

Morgan Lewis Adds Dorsey Corporate Duo In Orange County

By **Jake Simpson**

Law360, New York (January 17, 2013, 6:34 PM ET) -- A pair of securities, mergers and acquisitions and private equity attorneys who spent the last five years working together at Dorsey & Whitney LLP have joined Morgan Lewis & Bockius LLP as corporate partners in Orange County, Calif., Morgan Lewis said Wednesday.

Ellen S. Bancroft and Bryan S. Gadol, who had previously worked as partners in Dorsey's Orange County office, joined Morgan Lewis last week. Bancroft had been at Dorsey for the past 10 years, while Gadol had worked with her there for the past half-decade.

The duo said they were excited to join the multi-faceted practice group platform at Morgan Lewis.

"They have the platform and system you really need for a corporate M&A and securities practice in the Orange County market," Bancroft said. "They also have a very sophisticated private equity practice, which was appealing to us."

Bancroft operates a corporate M&A practice, advising public companies on their transactional activity and general corporate governance. She also advises issuers and underwriters in initial public offerings and registered follow-on and secondary public offerings.

Gadol is "an M&A specialist across the board," Bancroft said. He advises private equity and venture capital firms on transactional matters, joint venture deals and securities offerings. In addition to his broad private fund M&A expertise, Gadol advises on public company deals and provides general corporate and governance advice to emerging growth and middle-market companies.

"This group is a natural fit for our practice," Morgan Lewis partner Charles E. Engros, head of the firm's business and finance practice, said in a statement. "Their capabilities are in harmony with our well-established emerging business and technology practice in Northern California and also provide us with added depth in other areas."

In addition to Bancroft and Gadol, former Dorsey corporate attorney Joo Ryung Kang has joined Morgan Lewis as of counsel, the firm said.

Both Bancroft and Gadol operate a California-focused practice and have a client base comprised largely of in-state firms. The duo hopes to expand its geographic reach to some degree, but Bancroft said she expects their practices to remain California-based.

"The real driver for us was that Morgan Lewis' expanded platform provides a greater depth of lawyers and bench strength in key areas," Gadol said. "So we're not necessarily expanding our practice other than continuing to do what we do and having the resources to do it better."

Bancroft currently is working on three private equity deals ranging from middle-market to large transactions, as well as one corporate M&A deal. Gadol has two buy-side private equity M&A deals, a sell-side middle-market M&A transaction and a corporate reorganization for a public company on his plate. Both partners declined to name the firms involved with the deals, citing client confidentiality.

"The addition of Ellen, Bryan and JR enables us to expand our nationally recognized corporate capabilities to a region that has a substantial community of emerging and middle market companies and venture capital and private equity firms," Morgan Lewis chair Francis M. Milone said in a statement.

Bancroft received her law degree from Vanderbilt University Law School. Gadol received his law degree from Chapman University School of Law.

--Editing by Chris Yates.

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