Kilpatrick

Insights: Perspectives

What's Happening in Chicago

SEPTEMBER 22, 2023



HOW LONG HAS THE FIRM HAD A PRESENCE IN CHICAGO?

The Chicago office was launched on March 1, 2023, but it is building on the strong Midwestern presence and stellar reputation of predecessor firm Lowis & Gellen. Founded in 1994 by four attorneys from big firms, Lowis & Gellen grew to over 75 attorneys across the United States and in the UK.

The merger with Kilpatrick Townsend was a perfect fit because we provide an opportunity for Kilpatrick Townsend to hit the ground running in its expansion to the Midwest, while Kilpatrick Townsend provides us with the big-firm structure, resources, and expertise, which allows us to keep growing, too.

DESCRIBE THE CHICAGO OFFICE'S EXPERTISE AND CLIENT BASE?

About 90% of our clients are middle market, privately held companies for whom we serve as the outside general counsel. In that role, we handle all their matters, whether it's employment, mergers and acquisitions, contract negotiations, collections, and so on. While we have clients from a wide variety of industries, many of our clients are in the food industry. That's pretty logical because we are based in Chicago, known for its stockyard district.

In addition to privately held company clients we also serve as counsel for several publicly traded companies – including many of the major national banks. Our work for the banks includes loan business and get to know the different personalities. That sets us apart and creates a bond between us and our clients that goes beyond providing typical legal advice; it allows us to help the client much more effectively, with an insider's understanding of the client's constraints and opportunities.

ANY RECENT GROWTH?

We're welcoming **Victoria Mpistolarides**, **Tatum Andres**, and **Hannah Koepke** from the associate class of 2023, and we're always looking to add great, client-focused lateral attorneys to our team. With respect to business growth, we are expanding our banking and corporate transactional practices as well as delving deeper into litigation, now that the courts have fully opened post-COVID. Our growth has always been driven by our strong relationships with the business community and with other law firms in the Midwest, and referrals continue to be a key source of new business and growth.

WHAT KEY INITIATIVES DOES THE CHICAGO OFFICE SPEARHEAD IN THE COMMUNITY?

The Chicago office has always placed an emphasis on serving the community and encouraged involvement with community organizations. For example, we have a long-standing relationship with the Cook County Hospital and Partner **Jerry Haberkorn** currently serves on the Executive Board of Directors for the Cook County Health Foundation. Partner **Samera Ludwig** is very active with the Chicago public-school system, including serving on the Foundation Board of

serve as counsel for several publicly traded companies – including many of the major national banks. Our work for the banks includes loan documentation and a lot of commercial workout work, which is collection work. We don't do any consumer-based collection work.

WHAT DIFFERENTIATES KILPATRICK FROM OTHER FIRMS IN CHICAGO?

Our distinguishing advantage is our focus on communicating with our clients, which has led to extraordinary client retention. We think it's a justifiable bragging point that once we get a client, we never lose them. Over a decade ago, we started a program through which we send our attorneys to work from our clients' offices for a couple of weeks at a time. This way, our attorneys better understand the client's

County Health Foundation. Partner **Samera Ludwig** is very active with the Chicago public-school system, including serving on the Foundation Board of Directors for the Chicago High School for the Arts.

Every year, we also spearhead food and clothing drives, with a particular emphasis on collecting coats and other warm clothes that are so essential in the brutal Chicago winters. Our pro bono work includes volunteering at Cabrini Green Legal Aid as well as Chicago Food Depository, El Hogar Del Niño, Goodwill, Dress for Success, and other organizations focused on assisting in educational needs and general mentoring, through our local bar associations.

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