

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Blank Rome's Consumer Financial Services Practice Welcomes Seven New Attorneys**  
*Additions Continue Group's Rapid Nationwide Expansion*

Blank Rome LLP is pleased to announce the addition of seven attorneys to its national [Consumer Financial Services Industry Practice](#). Joining in the Firm's Philadelphia, PA office as Of Counsel is Edward W. Chang, formerly a partner at Dilworth Paxson LLP. "Ed is an experienced and respected commercial litigation attorney, with a concentration in the area of consumer financial services," said [Wayne Streibich](#), Chair of Blank Rome's Consumer Financial Services Industry Team. "Ed and I previously worked together for several years and I am excited that he is now a member of the Blank Rome team."

Joining as Associates are James R. Billings-Kang in Washington, D.C.; Russell G. Gomm and Brendan F. Hug in Los Angeles, CA; Cody P. Peterson in Houston, TX; and Natalie F. Guerra-Valdes and Brendan A. Sweeney in Boca Raton, FL.

"We are pleased to welcome this group of talented attorneys to Blank Rome," said Streibich. "This area of law is one of the hottest areas of practice right now, with increased regulation and much confusion surrounding the regulatory environment. As we experience a steady increase in consumer financial services matters to be handled in our offices across the country, we continue to satisfy the growing demand of our mortgage industry clients through strategic expansion."

During the past year alone, Blank Rome's Consumer Financial Services Practice has added more than 20 lateral attorneys, further enhancing capabilities to provide mortgage industry clients with regulatory compliance services nationwide and litigation services in 13 states across the country.

**PHILADELPHIA**

**Edward W. Chang** joins as Of Counsel in the Corporate Litigation group, and is based in the Firm's Philadelphia office. He previously served as Partner at Dilworth Paxson LLP in Philadelphia. Mr. Chang's practice is focused on consumer financial services and commercial litigation. He represents and counsels residential mortgage loan servicers and lenders in all phases of litigation, from initial investigation through trial and appeal, in numerous state and federal courts throughout the country. Admitted to practice in Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Maryland, Mr. Chang received his J.D. from The George Washington University Law School and his B.A. in International Relations, *Cum Laude*, from the University of Pennsylvania.

**WASHINGTON, D.C.**

**James R. Billings-Kang** joins as an Associate in the Corporate Litigation group, and is based in the Firm's Washington, D.C. office. He previously served as a Litigation Associate at Venable LLP in Washington, D.C. Mr. Billings-Kang works on a variety of consumer finance litigation matters, including disputes under TILA, RESPA, FCRA, ECOA and FDCPA, state law UDAP claims, and a variety of common law claims. Admitted to practice in Washington, D.C., Maryland, and Virginia, Mr. Billings-Kang received his J.D. from the University of Virginia School of Law and his B.A. in Classical Studies and Greek, *Summa Cum Laude*, from Hampden-Sydney College.

**LOS ANGELES**

**Russell G. Gomm** and **Brendan F. Hug** join as Associates in the Corporate Litigation group, and are based in the Firm's Los Angeles office. Both were previously attorneys at Palmer, Lombardi & Donohue LLP in Los Angeles.

Mr. Gomm represents financial institutions in mortgage lending, consumer banking, and securities litigation in state and federal courts and FINRA arbitrations. Admitted to practice in California, Mr. Gomm received his J.D. from Harvard Law School and his B.A. in Linguistics & Korean Studies from Brigham Young University.

Mr. Hug has experience defending consumer lenders – primarily mortgage bankers – and loan servicers against wrongful foreclosure, fraud, FDCPA, FCRA, RESPA, and TILA claims. Admitted to practice in California, Mr. Hug received his J.D. from the University of Iowa College of Law and his B.S. from the University of Michigan.

**HOUSTON**

**Cody P. Peterson** joins as an Associate in the Corporate Litigation group, and is based in the Firm's Houston, TX office. He previously served as an Associate at McGlinchey Stafford, PLLC in Houston. Mr. Peterson focuses his practice on commercial and consumer finance litigation and banking law in state and federal courts, as well as advising clients in related compliance matters. Admitted to practice in Texas, Mr. Peterson received his J.D. from the University of Houston Law Center and his B.A. in Political Science, *Summa Cum Laude*, from the University of Texas at Tyler.

#### **BOCA RATON**

**Natalie F. Guerra-Valdes** joins as an Associate in the Commercial Litigation group, and is based in the Firm's Boca Raton, FL office. She previously served as an Associate at Arnstein & Lehr, LLP in Ft. Lauderdale, FL. Ms. Guerra-Valdes represents lenders and financial institutions in a variety of consumer finance litigation matters, including disputes under TILA, RESPA, FCRA, ECOA and FDCPA, state law UDAP claims, and a variety of common law claims. Admitted to practice in Florida, Ms. Guerra-Valdes received her J.D., *Cum Laude*, from the University of Florida Levin College of Law and her B.S. in Communication, *Cum Laude*, from the University of Miami.

**Brendan A. Sweeney** joins as an Associate in the Commercial Litigation group, and is based in the Firm's Boca Raton, FL office. He previously served as an Associate in a Fort Lauderdale, FL law firm. Mr. Sweeney represents lenders and financial institutions in a variety of consumer finance litigation matters in federal bankruptcy and district courts, as well as state courts. Admitted to practice in Florida and Maryland, Mr. Sweeney received his J.D. and his LL.M. in Real Property Development from the University of Miami School of Law, and his B.A. in Political Science from the University of Wisconsin – Madison. Earlier this year, Blank Rome also enhanced its Consumer Financial Services Practice through the combination with Houston-based Abrams Scott & Bickley and the addition of Manuel S. Hiraldo, Associate in Boca Raton; Arti L. Bhimani and Eduardo Martorell, Associates in Los Angeles; and Jonathan M. Robbin and Adam M. Swanson, Associates in New York.

Blank Rome's Consumer Financial Services industry team is comprised of more than 60 attorneys with a multi-disciplinary group of business, regulatory and litigation lawyers spanning the Firm's geographic footprint. Their collective related experience is in the areas of regulatory compliance, financial services and commercial litigation, bankruptcy, and white collar criminal defense/government investigations. For additional information, visit: [www.blankrome.com/cfs](http://www.blankrome.com/cfs).

#### **About Blank Rome LLP**

Blank Rome LLP is one of America's largest law firms. With more than 500 attorneys serving clients across the globe, Blank Rome is an international law firm representing businesses and organizations ranging from Fortune 500 companies to start-up entities. Blank Rome helps its clients in all aspects of their businesses. The Firm's practices cover areas including business tax; commercial and corporate litigation; employment, benefits and labor; financial services; business restructuring and bankruptcy; government relations; health law; intellectual property; maritime, international trade and procurement; matrimonial; mergers & acquisitions and private equity; product liability; public companies and capital formation; public finance; real estate; trusts and estates; and white collar, internal and government investigations. Blank Rome also represents *pro bono* clients in a wide variety of cases and matters. More information about the firm is available at [www.BlankRome.com](http://www.BlankRome.com).

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