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Barnes & Thornburg Adds Corporate Transactions Pro

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ATLANTA (February 3, 2016) – Barnes & Thornburg LLP announced today that Stephen Opler has joined the firm's Atlanta office as partner. Opler, who was most recently a partner at Ballard Spahr LLP, is a member of the firm's Corporate Department.

Opler concentrates his practice on the distinctive characteristics of liquidity transactions by and with entrepreneurs. Buying or selling entrepreneur-owned businesses requires a unique focus on the myriad ways these relationships often fail, including cultural integration, performance incentives and metrics, joint ownership and minority owner rights and responsibilities.

A former interim general counsel to an international private equity investor and co-founder of One Georgia Bank, Opler has vast transactional experience through his work with public and private companies and private equity firms. He helps clients achieve their goals by leveraging his three decades of experience as an M&A lawyer, entrepreneur, business founder, investment banker, in-house lawyer and accountant. Opler's clients include private equity funds, strategic acquirers, and entrepreneurial buyers and sellers.

"Stephen is not only a seasoned and experienced attorney, but also a seasoned accountant and investment banker," said Stuart Johnson, managing partner of Barnes & Thornburg's Atlanta office. "The addition of a colleague with his level of experience continues to strengthen what is already a strong transactional bench in our Atlanta office, and illustrates our ongoing commitment to provide practical, business focused, actionable advice to our clients."

In the community, Opler is an advisory board member of Kate's Club and formerly a founding member of the board of TechBridge, Inc. He is a past board member of board of the Anti-Defamation League, Hands on Atlanta, Jewish Family and Career Services, and The Temple.

Opler serves on the Advisory Board of the oldest continuously owned apparel manufacturer in the United States.

Opler has been recognized by *Chambers USA* for corporate/M&A law, named to the Georgia Super Lawyers list by *Law and Politics* magazine, and named to "The Legal Elite: Georgia's Most Effective Lawyers" by *Georgia Trend* magazine for his work in business law.

Opler earned his J.D. from the University of Alabama School of Law, and his bachelor's degree from the University of Virginia. He also has passed the CPA exam and the Series 7 and 63 securities exams.

With more than 600 attorneys and other legal professionals, Barnes & Thornburg is one of the largest law firms in the country. The firm serves

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