

## 3 Buchanan women leave to start their own law office

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STAFF WRITER

The three most senior female partners in the Philadelphia office of law firm Buchanan Ingersoll & Rooney have left to start their own litigation boutique.

Mary Kay Brown, Antoinette R. Stone and Jami B. Nimeroff have formed Brown Stone Nimeroff. The offices will be at 1818 Market St., across the street from Buchanan Ingersoll's offices at 1835 Market.



Stone

Brown and Stone are commercial litigators and Nimeroff's practice is geared toward bankruptcy. Brown handles banking, real estate, restrictive-covenant and trade-secret litigation, and e-discovery matters. She was co-managing partner of the Buchanan office until last year. Stone was one of the first three lawyers to join the office in 1990 and also has an alternative-dispute resolution practice.

Stone said Buchanan Ingersoll's

merger last July with fellow Pittsburgh-based firm Klett Rooney Libe & Schorling did not factor into the decision. In fact, she said it was viewed as positive. Stone said the parting was amicable and that the trio was seeking a more entrepreneurial approach to their practices.

"It's something we have talked about for a long time," Stone said. "There is just something attractive about controlling your own destiny and being able to take on the clients you want."



Van Kirk

She said they will be able to represent certain clients that couldn't afford Buchanan Ingersoll billing rates and as a women-owned business, it could have an advantage in getting work from the city, state and federal governments. She said the fledgling firm's office space has room to add more lawyers and the firm would eventually like to hire some associates and possibly a partner with

a transactional practice to complement the litigation focus.

The departure comes in a time when law firms are paying attention to the keys to attracting and retaining women attorneys. "Whether they are male or female we hate to lose good lawyers," Buchanan Ingersoll Chairman Thomas Van Kirk said. "But we understand the reasons why, and we think we have a number of other female role models at the firm.

Van Kirk said the heads of the firm's New York and Newark, N.J., offices are women and the firm still has some female partners among its 85 lawyers in Philadelphia.

He said the merger, in which 425-lawyer Buchanan Ingersoll acquired the 150-lawyer Klett Rooney, added between \$4 million and \$5 million in costs last year. Van Kirk said the firm believes it will see a larger impact from the merger this year, with incurred costs now in the past.

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