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Wyche Burgess advises textile maker Milliken on deal

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One of the largest U.S.-based textile manufacturers recently relied on a Greenville, S.C. law firm for advice on acquiring a private equity fund's portfolio company.

Milliken & Co. was advised by a legal team from **Wyche, Burgess, Freeman & Parham** on its acquisition of carpet maker **Constantine** LLC. Heading up the Wyche team was partner Kevin Hendricks, a former associate in Jones Day's Atlanta office. The deal closed on Tuesday and terms weren't disclosed.

Milliken, a privately held company that's headquartered in Spartanburg, S.C., manufactures modular carpet, apparel, fabrics and chemicals. Constantine is based in Calhoun, Ga., and is owned by the Boston private equity fund **Lineage Capital** LLC. Constantine makes broadloom and modular carpet tile, as well as other types of floor-covering products.

Working with Hendricks on the Milliken deal were Wyche partner Cary Hall and associates John Harvey, Maurie Lawrence and Rita Barker, all located in Greenville. **Ropes & Gray** advised Lineage Capital.

Wyche, a 38-lawyer firm, has weathered the economic downturn well because there were few examples of companies and lenders in the Greenville area that became overextended leading up to the recession, Hendricks said.

"Greenville never went crazy in the last few years in terms of growth and massive deal flow," Hendricks said.

With an even split between litigation and transactional work, Wyche is able to handle clients' needs on most deals, in spite of its size, Hendricks said. Occasionally Wyche will partner with a Washington firm when a client needs specific regulatory advice.

The Wyche firm is known for its work in some specific areas. Founding partner Tommy Wyche has authored several books about the South Carolina mountains, and he helped lead the redevelopment of downtown Greenville, including the creation of a park centered on the Reedy River waterfalls. Wyche's office is situated on a parcel overlooking the falls. The Wyche firm has also carved out a niche, led by partner Wallace Lightsey, as a specialist in representing architectural firms in copyright infringement litigation.

