

Rising Star: Goodwin Procter's Blake Liggio

Law360, New York (July 17, 2017, 3:36 PM EDT) -- Goodwin Procter LLP's Blake Liggio has steered several multibillion-dollar tie-ups in his young career, including guiding real estate investment trust Monogram Residential Trust Inc. in an newly announced \$3 billion sale to a Greystar Real Estate Partners-led fund, earning him a spot as one of five mergers and acquisitions attorneys under 40 honored by Law360 as Rising Stars.

THE BIGGEST DEAL OF HIS CAREER:

Liggio has worked on a series of multibillion-dollar transactions in recent years, but his biggest may be his most recent. He is representing Monogram Residential Trust in a \$3 billion deal announced just this month to take the Texas-based REIT, which specializes in luxury apartment communities, private. The sale is to a fund led by Greystar Real Estate Partners that also includes a consortium of foreign investors, including Singapore's sovereign wealth fund GIC and Canadian real estate company Ivanhoé Cambridge.

"It is a highly structured transaction with a number of unique challenges," Liggio said of the deal, which is still pending.

WHY HE IS AN M&A ATTORNEY AND WHAT MOTIVATES HIM:

M&A work was not initially a goal for Liggio, but after joining Goodwin out of law school, he began to handle more of the work. He quickly found it to be a "perfect fit" due to the "fast pace and high-stakes" nature of deal work and how the process demands collaboration with both his colleagues and opposing counsel.

Liggio said he loves coming up with the solutions to the different tests M&A transactions provide.

RISING
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STAR



Blake Liggio
Goodwin Procter

Age: 36

Home base: Boston

Position: Partner in Goodwin's real estate industry group

Law school: Northeastern University School of Law

First job after law school: Associate at Goodwin

“Every transaction presents a new set of complexities, whether through structuring, the dynamic between the parties, the particular needs of the client and all of the various other factors involved in signing and completing a business combination transaction,” he said.

OTHER NOTABLE CASES:

Earlier this year, Liggio guided cloud-based information services provider NeuStar Inc. in a \$2.9 billion sale to an investment group led by private equity shop Golden Gate Capital and GIC, which will be the minority owner after the transaction. He also led spin-off structuring and merger closing for Citrix Systems Inc.’s spin-off of its GoToMeeting business and its subsequent \$1.8 billion sale to LogMeIn Inc. through a tax-friendly Reverse Morris Trust transaction. He represented student housing operator the Scion Group in a \$1.4 billion acquisition of University House Communities Group in a joint venture with GIC and the Canada Pension Plan Investment Board. Last year, he advised Dell Inc. and Silver Lake Partners as local counsel in the \$67 billion acquisition of EMC Corp., handling Massachusetts matters.

He also represents financial advisers to M&A transactions. Notably, he has represented Centerview Partners in at least five deals, including representing it in providing a fairness opinion to Thoratec Corp.’s board of directors on a \$3.4 billion acquisition by St. Jude Medical Inc.

In addition to his M&A work, Liggio takes pride in advocating for transgender rights and provides pro bono work on behalf of transgender individuals and the parents of transgender youths.

ADVICE FOR YOUNG ATTORNEYS:

“I would encourage young lawyers to get involved in as many assignments as possible in the initial years of practicing because that variety can really help with making decisions about which area to pursue,” Liggio said. “I think it is an advantage to be in a position to focus on one particular area of interest early in your career in order to gain deeper knowledge and skill in that area.”

--As told to Zachary Zagger.

Law360's Rising Stars are attorneys under 40 whose legal accomplishments belie their age. A team of Law360 editors selected the 2017 Rising Stars winners after reviewing more than 1,200 submissions. This interview has been edited and condensed.