

Rising Star: WilmerHale's Philip E. Beshara

By Sarah Martinson

Law360 (June 30, 2022, 2:02 PM EDT) -- Philip Beshara of WilmerHale has successfully defended multibillion-dollar defense contract awards, including engineering company Fluor Corp.'s place on an \$82 billion military logistics contract, earning him a spot among the government contract attorneys under age 40 honored by Law360 as Rising Stars.

HIS BIGGEST CASE SO FAR:

In 2019, defense contractor DynCorp International filed a second bid protest in the U.S. Court of Federal Claims challenging its exclusion from the U.S. Army's \$82 billion global logistics services support contract, which was awarded to four other companies.

Beshara successfully delivered oral arguments in court on behalf of engineering company Fluor Corp., one of the awardees of a Logistics Civil Augmentation Program V contract.

In June 2020, the claims court rejected DynCorp's challenge, finding that the Army had adequately evaluated the price reasonableness of the contract bidders' proposals in a corrective action. The Federal Circuit affirmed the lower court's ruling in August of the following year.

"Sometimes you have no more than just a few days to digest thousands of pages of materials, but distilling that information into creative arguments on behalf of our clients, like Fluor in that case, is really what I love most about my job," Beshara said.

OTHER NOTABLE WORK:

Aerospace and defense company Teledyne Brown Engineering Inc. filed a bid protest in the U.S. Government Accountability Office challenging NASA's award of a \$652 million spaceflight operations contract to competitor SGT LLC.

Beshara and his team argued on behalf of Teledyne that NASA mishandled a conflict of interest involving a personal relationship between a NASA

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**RISING
STAR**



Philip E. Beshara
WilmerHale

Age: 34

Home base: Washington, D.C.

Position: Counsel

Law school: Georgetown
University Law Center

First job after law school:
Adviser and legal fellow for U.S.
Rep. Tim Ryan, D-Ohio

employee and a senior executive who worked for SGT subcontractor Colsa Corp.

In September 2020, the GAO sided with Teledyne, ruling that NASA should reaward the contract in light of the conflict of interest.

"It actually became known as the 'foosball protest' in the press, because we discovered an improper relationship between the competitor's subcontractor and a NASA official where they were meeting and playing foosball while this major NASA procurement was conducted for the International Space Station and asteroid detection," Beshara said.

WHY HE'S A GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS ATTORNEY:

Being a government contracts attorney combines Beshara's interests in litigation and public policy, he said.

"When I was a summer associate, I saw government contracts as a way to develop my litigation skills and also still have a footprint in the public sector where there's a policy component to it as well," Beshara said.

HIS PROUDEST MOMENT AS AN ATTORNEY:

Beshara said his proudest moment as an attorney is making it to where he is now in his career.

"I'm a first-generation college graduate, so it's incredible for me to take a step back and appreciate working on multibillion-dollar programs for some of the leading defense contractors and tech companies in the world and getting to work and learn from leaders in my field like [WilmerHale partners] Andy Shipley, who wrote the book on bid protests, and Stephen Preston, who served as the top lawyer at the CIA and Pentagon," he said.

ON HOW GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS WILL CHANGE IN THE NEXT 10 YEARS:

Beshara predicts that cybersecurity will become a game changer in the government contracts space.

"I think there will be a challenge both on the government and industry side to align in a way that is meeting these new risks in cyber from our adversaries," he said.

— As told to Sarah Martinson

Law360's Rising Stars are attorneys under 40 whose legal accomplishments belie their age. A team of Law360 editors selected the 2022 Rising Stars winners after reviewing more than 1,350 submissions. Attorneys had to be under 40 as of April 30, 2022, to be eligible for this year's award. This interview has been edited and condensed.