

Albany Law Firm Expands Into WNY

An Albany law firm looking to expand into Western New York is also looking for attorneys. Tully Rinckey PLLC has mailed thousands of letters to practicing attorneys in the Seventh and Eighth judicial districts in anticipation of opening branch offices in the Rochester and Buffalo areas early next year, according to the company. The recruiting approach may seem unusual, but is nothing new for the firm. "We've used it for years and it's been very successful," said Managing Partner Greg T. Rinckey. "It's been very successful out in Syracuse. The firm opened a Syracuse office just before Labor Day. It also has offices in Albany, Washington, D.C., and Arlington, Va. Rinckey said the mailings are a way of letting attorneys know the firm is coming to their area and that opportunities are available. He said it also lets firms know they are willing to work with them in developing mutually beneficial referral relationships. The firm sent 3,686 letters to Seventh Judicial District attorneys in Monroe, Livingston, Ontario, Seneca, Wayne and Yates counties, and 5,469 in the Eighth Judicial District to attorneys in Erie, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Genesee, Niagara, Orleans and Wyoming counties. Opportunities run the gamut from attorney to paralegal to secretary. Rinckey said the Rochester office will initially have two to three attorneys as a launching pad for a larger operation. The firm is particularly looking for attorneys with portable business. Rinckey said they are also talking to solo practitioners who are exploring options to transition into retirement. "A lot of people build a very nice firm and they don't want to see it just go away when they retire or move away," he said. "We'll be able to serve their clients. A lot of people are worried about that. We can assure them that we're going to take very good care of their clients. The firm has been considering expanding into Western New York for some time. It conducted its own analysis and is encouraged by the Brookings Institute's repeated high ranking of Rochester as one of the nation's strongest performing metropolitan areas. Rinckey said exact locations have not been determined, but they will likely be towards the suburbs. In Rochester, they are looking in the Pittsford area and expect to have a Buffalo-area site selected soon. The focus initially will be on criminal matters and family law, with additional practice areas added later. Other Tully Rinckey practice areas include estate planning, employment law, real estate law, commercial litigation, bankruptcy and person injury. Rinckey said the firm is also known nationally for handling federal employment, military matters and national security, a few of its niche practice areas. He joined the firm in 2004 after serving as an attorney in the U.S. Army Judge Advocate General's Corps. Founding partner Mathew B. Tully, a lieutenant colonel in the New York Army National Guard, is currently serving in Afghanistan. Supporting the firm, allowing attorneys to focus on practicing law and maximize their revenue, is a large in-house marketing client relations team, based in the Albany office. Rinckey said large firms, particularly in New York City, have back office support to handle their billing, marketing and administration, but that it is pretty rare in upstate areas. The firm also prides itself in competitive pricing and the quality of its services, including customer service. Rinckey said when people call a law firm, they have a problem and want to speak to someone right away. He said they will be able to when they call his firm, noting that calls are answered within three rings. "We're known as a very aggressive firm," he said. "Clients know when they retain us, they're going to get aggressive representation. Our attorneys are able to focus on their clients. They're not doing the billing. They're not doing the

marketing. All of that is done in our back office. "The firm has a total of 37 attorneys, including a former congressman and a presidential appointee. John E. Sweeney, of counsel in the Albany office, served four terms in the U.S. House of Representatives, covering parts of 10 counties in Eastern New York. Neil A.G. McPhie, managing partner of the Virginia office, is a former chairman of the U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board, appointed in 2003 by President George W. Bush. Tully Rinckey's roots are traced to the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks. Tully, who was working in Morgan-Stanley's legal department at the time, escaped the World Trade Center and moved to the Catskills where he formed the firm in 2003 in a room of his Greene County home. The following year, he and Rinckey opened the Albany office. Rinckey said many of the attorneys in the firm have military experience.