

# Twelve Attorneys Rated Tops in Their Fields by Chambers & Partners Legal Guide

June 10, 2011 12:06 PM

**Twelve** attorneys at the Florida law firm of Shutts & Bowen LLP have been named top lawyers in their fields by London-based Chambers & Partners in the latest edition of “Chambers USA: America’s Leading Business Lawyers.” The firm also was recognized in the 2011 edition for excellence in the following practice areas: banking and finance, construction, corporate/M&A, real estate, zoning/land use and health care.

Since this prestigious U.K. publisher of legal guides began publishing rankings of U.S. law firms and lawyers in 2003, Shutts & Bowen’s financial services practice has achieved the guide’s highest possible ranking every year. In addition, Shutts & Bowen Chairman Bowman Brown has been ranked number one in Florida in the banking and finance practice area since the inception of the U.S. guide.

The twelve attorneys included in the latest guide to the nation’s top lawyers are: Shutts & Bowen Executive Committee Chairman Bowman Brown in Miami (banking and finance/regulatory and transactional), partner Kevin Cowan in Miami (real estate), partners Brent C. Bell and John H. Dannecker in Orlando (construction), partner Luis de Armas in Miami (corporate/M&A), partner Michael J. Grindstaff in Orlando (real estate: zoning and land use), partner Rod Jones in Orlando (banking and finance), partners Linda M. Robison and Mark D. Folk in Fort Lauderdale (health care) and Steven K. Barber in Tampa (tax: employee benefits) and R. Alan Higbee in Tampa (corporate/M&A). Bowman Brown was given a star rank, above the #1 ranking, in Banking & Finance/regulatory. New to the rankings this year is Margaret A. Rolando in Miami (real estate), who was noted for her practice in condominium law.

To determine the rankings, Chambers and Partners conducts independent research that includes extensive telephone interviews over an eight-month period. A team of full-time researchers interviewed business people and lawyers throughout the country to assess the attorneys' and firm's legal abilities, professional conduct, client service, diligence, commitment and other qualities most valued by clients.

Following is a brief description of the Shutts & Bowen attorneys who received top recognition from Chambers and Partners:

**STEVEN K. BARBER** is a partner in the Tampa office. He has more than 25 years of experience in the areas of ERISA transactional and compliance law and employee benefits law. Mr. Barber has worked extensively in the design, adoption, operation and administration of employee benefit plans, including preparation of all necessary plan documents.

**BRENT C. BELL** is a partner in the Construction Litigation Group in Orlando. He assists clients with litigation avoidance and also handles disputes through negotiation, mediation, administrative proceedings, arbitration and litigation. He handles cases involving construction defects, lien and bond law, defective products and product liability claims. He also works on contracts, drafting and enforcement. Mr. Bell is a frequent lecturer to audiences in the construction industry.

**BOWMAN BROWN** is Chairman of the firm's Executive Committee and Financial Services Practice Group. Mr. Brown has an extensive practice representing domestic, interstate and international banks, broker/dealers and insurance companies, and drafting laws and regulations addressing the development of international banking and insurance in Florida.

**KEVIN D. COWAN** is Co-Chairman of Shutts & Bowen's Real Estate Department. Mr. Cowan's experience ranges from downtown office or anchor/tenant retail leases to mega yacht marina/mixed-use hotel/retail developments, commercial ground leases and related financing, and large-scale condominium developments. In addition, he represents institutions in connection with the sale or acquisition of office complexes.

**JOHN H. DANNECKER**, a partner in the Orlando office, heads the Construction Litigation Team for Shutts & Bowen. He is Florida Bar Board Certified in Construction Law . Mr. Dannecker represents developers, contractors, property owners, hotels and others in matters involving construction litigation, contract negotiation and defect and delay litigation. He also works on mold- and mildew-related disputes and has litigated numerous claims involving Chinese drywall issues.

**LUIS A. DE ARMAS**, a partner in the Miami office, is a Member of the Firm's Management and Distributions Committees. He has a strong reputation for structuring and negotiating complex mergers and acquisitions, including acquisitions of financial institutions, leveraged transactions and international transactions. Many foreign institutions rely on him to represent their investments and operations in the United States.

**MARK D. FOLK** is a partner in the Fort Lauderdale Office. He has more than fifteen years of experience in private practice, focusing on corporate and securities law matters, including extensive experience representing public and private companies in the healthcare industry.

**MICHAEL J. GRINDSTAFF** is a partner in the Orlando office's Real Estate Practice Group. His real estate and land use practice focuses on the acquisition, zoning, permitting, development and sale of retail shopping centers, mixed-use developments, residential subdivisions, multi-family apartment complexes, and office buildings.

**R. ALAN HIGBEE** is the Managing Partner of the Tampa office. He represents public and private companies and entrepreneurs in all facets of general business, corporate and securities matters, including public and private equity and debt offerings, mergers and acquisitions, business contracts, business transactions, joint ventures, corporate governance, and franchise matters.

**ROD JONES** is a partner in the Financial Services Practice Group in Orlando. A former Director of Florida's Division of Banking with responsibility for licensing and supervision of state-chartered financial institution of all types, he concentrates on bank regulatory matters, including supervisory compliance and remediation efforts, capital augmentation strategies and disposition of troubled assets, as well as mergers and acquisitions and other corporate transactions involving financial institutions.

**LINDA M. ROBISON** is a partner in the Fort Lauderdale Office. She focuses her practice in corporate and securities law matters, including representing public and private companies in the healthcare industry and lenders to such companies. Her securities experience encompasses

preparation of registration statements for equity and debt offerings as well as exchange offers, private placements, proxy statements, and various other filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

**MARGARET A. “PEGGY” ROLANDO** is a partner in the Miami Office. She is Florida Bar Board Certified in Real Estate Law and a fellow in the American College of Real Estate Lawyers (ACREL). She has a strong background in the acquisition, development, sale, financing and operation of large scale real estate projects. She also has extensive experience in the creation and operation of condominiums, planned developments, mixed use projects, resorts, clubs and hotels, including regulatory matters, development, structuring, documentation and management.