

## Mayer Brown Nabs Bracewell Atty To Lead Upstream Group

By **Katie Pohlman**

*Law360 (August 12, 2020, 5:04 PM EDT)* -- Mayer Brown LLP has hired a Bracewell LLP partner experienced in upstream oil and gas mergers and acquisitions and private equity transactions to lead the firm's U.S. upstream oil and gas group in Houston.

Carl von Merz is joining Mayer Brown as partner after a three-year stint at Bracewell, the firm announced Tuesday. His practice focuses on acquisitions, divestitures, joint ventures and private equity investments in the upstream energy industry. He also advises private equity funds and management teams on forming partnerships and other joint ventures for investment.

Von Merz told Law360 in an interview Wednesday that he is excited to help Mayer Brown expand its presence in the domestic and global oil and gas markets, especially as the industry recovers from widespread turmoil.

He expects to see a lot of mergers and restructurings in the near future as energy companies attempt to recover.

"We're going to come out of this and have a new equilibrium," he said. "And it's anyone's guess what that's going to look like."

Von Merz, who worked as in-house counsel for five years at Equinor ASA, formerly Statoil, said his experience on both sides of the working relationship provides him with insight to create a client-centered practice.

Neil Wasserstrom, managing partner at Mayer Brown's Houston office, said in a statement that von Merz will play a large role in guiding clients through the energy industry.

"[Von Merz's] experience and knowledge will play a pivotal role in assisting clients as they navigate the evolving U.S. oil and gas landscape and broader energy landscape," Wasserstrom said. "His proven ability to lead on major deals makes him a perfect addition as we continue to build upon our capabilities to meet market demands."

Alex Chequer, Mayer Brown's global lead of the oil and gas group, touted von Merz's reputation and robust practice.

"The arrival of a lawyer of [von Merz's] caliber reinforces Mayer Brown's commitment to investing in top-tier talent to deliver full-service excellence," he said in a statement.

Von Merz earned his undergraduate degree at Duke University and his law degree at the University of Chicago Law School.

Mayer Brown has more than 1,500 lawyers in 27 offices worldwide, according to the firm.

--Additional reporting by Michelle Casady. Editing by Stephen Berg.