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Graves will get to run his own show

Ex-U.S. attorney joining law firm Bartle co-founded

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Bartle



Graves

Former U.S. Attorney Todd Graves on Monday hooked up with Missouri Sen. Matt Bartle to form the law firm of **Graves Bartle & Marcus**.

Graves, 40, stepped down as U.S. attorney on Friday after serving as the Western District's chief federal prosecutor since September 2001. Before that, he was the Platte County prosecuting attorney for seven years.

"This has been a lifelong dream of mine, to have my own law firm," Graves said.

Graves and Bartle have known each other since they were undergraduates at the **University of Missouri-Columbia** two decades ago. Both also worked at the **Bryan Cave** law firm, as did David L. Marcus, the third member of the legal triumvirate.

Graves said his practice would focus on regulatory compliance work, advising clients on corporate governance and the Sarbanes-Oxley Act, as well as on white-collar criminal defense work.

Bartle, 41, a Lee's Summit Republican, hung out his shingle with Marcus last summer, when the two formed Bartle and Marcus. A large part of his practice has focused on arbitration matters before the **National Association of Securities Dealers**.

He's better known, though, as a politician, especially for his legislation attacking sexually oriented businesses and seeking to restrict cloning.

Bartle was elected to the **Missouri House of Representatives** in 1998 and re-elected in 2000. In 2002, he won the 8th District state Senate seat, which encompasses eastern Jackson County.

In short order, he carved out a reputation as something of a conservative firebrand. His bill banning sexually oriented billboards within a mile of state highways was enacted in 2004 and so far has withstood a court challenge. Another Bartle bill banned lap dances and full nudity in Missouri strip clubs and prohibited the clubs from admitting customers and hiring workers less than 21 years of age.

Bartle has also introduced legislation to ban embryonic stem-cell research, which involves replacing egg-cell nuclei with the nuclei of regular cells. The procedure is thought to hold great promise for the cure of various human diseases. Although the egg is never fertilized by sperm or implanted in a woman's uterus, Bartle and his allies believe the procedure creates human life and want to ban it.

Among Graves' top priorities as a federal prosecutor were illegal-firearms cases, child abuse and child pornography cases

and drug cases.

Graves received his law degree and a master's degree in public administration from the **University of Virginia** in 1991. He briefly worked as an assistant Missouri attorney general before joining Bryan Cave in 1992. He was elected Platte County prosecuting attorney in 1994 and re-elected in 1998.

He was appointed by President Bush as the U.S. attorney for the Western District of Missouri in July 2001 and assumed office on an interim basis on Sept. 17, 2001. He was confirmed by the Senate on Oct. 11, 2001.

Graves said he talked with several large firms about going to work for them but ultimately decided he wanted to run his own show.

"I'm a farm kid and always liked making my own way," he said. "I've always said I'd rather be captain of a rowboat than a high officer on a battle cruiser."

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