

Rising Star: Latham's Chad Rolston

Law360, New York (July 25, 2017, 12:57 PM EDT) - Latham & Watkins LLP's Chad Rolston has successfully negotiated mergers and acquisitions with billions at stake for a broad base of major technology and semiconductor companies such as Broadcom, earning him a spot as one of five technology attorneys under age 40 honored by Law360 as Rising Stars.

WHY HE BECAME A TECHNOLOGY LAWYER:

After finishing his undergraduate degree in finance and statistics, Rolston was “thrown into the fire” of the first Internet boom, he said. He read “Coding for Dummies”-type books at night while working for an enterprise security company called Netegrity, taking after his father, who is also a Silicon Valley engineer.

“I’m a bit of nerd,” he said. “I’m a Valley native, and it’s kind of infectious here.”

Rolston always knew, however, that he wanted to go to law school. He started his career at Kirkland & Ellis LLP in San Francisco, focusing on middle-market private equity. In his fourth year there, he moved to Latham & Watkins LLP to gain broader exposure to a range of technology companies, from private digital media to mature public companies.

THE BIGGEST CASE OF HIS CAREER:

Rolston notably worked on a series of major acquisitions for semiconductor giant Broadcom Limited, formerly known as Avago Technologies.

He shepherded Avago’s \$37 billion acquisition of Broadcom,

RISING
 ★★★★★
STAR



Chad Rolston
Latham & Watkins

Age: 39

Home base: Menlo Park, Calif.

Position: Corporate partner

Law school: Harvard Law School

First job after law school:

Corporate associate at [Kirkland & Ellis LLP](#)

which was the biggest tech transaction of 2015 and the largest semiconductor acquisition ever completed, ushering in a wave of semiconductor deals thereafter. The deal structure involved a Singapore holding company formed to become the parent of Avago and Broadcom.

“We had a very complex cash election process,” he said. “We sat in a conference room and sketched out the formulas for that. It was a massive deal with lots of peculiarities.”

Rolston also worked on Broadcom’s \$5.9 billion pending acquisition of chipmaker Brocade Communications Systems Inc., Avago Technologies \$6.6 billion acquisition of another chipmaker called LSI Corporation and Avago’s \$606 million acquisition of network connectivity company Emulex Corporation.

HIS PROUDEST MOMENT AS A LAWYER:

Though Rolston has worked on high-transaction value deals, the proudest moment of his career was “definitely not something that was newsworthy in terms of dollar value,” he said. He assisted a friend of his from Netegrity in a small sale.

“I was able to provide trusted advice to someone who I have a personal relationship with,” he said. “I was proud to use my breadth of knowledge and experience for a friend to get a successful outcome for him.”

HIS ADVICE TO YOUNGER ATTORNEYS:

Rolston said attorneys fresh out of law school should focus on more than the minutia of executing deals. He recommended that attorneys build a substantive knowledge base early in their careers, which not only aids in providing advice to senior members of a firm’s internal team, but also to the client.

“The key is understanding those bigger picture items, even if you’re not directly negotiating them, to prepare yourself to step into that role as your career advances,” he added.

— *As told to Nicole Narea*

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.