

# MIAMI TODAY

WEEK OF THURSDAY, APRIL 26, 2012

SERVING SOUTH FLORIDA'S MOST IMPORTANT AUDIENCE

As managing partner of Hunton & Williams' Miami office, Juan Enjamio is focused on defending clients in complex disputes, while helping the firm continue growing as an international law firm.

Focusing on the defense of companies encountering employment disputes, he has extensive experience in international and commercial litigation as well as in the defense of class-action suits, which he says are becoming more and more common. Among the firm's clients are a wide array of Fortune 500 companies, including large international and prominent financial institutions.

After spending a decade at Holland & Knight, in 1999 Mr. Enjamio helped form the Miami office of Hunton & Williams. Since then, he has worked on attracting top lawyers who share the firm's vision and core values.

Besides the firm's track record dealing with complex disputes, Mr. Enjamio is proud of the Miami office's community involvement, with 100% of its full-time lawyers working on pro bono projects, providing counsel to foundations and individuals.

"It isn't just about attracting clients and providing great legal service," he said, "but it's also doing that in the context of being a full professional – a well-rounded service to the community [through] pro bono work, service to the bar and to the bench. That's [how] we view ourselves."

Mr. Enjamio currently sits on the board of the Center for Ethics and Public Policy at the University of Miami, on the board of the Hispanic Alumni Association of the University of Florida and on the board of the Center for Financial Stability at United Way, helping those in finan-

## THE ACHIEVER



Juan Enjamio

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Age: 52

Born: Havana, Cuba

Education: University of Florida (bachelor's, economics); University of Miami (law).

Personal Philosophy: "Do the best you can in all the things that you do and treat people with respect."

cial need get back on their feet.

Originally from Havana, Mr. Enjamio has seen Miami change tremendously from the days he grew up in Little Havana and worked as a law clerk on Brickell Avenue. However, in his viewpoint, the one thing that has stayed the same is that Miami has always been a great place to practice law.

"In Miami we have some of the most challenging cases," he said. "If you look at the docket that we litigate as a legal community in Miami, we litigate some of the most interesting and important cases in the country from a business standpoint. It's always been a leading litigation city, for whatever historical reasons."

Mr. Enjamio discussed his career and his aims with Miami Today staff writer Patricia Hoyos in his Brickell office.

**Q: How extensive is Hunton & Williams?**

**A:** We're a global international law firm that has nearly 800 lawyers throughout the US and abroad.

In Miami, we're in the mid-30s, [with about] 36-37 lawyers. We'll be growing in the next few weeks as we get new lawyers. [We'll be] close to 40 lawyers.

**Q: When was the Miami office formed?**

**A:** We opened the Miami office around March 1, 1999.

**Q: How did that come about?**

**A:** Hunton & Williams as a firm is over 100 years old. It grew out of Virginia and became a large and powerful regional firm in the Southeast United States.

In 1999, four lawyers – Marty Steinberg, Wally Martinez, Sam Danon and me – opened the Miami office. We soon grew into over 40 or 50 lawyers.

# Juan Enjamio manages Hunton & Williams' Miami office...

**Q: How many of the original lawyers are still here?**

**A:** Wally Martinez is not in Miami now. He works out of our New York office, but he was one of the founding partners of this office and now manages the entire law firm.

Sam Danon and I are still here, and Marty Steinberg is not. He's the only one who's not.

**Q: What drove you to start a firm?**

**A:** If you ask each one of us we would probably have a different reason, but from a personal standpoint, I had been a lawyer at Holland & Knight for 11 years. I had a great time, but it was a perfect opportunity in my career to try something else – to build an international law firm.

That appealed to the entrepreneurial side of me. It was the right time to move.

**Q: Can you tell us about your experience at Holland & Knight?**

**A:** I spent my entire career at Holland & Knight before I came to Hunton & Williams.

I am a litigator who focuses on representing companies, mostly in employment, intellectual property disputes. I've also represented companies or governments in some international, commercial disputes.

I represent employers and large companies in a range of issues from intellectual property disputes, like trade secret theft or non-compete agreements, to large collective or class actions, where employers are being sued nationally, to more common discrimination or sexual harassment type claims.

**Q: What are some of the major challenges in your area of practice?**

**A:** You see a lot more of what I would call collective or class action-type cases, where employers are being sued, for example, [for] misclassification – which is a great implication in the way a company does business.

Those cases are growing, and they can be expensive for a company. You see more governmental action, regulatory action. The different government agencies are becoming more active in this administration in investigating firms, so it creates potential liability for firms.

In terms of governmental activity, making sure that companies follow regulations is becoming a challenge.



Photo by Maxine Usdan

University of Miami law grad Juan Enjamio has seen Brickell Avenue rise up around him as a founder of the Miami office of global international law firm Hunton & Williams.

**Q: Why are there more class-action suits than before?**

**A:** There are a lot of reasons. Government agencies have become more involved or active in the prosecution of these cases. They tend to instigate more private actions, so you have more regulatory action.

People are more conscious of certain rights or potential causes of action. A lot of lawyers who may have traditionally specialized in personal injury and other cases, with the advent of tort reform laws, are pursuing other areas than personal injury. A lot of them gravitate to the employment area – to statutory actions.

**Q: What are your responsibilities as managing partner of Hunton & Williams? What is the firm's focus?**

**A:** My role is to make sure that we are focused on our strategic goals, that we as an office [are] focused on attracting lawyers that fit the strategic vision of the firm. We are a partnership, and I'm mindful of that. I'm mindful that I am one of many partners in this office and in this law firm.

My role is to make sure that we're focused on the right issues, that we are consistent with our strategic vision and that we're living up to our core values as an office and as a firm.

**Q: What are those strategic goals?**

**A:** As a firm and as an office we want to represent businesses [in] a whole array of business disputes and issues. For example,

in this office we have a large litigation practice representing large international companies banks, financial institutions or retail companies in large cases.

We litigate cases not only locally but across the country and internationally. From large antitrust disputes we are litigating some of the largest Madoff-related cases in the country.

We represent financial institutions' major lawsuits. We have dealer-related cases, collective actions in the employment side nationally. One of our strategic goals is to continue to handle large cases nationally. We are fortunate to be able to do that from this office.

Another big focus of this office is our cross-border practice. We've represented in the last few years financial institutions from abroad or domestic that purchased large banks in Florida or throughout the United States.

We've got a good practice in what we call infrastructure work projects, where we partner clients with the state for large transportation or other infrastructure projects. Our clients have done work, for example, on the I-95 managed lane projects, I-595 and a lot of other projects throughout the state where we represent either the construction company or the financing company.

Our third big focus is growing the law firm and servicing companies from all over the world – especially European and American companies that are purchasing



## ...and focuses on continued growth of international law firm

businesses, companies in South America or in Latin America that are purchasing businesses in the United States.

Those are some of the major strategic areas that we focus on, and we want to make sure that we continue to grow those.

**Q: Has Latin American always been a firm focus?**

**A:** Obviously it's something that we thought would be a great opportunity for the firm. Miami is considered the gateway to Latin America, and a lot of law firms have opened here with that vision.

We've always maintained that's not all we wanted to do. We want it to be a leading law firm for all kinds of business issues and disputes, but because of the lawyers we've attracted to this office we've been able to grow that practice.

Fernando Alonso was one of the leading lawyers for Latin America in the United States. [He] came to our office to grow that. In the last year, we've added two partners to grow [that] practice. We've attracted talent better than some of the leading practitioners in that area.

**Q: Do you plan to continue to expand?**

**A:** Absolutely. From the time we opened the office it continues to be our strategic goal to grow by adding great lawyers.

We're not saying we want to be 50 lawyers by this date. That's never been part of our plan. It's more important to attract the right person than to focus on numbers, but we're actively looking for great lawyers that fit what we're trying to do as an office and as a firm.

**Q: How do you attract top lawyers?**

**A:** Miami has some leading law firms and great lawyers. All we can do is talk about the fact that we also have some great lawyers and talk about the core values of the firm.

We are a law firm that's been around for over 100 years because of the great legal work that our predecessors have done. We have been able to grow the firm, because it has always been committed to values that transcend time and our professional responsibilities as lawyers. It's a firm that believes in public service.

It's a firm that is proud of the fact that it achieves the ABA [American Bar Association] goal for pro bono work.

That makes us attractive to other lawyers who have the same vision of what

a lawyer should be. It isn't just about attracting clients and providing great legal service, but it's also doing that in the context of being a full professional – a well-rounded service to the community [through] pro bono work, service to the bar and to the bench. That's [how] we view ourselves.

**Q: Who are some of your clients?**

**A:** We do a lot of work for a lot of international financial institutions like Banco de Sabadell, Banco Santander. We do work for large companies like Kraft.

We do work for all kinds of national and international retail companies, transportation companies, a whole gamut of Fortune 500 companies.

**Q: Can you talk more about your pro bono work?**

**A:** We are proud of the fact that we have 100% participation from all of our lawyers in pro bono work that we need for the ABA challenge. [We] surpass it per lawyer, which is something that we emphasize.

We've done a lot of work for entities like Kristi House. We partner with them and provide a whole array of legal services, but we also do individual cases. Through our office we have the Randolph Williams Award to lawyers who provide more than 100 hours of pro bono or public service during the year.

We're proud that so many of our lawyers in Miami continue to win that award every year.

**Q: Are you involved with any community organizations?**

**A:** I'm with the board of the Center for Ethics and Public Policy at the University of Miami. I'm on the board of the Hispanic Alumni Association at the University of Florida. In addition to that, I'm on the board of the Center for Financial Stability at United Way, which is a great initiative to help people in financial need get on their feet.

I'm also on the board of the St. John Bosco Leadership Learning Center, which is a wonderful afterschool program in Little Havana. We're now serving close to 100 kids in a youth afterschool program.

I'm involved with a prison medical program that provides services to prisoners called Kairos Prison Ministry International.

**Q: Is the law field oversaturated, or is**

**there room for new lawyers to enter?**

**A:** Actually, both.

I talk to young lawyers, college students that are thinking about becoming lawyers. I always tell them both sides of that. Yes, there are a lot of lawyers, and in so many ways the profession is saturated, but as great lawyers always use to tell me – there's always room for a good lawyer.

It's a great profession. It gives you great opportunities in life – not only material opportunities, but opportunities to provide service, to develop your talent. You have to go into the profession because you like that, not because you think it's a pathway to material success.

While in many ways the profession is oversaturated, it is never oversaturated with great lawyers and people who have a sense of what being a lawyer is about.

I always try to tell college students who are thinking of becoming lawyers [that] if this is really your vocation then go for it because there's always going to be a place for you. If you're just doing it because you think it's a way to make money, then you're already miserable and it's not the profession for you.

Historically, you see a lot of people gravitate to law because it was a growing field, and people thought it was a path to great material success. A lot of those people end up being miserable.

**Q: Can you tell us about your background?**

**A:** I was born in Cuba. [I] came when I was 10 years old into the US. I grew up in Miami, went to Miami Senior High School. I'm a proud Stingaree.

I went to the University of Florida for undergrad, got an economics degree, went to the University of Miami, got a law degree, and I've practiced in Miami ever since.

**Q: How has Miami changed throughout the years?**

**A:** It's grown tremendously.

When I was a law clerk on Brickell Avenue you could literally look out the window and not see any high rises. Now it's a totally different world.

Miami has changed dramatically, but I'm a proud Miamian and I think it's for the better. From a business standpoint and professional standpoint, it's a great place to be. It's a great place to practice law; it's a great place to raise a family; it's a great

place to live.

***Q: Why is Miami a great place to practice law? What differentiates the city from others?***

**A:** In Miami we have some of the most challenging cases. If you look at the docket that we litigate as a legal community in Miami, we litigate some of the most interesting and important cases in the country from a business standpoint.

It's always been a leading litigation city, for whatever historical reasons. If you're a litigator it's a place where you get great opportunities, a place where you get to litigate some of the leading issues.

For example, [Miami] has this connection to Latin America that allows us, as a legal community, to handle some of the most sophisticated legal issues from a transactional or a litigation standpoint. We get great work in the city.

***Q: What are some of the challenges facing Miami, either from a law perspective or a residential standpoint?***

**A:** In Miami we always have the challenge of [being a] wonderful multiethnic community, and it's part of what gives us a unique flavor. It's part of what attracts people to Miami, but it also creates great challenges.

The biggest challenge Miami always faces is how to unite the various ethnic groups and various cultures. That's always a challenge from the civic community standpoint, and it's always a challenge for our political leaders.

We're always – especially in the political arena – very susceptible to divisiveness because we have so many cultures and because we have so many ethnic groups. It's very easy for political leaders to fall into that trap of dividing us.

The biggest political challenge we have is leadership that unites us in a common cause rather than divides us. That's not always been there. From a civic leadership perspective it's the same. We have great challenges from poverty, homelessness, but they're challenges that every community has. We have to pull in the right direction as a community.

That's always very hard in Miami because our greatest asset – our multicultural, multiethnic reality – is also our biggest challenge. How do you unite us instead of dividing us? That, I think, is our biggest challenge, and it has been for 25 years, since I've been growing up in this community.

