

Dechert Agrees to Pay \$2.4M Over Coudert Partner Defections

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Dechert LLP agreed Monday to pay \$2.4 million to settle claims connected to partner poaching in the bankruptcy of Coudert Brothers LLP, according to a court filing, a rare settlement of its kind after New York limited such unfinished-business claims last year.

The proposal would close out a long-running dispute over the value allegedly stripped from Coudert when five of its Brussels partners and six of its Paris partners decamped for Dechert after the failing firm announced its dissolution in 2005, according to the settlement motion.

The two firms had struck a deal at that time under which only associates were to transfer, leaving partners to wind down their business in a more organized way. The partners allegedly billed on Dechert's behalf for work that Coudert's estate should have profited from, the motion says. Dechert allegedly underpaid for the Paris office and owed Coudert money for unfinished-business bills for the Brussels office.

The settlement also puts to bed a \$25 million claim against Coudert's estate by Dechert.

Continuing to litigate the matter would do more harm than good, according to the document, filed by Coudert bankruptcy administrator Development Specialists Inc. and Dechert.

DSI is represented by David Adler of McCarter & English LLP.