

MoFo Makes Big Boston Entrance With New 30-Lawyer Office

Morrison & Foerster is committed to making “a big splash” in Boston’s increasingly crowded legal market, its chairman said.

By Meghan Tribe
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Morrison & Foerster is moving into Beantown in a big way.

On Monday, the Bay Area-based firm announced the opening of a new Boston office staffed with nearly two-dozen lawyers, including eight partners, from local boutique finance firm, Riemer & Braunstein.

The firm is also adding longtime Proskauer Rose corporate partner Ori Solomon, who joins as co-chair of MoFo’s emerging companies and venture capital practice. It’s also relocating several existing partners to the office, including Michael Ward, the head of its patent practice group and co-chair of its intellectual property practice group.

In total, Morrison & Foerster’s new office, located in the Hancock Tower of the city’s Bay Back neighborhood, will be host to more than 30 lawyers in its first days in operation.

“We are a very large firm, and for us to make a commitment to a market like Boston, we had to do it right in our minds. And in our minds, right was a big splash with a lot of strong lawyers and really hit



Boston’s skyline from Seaport Boulevard bridge.

Photo: Shutterstock.com

the ground running on Day One,” said Morrison & Foerster chair Darren Nashelsky.

Leading the firm’s new office in Boston will be Riemer & Braunstein senior partner David Ephraim, who led the boutique firm’s life sciences and technology practice as well as its fund finance practice.

Also joining MoFo as partners are Charles Stavros, Beth Tunstall, David Givner, Joseph O’Donnell, Jonathan Jacobs, Alexander Rheume and Gregory Bilton.

The 23-lawyer group from Riemer & Braunstein specializes in commercial lending, particularly to the technology and life sciences industries, as well as subscription lending and leveraged finance.

“MoFo couldn’t be a better fit for us because of its technology and life science focus, as well as its multiple offices in Asia, Europe and California,” Ephraim said. “For us, it’s very complementary.”

Morrison & Foerster, which saw its gross revenue hit an all-time high last year, has a clientele that’s heavy on technology and life sciences companies.

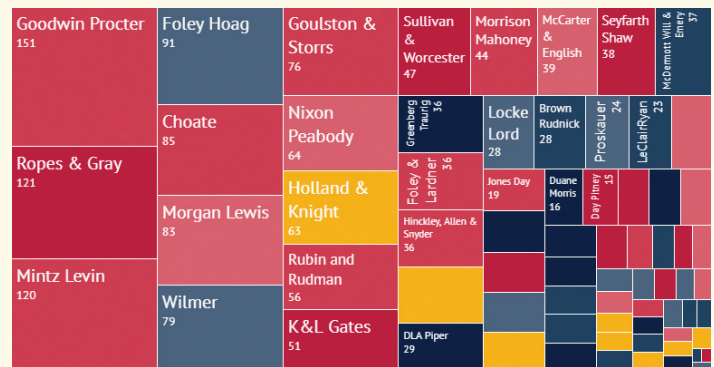
In 2017, the firm represented Uber Technologies Inc. in its fight against Alphabet Inc.’s auto unit Waymo LLC, as well as Toshiba Corp. in the \$18 billion sale of its chip business to a Bain Capital LP-led investor group. In 2018, MoFo represented Sprint Corp., which is owned by longtime client SoftBank, in its proposed \$26.5 billion merger with T-Mobile USA, Inc.

Leading the MoFo team on the deal was longtime partner Robert Townsend, who late last year was appointed SoftBank’s first-ever chief legal officer and senior vice president.

Many of the firm’s clients are based out of Massachusetts, Nashelsky said. With an office in the city, its clients now have a bench of lawyers in Boston to

Strength in Numbers: Boston

Am Law 200 Firms With the Most Partners in the Boston Metro Area



go along with the firm’s strengths in the Bay Area, Asia and elsewhere.

“It is really a great day for us, and we think that what we’ve added here is something our clients are really going to respond to,” Nashelsky said.

Over the past two years, Kirkland & Ellis, Hogan Lovells, Quinn Emanuel Urquhart & Sullivan, Womble Bond Dickinson and Arent Fox have all moved to Boston.

Since the start of 2019, Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe, Freeman Mathis & Gary and now Morrison & Foerster have added to that influx, making Boston home now to 60 Am Law 200 firms.

Meghan Tribe is a reporter covering the changing face of Big Law, from lateral moves and work-from-home programs to diversity initiatives. Contact her at mtribe@alm.com. On Twitter: @TribeMeghan