

Thompson Hine Names Former Ohio State Basketball Captain as Next Managing Partner

By Dan Packel
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What You Need to Know

- Anthony White hopes to build on the firm's established reputation for embracing innovation.
- He also aims to prioritize strategic growth, primarily outside of the firm's geographic core in Ohio.
- Thompson Hine now has approximately 400 lawyers across eight offices.

Thompson Hine has elected longtime national hiring partner Anthony White to serve as its next managing partner, replacing Deborah Read, who will return to her tax law practice after 12 years of leading the Ohio-based firm.

One of the rare female managing partners in Big Law, Read will hand over the reins on May 1 to White, who will become one of just a handful of African Americans leading an Am Law 200 firm.

White said that one of his biggest priorities for his four-year term, which can be renewed by the firm's partners, is to build on the firm's established reputation for embracing innovation and new models of legal service delivery.



Courtesy photo

Tony White of Thompson Hine.

"We made a hard pivot to innovation under Debbie's leadership," he said in an interview. "That sets us apart from our competition."

In addition to his 11 years as national hiring partner, White has served for 13 years on the firm's executive committee and previously spent 10 years as the partner-in-charge of the firm's Columbus office.

His leadership experience extends even farther back, having served as the captain of

The Ohio State University men's basketball team as a senior in 1989.

The one common theme through all these roles, White said, is that "it's all about people," echoing longtime Ohio State football coach Woody Hayes' adage that "you win with people."

"That gets exactly to the business of running a law firm," White said of Hayes' famous quote.

White also emphasized that Thompson Hine's past record of pushing forward new approaches to the practice of law—which include the development of AI tools for budgeting matters and commitments to flexible staffing and value-based pricing—has been particularly successful in attracting lateral partners and allowing them to build their practices.

"I have some clients, where at any other firm, they'd be a zero. Here, they're seven-figure clients," he said. "That's because our innovation strategy has allowed us to solve their problems and generate the trust that's been successful in building a deep relationship."

White, a trial lawyer, represents clients in Ohio and around the country in class actions and collective actions, trade secrets disputes, mass torts and other complex commercial litigation. His major clients include R+L Carriers, the largest privately owned trucking company in the U.S., and shipping giant DHL and its supply chain subsidiary DHL Logistics. Some of that work will continue.

"My first and foremost priority is to serve my partners in the firm as managing partner. That's where I'm going to devote my vast majority of time," he said. "But I have great clients who will

need me on occasion to speak to judges and juries on their behalf, without losing focus that I am the managing partner of Thompson Hine and that is my primary responsibility."

In addition to furthering the firm's commitment to innovation, White intends to prioritize strategic growth under his leadership. He said that while the firm has a market-leading position in Ohio, the biggest opportunities for expansion are going to be outside the Buckeye State.

He highlighted the firm's New York office, with 40 attorneys handling multimillion-dollar deals and real estate and tax matters as well as litigation, as an asset that can benefit from even further investment, along with outposts in Atlanta, Washington and Chicago. All told, Thompson Hine now has approximately 400 lawyers across eight offices. It placed No. 141 in the 2023 Am Law 200 rankings, with just under \$253 million in revenue.

"Tony is an excellent choice for the firm's next managing partner," Read, White's predecessor, said in a statement. "There is a recognized correlation between sports and business leadership success, and Tony has it. He is a seasoned leader with the vision and experience to guide the firm toward a successful future."

And White is optimistic that sports will continue to be part of his future. A former Ohio State basketball analyst, he now does color commentary for the University of Dayton Flyers, whose fans he called "the best in the country."

"I'm hopeful I can keep a little time and keep calling Dayton games and keep my involvement with college basketball alive," he said.