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Schutte likes to rise before sun

Energetic Morgan, Lewis leader strives to boost firm visibility in Chicago area

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As managing partner of the local office of Morgan, Lewis & Bockius LLP, Scott T. Schutte maintains a routine he started as a young man working on a downstate dairy farm.

Dairy cows needed to be milked at 3 a.m. and again at 3 p.m., he said.

So, Schutte now regularly gets up at 4 a.m.

"I love getting up early, getting some work done and hitting the gym before most people are awake," he said.

Schutte, a partner in Morgan, Lewis' litigation practice group, also serves as a co-chairman of its class-action group. In addition, he leads the firm's 19-lawyer litigation group in Chicago and focuses on commercial litigation and class-action defense.

James D. Griffin, a Husch, Blackwell LLP partner in Kansas City, Mo., works as co-counsel with Schutte on some national class-action cases involving a financial services client.

"I do get e-mails from (Schutte) shortly after 4 a.m., so I knew that's true," he said of Schutte's early morning routine.

Schutte joined Morgan, Lewis' local office in January 2011 after leaving the now-defunct Howrey LLP. He's served as head of the local office since April.

"In the space of two years, he has done so much and impressed so many people that he's got very significant leadership responsibilities," said Jami Wintz McKeon, a Morgan, Lewis partner in Philadelphia and global leader of its litigation practice group.

The Chicago office, which

opened in October 2003, consists of 58 lawyers and 48 support staff. Morgan, Lewis began operations in Philadelphia in 1873 and now 1,418 lawyers work in 24 offices in the U.S., Europe and Asia.

As managing partner of the Chicago office, Schutte said his duties include budget and personnel issues, along with making sure lawyers work together and with the administrative staff.

When he became head of the local office, Schutte said he sat down with the local partners and sought their thoughts.

"To a person, they were interested in a leader more active in marketing and raising the profile of the Chicago office," he said.

So last year, the firm hired a marketing employee for the local office, he said.

A main goal remains to continue to increase the firm's visibility in Chicago, he said.

"We have individuals in practice groups that are known in the city," he said. But "I think the Morgan, Lewis brand name is not as well known as some other non-Chicago-based firms with offices in Chicago."

Schutte said he encourages the lawyers to become more involved with local boards of both legal and nonlegal groups.

Morgan, Lewis recently became a sponsor for the Association of Corporate Counsel programs and encourages its local lawyers to speak at association events, he said.

He also tries to run the office as a unified operation, rather than based on individual practice groups. He strives to introduce Chicago office lawyers to local firm clients who established relationships with firm lawyers in other offices.



Scott T. Schutte

Managing Partner, Morgan, Lewis & Bockius LLP's local office

- **Location:** Chicago.
- **Size:** Declined to reveal revenue figures.
- **Lawyers:** 58.
- **Age:** 46.
- **Law school:** IIT Chicago-Kent College of Law, 1995.
- **Organizations:** Member, Chicago Children's Museum Board of Directors; and vice chairman, Illinois State University Attorneys Advisory Board.
- **Interests:** He spends time with his wife and three young daughters, reads, listens to music, exercises and heads to his family's second home in Michigan, a 25-acre, nonworking farm, "where I enjoy building stuff and tearing things down."

For example, a lawyer with the Philadelphia office could have developed a long-standing relationship with a local client, he said.

"We then try to introduce our Chicago capabilities to that client," he said.

Nina G. Stillman, a Morgan, Lewis Chicago partner in its labor and employment practice group, said Schutte uses a global approach and remains "mindful of how do we cross-sell and can we service clients in different ways. Scott has really made us constantly aware of how we can service clients in prac-

tice areas other than our own."

The firm's Chicago office practice groups also include labor and employment, employee benefits and executive compensation, intellectual property and investment management.

During the last two years, the firm's local office grew from 48 to 58 lawyers, Schutte said.

"We always look to grow but only in opportunistic ways and ways that make sense from a synergy perspective," he said, adding there's no target number for hiring additional lawyers.

Schutte spends most of his time working on client matters.

Griffin, the Kansas City lawyer who works as co-counsel on cases with Schutte, called him "a very good strategist who thinks several moves ahead" and who "very ably presents himself in court."

Schutte said he spends on average about 10 hours a week on management issues.

"I'm a lawyer first and a businessman, maybe second or third," he said.

But the firm stresses the importance of lawyers performing business functions such as sending bills to clients promptly and collecting payments, he said.

"It's not enough to just go out and chase business. You have to do the spade work to make sure things happen on the business side."

Schutte, a native of downstate Sigel, worked for two years as a sports writer at the (Bloomington) Pantagraph after graduating from Illinois State University.

He later decided to pursue a long-time ambition to become a lawyer.

He graduated from IIT Chicago-Kent College of Law in 1995.

He then worked as a clerk for U.S. District Judge Milton I. Shadur. In 1996, he joined Jenner & Block LLP as an associate and became a partner there in 2002.

He left Jenner & Block in 2007 to join Howrey's local office, where he remained until joining Morgan, Lewis.

Schutte said when he's tired and experiencing difficult days as a lawyer, he recalls his time toiling on a farm.

"I worked a lot harder in terms of finishing the day with aching bones," he said. "I've developed a healthy appreciation for how good I have it as a lawyer."

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