

Rising Star: Goodwin's Annie Railton

Law360, New York (August 4, 2017, 3:49 PM EDT) -- Goodwin Procter LLP's Annie Railton played key roles in the successful trial defense of a pharmaceutical executive and a former Deutsche Bank trader and spearheaded major investigations, making her one of five attorneys under age 40 honored as Law360's white collar Rising Stars.

WHAT HOOKED HER ON WHITE COLLAR WORK:

Railton didn't start out thinking she would become a lawyer, but rather a teacher like others in her family. But she said practicing law draws on similar skills.

"The ability to spend your career advising and helping people was really appealing to me," Railton said.

Railton first saw the connection when she was a new associate and assigned to work on the team that represented Jon-Paul Rorech, a trader at Deutsche Bank who the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission had accused of insider trading. The case was ultimately dismissed.

"I worked closely with our client, and I got to really see the effect that my day-to-day work was having on him and on our case. To see that play out in court where there is an individual who you represent who has so much at stake was so impactful for me that I was completely hooked," Railton said.

THE PROUDEST MOMENT OF HER PRACTICE:

Last year, Railton worked with a Goodwin team to win an acquittal for Warner Chilcott president W. Carl Reichel, who had been accused of heading up a massive scheme to pay kickbacks to doctors to prescribe the company's drugs.

"It's hard to think of a prouder moment as a white collar lawyer than

RISING
 ★★★★★★
STAR



Annie Railton
Goodwin

Age: 35

Home base: New York

Position: Partner

Law school: New York University School of Law

First job after law school: Associate at Goodwin

having a jury return an acquittal in a criminal case where your client is an individual,” Railton said. “It shapes what their life will be for the foreseeable future.”

One of Railton's key roles in the case was digging through documents to track down leads and talking to dozens of witnesses to find three people who took the stand for the defense, work she called “an exercise in diligence and persistence.”

“They were able to give this picture to the jury of who our client was and what his view of the company was, which was in stark contrast to the government’s theory,” Railton said. “I think it made a real impact.”

HER BIGGEST CHALLENGE SO FAR:

One of the biggest challenges in developing her practice early on was learning the importance of being ready to pivot quickly to take advantage of opportunities.

“Working through that and realizing that that’s part of being a white collar lawyer, being able to react and shift gears, was a challenge for me,” Railton said.

That happened at the Rorech trial. Mid-trial, the defense did an audio analysis of what the SEC considered a crucial call between Rorech and a co-conspirator and was able to cast doubt on the government's theory that Rorech had been insinuating an inside tip.

“It was something I didn’t see coming and that changed the way that we focused on the defense,” Railton said.

GOING BEYOND HER COMFORT ZONE:

The matters that have pushed Railton beyond her comfort zone are the ones she says have shaped her practice most. One of those challenges was working in-country to manage a large investigation for Swiss bank Wegelin & Co. as a third year associate. The bank faced a joint probe by the IRS, the U.S. Department of Justice and the U.S. Attorney's Office in the Southern District of New York.

That job saw her handle everything from developing document-handling procedures to preparing and helping conduct interviews to ultimately drafting sentencing submissions after Wegelin entered what was considered the first ever guilty plea by a foreign bank in a tax case. She advises other fresh attorneys to grab those kinds of chances.

“Really embrace those opportunities and embrace the fact that you are nervous about them,” Railton said. “Be OK with that, be comfortable with that. And know that if you are doing the best work that you can do, those are the opportunities where you are really going to grow.”

— *As told to Jody Godoy*

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