

Latham Adds Simpson Thacher Benefits Atty In Silicon Valley

By Danielle Nichole Smith

Law360 (April 24, 2020, 5:16 PM EDT) -- Latham & Watkins LLP has bolstered its employee benefits team with the addition of a Simpson Thacher & Bartlett LLP attorney who specializes in handling executive compensation and benefits issues involved in complex corporate transactions.

Erin Murphy started at Latham's Menlo Park, California, office as a partner in the tax department and member of the benefits, compensation and employment practice on April 20, after about three and a half years at Simpson Thacher, the firm said.



Erin Murphy

Murphy told Law360 on Friday that one of the reasons she was drawn to Latham & Watkins is that the firm's benefits, compensation and employment group is "recognized as a top-tier nationwide practice."

"I feel like I'll be very lucky to be practicing with attorneys who have the depth of expertise and experience that this group has," Murphy said.

At Latham, Murphy will advise clients on executive compensation issues, primarily in the context of the firm's transactional practices both in the Bay Area and New York, while also counselling corporate clients on ongoing executive compensation matters outside of deals, she said. Though her focus will be on private equity transactions, Murphy said she expects to be involved in a variety of deals.

Murphy said that she likes the practice area because it allows her to develop expertise and advise clients from a problem-solving and solutions-based posture, rather than a litigation or oppositional one.

What makes her work interesting and challenging is working for "really dynamic and sophisticated transactional practices" like the ones at Latham, she said.

"Latham has really an integrated global platform, and it's just a leader across transactional practices," Murphy said. "That's going to give me the opportunity to work on complex and sophisticated transactions."

Murphy, who earned her law degree from Northwestern University School of Law, told Law360 that her involvement in the employee benefits field was "somewhat fortuitous."

She started her career as a first-year associate in the litigation department at Willkie Farr & Gallagher LLP, but the associate next door — a fifth-year in the executive compensation and employee benefits department at the firm — was looking for a junior associate to work with and pitched the area to her over the course of a few months.

“I ended up making the switch, and I never looked back,” Murphy said. “It was a really good fit for me.”

--Editing by Alanna Weissman.