



Bay Adelaide Centre – East Tower
22 Adelaide Street West, Suite 3600
Toronto, Ontario M5H 4E3
T 416.865.6600 F 416.865.6636 www.grllp.com



Christopher Besant

Partner

T 416.865.4022

F 416.865.6636

E cbesant@grllp.com

Expertise

Financial Services

Education

- Cambridge University, LL.M.
- University of Toronto, LL.B.
- McMaster University, B.A. (Hons.)

Bar Admission

- New York Bar, 1992
- Ontario Bar, 1985

Executive Summary

Chris is a co-Lead of the firm's Financial Services Group and has a national and international profile. A specialist in lending and corporate finance, private mergers and acquisitions, corporate restructuring, and corporate governance, he has extensive experience in advising in large institutional and high value added situations. Prior to joining Gardiner Roberts, he was a partner in the Toronto and New York offices of a leading global law firm, where as a member of the global banking practice, he led the Canadian Financial Services/Restructuring practice, and served on the global steering committee of the firm's financial restructuring and automotive practices. Earlier in his career, he was a partner of a national firm based in Canada where he co-founded its Financial Restructuring Group, and prior to that worked in an Australian office of an international law firm.

Representative Work

- Acted for Schedule 1 banks/other financial institutions in acquisition financings, asset based financings, syndicated loans, distressed financings, structured financings, traditional financings and DIP loans.
- Acted for the financial arm of a multi-national corporation in connection with its 9-figure acquisition financing of certain energy reserves in Alberta.
- Acted for an international mining and metals company in its 9-figure acquisition financing of the Latin American mining operations of a publicly-listed NA company.
- Acted for a California-based health care fund and the venture funds of a global pharmacy chain in their 8-figure acquisition financing of a Canadian pharmaceutical technology business.
- Acted for an arm of a global US bank in a 9-figure refinancing of an NHL team and arena, and for financiers and acquirers in various other financings, restructurings and acquisitions of major professional sports teams and facilities.
- Acted for a US defense giant, Lockheed Martin Corporation, in its 8-figure acquisition financing of the engine, maintenance, repair and overhaul business of an aviation MRO.
- Acted for a global fashion retailer in its 100+ location exit from the North American marketplace.
- Acted for a global tier-one automotive supplier in its restructuring and refinancing of its pension exposures.
- Acted for the purchaser on its \$650 million acquisition financing bid for one of the five key divisions of Nortel Networks during its restructuring proceedings.
- Advised a global brewing conglomerate on the restructuring of long-term North American distribution arrangements with other global brewers.
- Acted on the restructuring and refinancing of a multi-billion dollar oil sands project.
- Advised on options to restructure and refinance a multi-billion cross border energy pipeline.



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- Acted for an overseas private equity fund in connection with its multi-million dollar bid to provide the DIP loan in the Timminco CCAA proceedings.
- Acted for the parent company of an iconic Australian conglomerate in the defence of a multi-billion dollar multi-jurisdictional medical devices class action;
- Acted for the federal Inspector-General of Banks (now the Superintendent of Financial Institutions) in the Royal Commission in the collapse of two western Canadian banking institutions, and in respect of certain bank rescues.

Articles and Presentations

Chris has authored and presented well over 50 corporate finance and corporate/commercial lending articles and presentations. Selected written materials include the following:

- Corporate Crisis Management Revisited – November 2016
- Corporate Crisis Management The Role of In-house Counsel – November 2015
- Co-Author of Article on Board Observers and Subordinated Debt Transactions, Corporate Financing Journal 2014.
- Instructor at Baker & McKenzie's North American Banking School 2013.
- Co-Author, Managing Pension Priority Risks in Canada, Corporate Financing Journal 2013.
- Colliers: Guide to International Bankruptcy & Insolvency 2013 to present.
- Law Business Research, International Insolvency and Restructuring 2013 to present.
- Kluwer, Contributing Co-Editor, Current Issues in Cross Border Insolvencies and Re-organizations 1993, a foundational text in the field.

Professional Involvement

- Member editorial board of the National Insolvency Review
- Executive member and past co-Chair, International Bar Association (IBA) Insolvency Section
- Executive member and past co-Chair, Canadian Bar Association (CBA) Bankruptcy Insolvency and Restructuring Section
- Member IBA Permanent Delegation to UNCITRAL Working Group V (Insolvency)
- Past Chair, OBA Insolvency Section
- Past Vice-Chair, IBA North American Forum
- Founding Co-Editor, Insolvency and Restructuring International (IBA quarterly journal)