

Sheppard Mullin Nabs Ex-Dorsey Indian Law, Finance Pro

By **Ian Thoms**

Law360, New York (February 15, 2012, 4:39 PM ET) -- Sheppard Mullin Richter & Hampton LLP has snagged the former co-chairwoman of Dorsey & Whitney LLP's Indian law group for its finance and bankruptcy practice group in New York, the firm said Tuesday.

Christine L. Swanick specializes in helping to set up commercial financing and other credit transactions, including loans, syndicated credit facilities and debt restructurings, for American Indian tribes. She also advises tribes and financial institutions doing business with tribes in a variety of contractual, gaming, regulatory and economic development matters.

"Christine is a perfect practice group fit from both a business and personal perspective," said Guy N. Halgren, chairman of Sheppard Mullin. "She adds depth to our finance practice and her focus on tribal gaming complements our existing capabilities in that practice specialty."

Swanick said she wasn't looking to leave Dorsey & Whitney, but felt compelled to jump at the opportunity to join Sheppard Mullin's growing finance practice.

"They've already got a really good financing reputation and I was excited by the idea of joining a growing practice," Swanick said. "And as I met the folks here in New York, I was impressed with how dynamic and talented they were."

Swanick decided to specialize in American Indian law while at law school at the University of Arizona. After graduating, she practiced as an in-house attorney for tribes in Michigan, Arizona and Colorado.

"I know what it's like on the ground in these reservations and what issues the Native Americans face," Swanick said.

The work keeps Swanick on her toes as she deals with the myriad issues specific to American Indian life. Individual tribes have their own laws and federal law adds a wrinkle by mandating special provisions for tribal land.

"You have to be able to understand how to deal with tribal cultures and politics," Swanick said. "It's never a dull day."

Swanick received her law degree from the University of Arizona in 1995. She attended undergrad at Boston College.

Sheppard Mullin has more than 40 attorneys based in its New York office and its finance and bankruptcy group includes more than 60 attorneys.

With more than 570 attorneys in 14 offices in the U.S., Europe and Asia, the firm focuses on corporate and technology matters, high stakes litigation and complex financial transactions.

--Editing by John Quinn.

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