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## Gray Reed Announces Q1 2017 New Hires

March 31, 2017

Gray Reed & McGraw is proud to announce the addition of five attorneys to the firm in the first quarter of 2017. Partner Ryan Sears joined the energy practice on January 30 (Houston), Partner Barry Cannaday joined energy practice on March 13 (Dallas), Counsel Jeffery Watters joined the trusts and estates section on March 15 (Houston), Counsel Jennifer Perry joined the healthcare practice on March 21 (Houston) and Counsel Ricardo Rivera joined the tax section on March 20 (Dallas).

[Sears](#) focuses his practice on the representation of clients in the energy industry, primarily on upstream and midstream transactions. He represents energy clients, both domestic and international, in a variety of matters relating to the exploration for and production of oil and gas. In addition, he has assisted common carrier pipeline clients with construction and start-up activities.

Admitted in Texas and Oklahoma, Sears is an active member of the Houston, Dallas and Oklahoma Bar Associations.

Sears earned his law degree, with honors, and his undergraduate degree from the University of Oklahoma.

[Cannaday's](#) practice focuses on representing clients in the energy sector in connection with matters relating to downstream and midstream oil and gas exploration, production, processing, gathering, transportation and marketing.

He represents energy clients, both onshore and offshore, in connection with oil and gas leasing, oil and gas contracting, operations, regulatory compliance, joint ventures, financing, acquisitions, divestitures, and restructuring. He also represents energy clients in arbitration, trial and appellate work relating to most facets of the petroleum industry.

Before entering private practice in 1984, Cannaday started his legal career as in-house counsel for Gulf Oil Corporation and later became general counsel for Mesa Petroleum Co. He earned his B.A. and J.D. at University of Texas.

[Watters](#) represents clients in state courts with respect to estate administration and fiduciary duty issues. He also handles federal estate, gift and income tax litigation and controversy work, including disputes and litigation with the Department of Justice and the Internal Revenue Service.

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Watters earned his law degree from Baylor University School of Law and undergraduate degree from University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

[Perry](#) focuses on corporate transactions and compliance issues in the healthcare industry. She has extensive experience with various health laws including the anti-kickback statute, Stark Law, HIPAA, non-profit regulations, healthcare media and marketing regulations, and compliance issues. Her experience also includes handling hospital operational issues related to regulatory compliance and risk management.

Perry earned her undergraduate degree from Baylor University and her J.D. from Lewis & Clark Law School with a certificate in environmental and natural resources law.

Prior to joining Gray Reed, she served as Associate General Counsel at Memorial Hermann Health System and General Counsel at Houston Orthopedic & Spine Hospital n/k/a Memorial Hermann Orthopedic & Spine Hospital.

[Rivera](#) has broad experience in tax and corporate transactional matters. He has an extensive background in handling and structuring business transactions, partnership and corporate tax planning and corporate governance in a variety of areas.

Rivera received his B.B.A. in accounting, *magna cum laude*, from the University of Puerto Rico, Rio Piedras Campus; his J.D., *magna cum laude*, from the University of Puerto Rico School of Law; and his LL.M. in Taxation with a Certificate in Employee Benefits Law from the Georgetown University Law Center.

Prior to joining Gray Reed, he served as Director & Tax Counsel for American Airlines.

### **About Gray Reed & McGraw**

Founded in 1985, Gray Reed & McGraw is a full-service, Texas-based law firm with more than 120 lawyers practicing in Dallas and Houston. Gray Reed & McGraw offers a wide range of legal services including business litigation, corporate transactions, oil & gas, tax planning and litigation, real estate, healthcare, trusts and estates, employment law, family law, intellectual property, and bankruptcy. For more information, visit [www.grayreed.com](http://www.grayreed.com).