
WilmerHale Elects Managing Partners for Three-Year Term

2010-11-22

WilmerHale announces its next generation of co-managing partners. Susan W. Murley and Robert T. Novick will serve as co-managing partners of the firm for a three-year term, commencing January 1, 2012. Over the course of the next year, Murley and Novick will work closely with WilmerHale's current co-managing partners, William F. Lee and William J. Perlstein, to ensure a seamless transition before they officially take the helm in January 2012.

"Susan and Bob have been leaders within the firm for some time and this election is a natural progression," said Lee. "They come to these new leadership positions with a very broad and real understanding of WilmerHale's practices, clients, culture and law firm economics—I am confident the firm will excel under their leadership."

Lee and Perlstein have been co-managing partners of WilmerHale since 2004, the year Wilmer Cutler Pickering LLP and Hale and Dorr LLP merged to form Wilmer Cutler Pickering Hale and Dorr LLP (WilmerHale). Each was a managing partner of his respective legacy firm—Lee at Hale and Dorr since 2000 and Perlstein at Wilmer Cutler Pickering since 1998. At the close of their term, Lee and Perlstein will devote all of their time to their respective practices at the firm. Lee, a highly sought-after IP litigation trial and appellate lawyer, will focus his attention to clients and continue to serve in various leadership capacities at Harvard University; Perlstein will spend a substantial amount of time in New York working to grow the firm's bankruptcy practice.

"This is a wonderful step forward for the firm—having dual managing partners ensures that our clients, attorneys and staff will benefit from the vision, perspective, experience and direct attention of two extremely talented leaders," said Perlstein. "Susan and Bob's collaborative management styles set a great tone for WilmerHale's future, and I look forward to serving under their guidance."

Murley is currently chair of the firm's Transactional Department—a department that is comprised of 11 practice groups with lawyers in eight offices. She graduated from the University of Virginia School of Law in 1986 and joined Hale and Dorr that same year. Susan was elevated to partner in 1994, served as chair of the firm's Corporate Department, and became chair of the Transactional Department in 2008. Murley was assistant managing partner of Hale and Dorr at the time of the merger, and has served on WilmerHale's Management Committee since that time.

Novick has served on the firm's Management Committee since 2006, and became chair of the Regulatory and Government Affairs Department in 2008. The department includes seven practice groups and lawyers in seven offices. He graduated from Washington College of Law at American University in 1983. Novick joined the firm as a partner in 2001 after four years of service as counselor and then general counsel in the Office of the US Trade Representative, Executive Office of the President, and has served as Chair of the International Trade Group since 2004. From 1983 to 1997, he was an associate and partner in a Washington DC-based firm with a practice focused on international trade and arbitration.

A great deal of WilmerHale's success has been at the hands of Lee and Perlstein. Most significantly, Lee and Perlstein were the driving force behind the merger of Hale and Dorr and Wilmer Cutler Pickering—a strategic business decision that combined more than 1,000 lawyers and 1,400 staff members across 13 offices—to form WilmerHale. Over the span of the next six years, the pair oversaw the firm's office openings in Beijing, Palo Alto, Los Angeles and Frankfurt. They have navigated WilmerHale through one of the country's worst economic crises with the vision and leadership that continue to earn the firm outstanding national business and legal recognitions. Lee and Perlstein instill a sense of community and pride throughout the firm and have built a legacy that will last for years to come.