

MoFo Snags Sheldon Silver Lead Prosecutor From DOJ

By **Martin O'Sullivan**

Law360, New York (May 9, 2016, 6:18 PM ET) --

The lead prosecutor in the freshly concluded trial against former New York State Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver has joined Morrison & Foerster LLP as partner, landing at the firm after a nine-year stint as an Assistant U.S. Attorney, it was announced on Monday.

Carrie Cohen started at the firm's New York office on Friday as a member of its securities litigation, enforcement and white collar practice group, where she will work with clients on investment and securities fraud matters, civil securities litigation, regulatory enforcement issues and more. Cohen returned to the firm nearly two decades after her time as a Morrison & Foerster associate in the late 1990s.



Carrie Cohen

"I was looking to join a firm that had an extensive white collar criminal defense practice but that also had some room to expand upon it, as well as a firm that tries cases and is a go-to trial shop," Cohen told Law360 in a phone interview on Monday. "Morrison & Foerster fit both bills."

Cohen most recently served as an Assistant U.S. Attorney in the Southern District of New York, where she was lead prosecutor in the trial against Silver. Silver was found guilty in November of corruption charges stemming from a purported scheme to gain nearly \$5 million in exchange for legislative action and state funding, and was sentenced to 12 years in prison earlier in May.

"I am very grateful to the U.S. Attorneys' office for the opportunity to investigate and try an important case," Cohen said. "For me, it felt like the time to leave the government and take on the challenge of helping to work on white collar matters and help build the white collar practice in the private sector."

In addition to the Silver trial, Cohen's experience as Assistant U.S. Attorney includes the trial against Walter Netschi, who was sentenced to more than eight years in prison for running an \$80 million Ponzi scheme surrounding investments in ATMs. Another trial during Cohen's tenure resulted in a guilty verdict for David and Donna Levy on charges of running a \$30 million pump-and-dump stock scheme.

Despite receiving less coverage than the Silver trial, the two examples were "extremely important cases, especially for the victims of those frauds," Cohen said.

Cohen joined the U.S. Attorneys' office in 2007. Before that, she worked in the New York Attorney General's office during Eliot Spitzer's tenure, where she first served in the Civil Rights Bureau upon joining in 1999.

During Spitzer's second term, Cohen worked as the chief of the Public Integrity Unit in the Criminal Division, where she successfully prosecuted former New York State Comptroller Alan Hevesi, who had to repay \$200,000 for using state employees to assist his wife

Jamie Levitt, co-chair of Morrison & Foerster's commercial litigation and trial group, told Law360 that the firm is "absolutely thrilled" to have Cohen onboard, due to both her resume and her role as "a leader in the advancement of women in the profession."

Cohen added that she was impressed by the number of female trial lawyers and women in serious leadership positions at the firm.

Cohen began her legal career at Vladeck Raskin & Clark PC, then known as Vladeck Waldman Elias & Engelhard PC, where she worked as an associate for four years. She then worked at Morrison & Foerster as an associate for one year until 1998, calling it "a great experience."

Cohen received her law degree from the University of Pennsylvania Law School in 1993 and her undergraduate degree from Cornell University in 1989.

--Additional reporting by Stewart Bishop. Editing by Stephen Berg.

All Content © 2003-2016, Portfolio Media, Inc.