

MoFo Adds 4 From Kirkland, Skadden

By **Matthew Perlman**

Law360, New York (June 1, 2016, 4:57 PM ET) -- Morrison & Foerster LLP said Tuesday that it has bolstered its Bay Area private equity coverage, adding three partners from Kirkland & Ellis LLP with experience in mergers, acquisitions and financing transactions and a corporate attorney from Skadden Arps Slate Meagher & Flom LLP who brings capital markets and fund-formation experience.

Dario Avram, Patrick D. Huard and Alex S. Kaufman have joined Morrison & Foerster's private equity investment and buyouts group from Kirkland, while Sara L. Terheggen joins as a partner in the firm's corporate department from Skadden, where she was an associate. Avram and Huard will work out of the San Francisco office, and Kaufman and Terheggen will be based in the Palo Alto, California, outpost.

Eric McCrath, co-chair of the private equity investment and buyouts, and mergers and acquisitions groups, said the new hires are part of an effort at Morrison & Foerster to beef up its private equity coverage in the Bay Area, as the firm sees an uptick in activity from funds interested in the technology industry.

"A lot of sponsors in the past have not been particularly keen on playing in the technology space," McCrath said, citing risks associated with young growing companies. "But that's changing in the Bay Area, and I think that our expertise will play into that space very well."

Avram represents private equity sponsors and their portfolio companies on a range of U.S. and cross-border transactions, helping secure financings for acquisitions, debt facilities and restructurings, among other things, on deals with values from \$5 million to more than \$1.5 billion. Avram said he was drawn to Morrison & Foerster by its global reputation, as well as its impressive growth strategy for the Bay Area. He said the strengths of the firm's other practice groups will be complemented by the new additions.

"The chance to help grow out a strong private equity practice was too good to pass up," Avram said. "You look at their reputation with life sciences, with intellectual property. Why not leverage that with our knowledge of private equity and what those clients need."

Huard focuses on representing private equity clients on mergers and acquisitions, divestitures, recapitalizations and portfolio company management. He also counsels the portfolio companies in acquisitions, joint ventures, financing arrangements and corporate governance matters.

Kaufman counsels private equity funds and their portfolio companies on transactions including leveraged buyouts, growth equity investments, recapitalizations and divestitures. He particularly focuses

on mergers and acquisitions in the software and technology sectors, but has worked across a range of industries.

Terheggen's experience includes advising sponsors in the structuring, formation and offering of private investment funds, including private equity, real estate, hedge and venture capital funds. She also has extensive experience advising companies and underwriters on public and private offerings of equity and debt securities, with a particular focus on initial public offerings.

Terheggen said private equity clients are increasingly turning to IPOs as a way a to exit their investments, and said Morrison & Foerster's approach to growing the practice area will allow it to serve these clients at every stage.

"Altogether, we have this great approach to helping private equity clients," Terheggen said. "It's a very comprehensive strategy."

--Editing by Bruce Goldman.

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