

## Howard Hughes Deputy GC Returns To Morgan Lewis

By Jack Rodgers

*Law360 (March 20, 2023, 1:58 PM EDT)* -- Morgan Lewis & Bockius LLP has rehired a former partner who spent the past 11 years helping field legal issues for Howard Hughes Medical Institute, the nation's largest medical research nonprofit, the firm announced Monday.

Ann K. Batlle rejoins the firm in Washington, D.C., as a partner, after spending a year as deputy general counsel of the Chevy Chase, Maryland-based Howard Hughes Medical Institute. She spent the prior decade before her promotion working for the medical research philanthropy's legal team as associate general counsel, according to her LinkedIn profile.



Ann Batlle

A New York University School of Law graduate, Batlle joined Morgan Lewis after law school as an associate, and was made an of counsel after a decade of working in that role. Her work then focused on tax-exempt organizations, leaving Morgan Lewis after 12 years with the firm.

Batlle's practice focuses on advising medical research organizations, charities and other tax-exempt entities on legal issues related to executive compensation, employee benefits and a range of other matters. Her work also includes counseling those clients on how to comply with lobbying and tax regulations, the firm said.

Batlle also guides tax-exempt organizations on complex structures and on navigating IRS audits, the firm said.

In an interview Monday with Law360 Pulse, Batlle said she had grown into the lawyer she is today because of her experience at Morgan Lewis, making her decision to rejoin the firm an easy one.

While Batlle worked for Howard Hughes Medical Institute, Morgan Lewis remained the nonprofit's outside tax counsel, she said, so Batlle continued to work with her former colleagues even after leaving the firm.

"I was kind of excited to have a new challenge. I just was at a stage in my career where I was thinking about what comes next; I think a lot of us have been doing a lot of that kind of thinking during the pandemic," Batlle said. "And so when the opportunity came up to rejoin my old practice with a lot of former colleagues and frankly good friends, it was a fairly quick yes for me."

Batlle said she found her interest in working with tax-exempt organizations in law school. Batlle's former law professor Jill Manny helped spark her interest in the field, she said.

Battle went on to be a fellow with NYU's National Center on Philanthropy and the Law during her third year of law school and was then introduced through Manny to Morgan Lewis' Celia Roady, who leads the firm's philanthropic and not-for-profit entities practice, she said.

Battle joined the firm as a summer associate alongside then-associate Tomer Inbar, who also recently rejoined Morgan Lewis in New York in 2021 along with three other attorneys from Patterson Belknap Webb & Tyler LLP, she said.

"This opportunity to work with Tomer and Celia again so closely, I think it's a once-in-a-career phone call that you get to do that," Battle said. "It was just a really quick yes to come back to these two particular mentors."

Battle said that having both worked at Morgan Lewis and been a client of the firm at Howard Hughes Medical Institute, she came to appreciate the practicality of advice given to clients by the firm. Being part of that solutions-oriented team was another reason she wanted to come back to Morgan Lewis, she said.

"Even a well-funded charity doesn't want to be spending all its time and money on lawyers; they're really trying to solve problems," Battle said. "Being able to work with a legal team that is very solution-oriented for clients — very practical, helping them think strategically about how to stretch those charitable dollars to get more money into programs and into the services they provide — I think is a real hallmark of this team."

Battle added that her parents spent their careers working with public health and international development nonprofit organizations, so working closely with those groups comes naturally to her.

"Being able to use sort of my legal training to actually help other organizations that are really on the front lines of solving really intractable problems in society — really thinking about poverty, really thinking about housing, thinking about education and what are the ways that we can catalyze the philanthropic sector to make societal change — is, for me, extraordinary to be able to come to work and do that every day," she said.

Roady said in a statement that the firm was excited to have Battle back on the team.

"Her deep familiarity with the firm, knowledge gleaned during her time at a major medical research philanthropy, and residence in Washington, D.C. — where federal policy and ambitions of our nonprofit and charitable clients intersect — is a welcome addition," Roady said in a statement.

Jami McKeon, the firm's chairwoman, said in a statement Monday that the firm was happy to welcome Battle back to the practice.

"Ann brings a keen understanding of philanthropic and not-for-profit organizations and the for-profit organizations that work with them," McKeon said. "The nonprofit sector relies on us to skillfully guide on developments with tax rules and regulations so they can make informed decisions on how to best move ahead with their goals."

--Editing by Marygrace Anderson.

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