davis is currently working on multiple acquisitions in the hotel sector, several distressed assets deals for borrowers and potential capital-raising activities by real estate operators. He declined to name the firms involved.

"Brian has an impressive track record of representing institutional real estate equity investors on a wide range of matters, particularly distressed debt and equity transactions, asset acquisitions and dispositions, leasing, development and structured finance," Jeff Usow, co-head of Mayer Brown's global real estate practice, said in a statement. "His extensive experience will further enhance the firm's ability to assist clients on real estate aspects of complex transactions in Chicago and around the world."

Davis received his law degree from the University of Pittsburgh Law School and his bachelor's degree from the College of Architecture and Planning at Ball State University.

--Editing by Chris Yates.

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