

Wake Up Call: NYC Firm Helping Anti-Vax Group in Mandate Fight

May 27, 2021, 7:54 AM

In today's column, Big Law firms are diverging on whether to require fully vaccinated people to wear masks in their offices; Steptoe is offering associates market standard special bonuses; the losing litigant in Texas' first hybrid Zoom/in-person trial is appealing based on technical grounds.

- Leading off, New York City-based boutique Siri & Glimstad, managed by attorney Aaron Siri, is coordinating litigation and other legal efforts of a national movement attacking Covid vaccination mandates spearheaded by a Texas-based nonprofit, the Post reports. According to his *LinkedIn profile*, Siri earlier in his career was a senior associate for Latham & Watkins. (*WaPo*)
- With many Big Law firms announcing *plans* for office returns, firms are diverging on whether to continue to require people to wear masks in-office if they are fully vaccinated. In the wake of updated guidance issued recently by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Weil Gotshal and Husch Blackwell have said they won't require vaccinated workers to wear masks in offices, provided local rules allow for that. Meanwhile, several other firms say they are keeping mask requirements in offices for now. (*American Lawyer*)
- The appeal of a losing litigant in a 2020 hybrid jury trial in Texas argues that technical snags in the part in-person, part Zoom format prevented the litigant's counsel of choice from participating. (*Texas Lawyer*)

Lawyers, Law Firms

- Steptoe & Johnson LLP is matching the Davis Polk scale for special associate bonuses, which goes up to \$64,000 depending on class year. But to get the money, which comes in two installments, associates have to make the firm's billable hour requirement, according to a report. (*Above the Law*)
- Several Big Law firms are making Juneteenth a permanent holiday to observe June 19, 1865, the day slavery effectively ended in the U.S. (*American Lawyer*) Facing criticism for its diversity efforts, the U.K.'s Supreme Court, in collaboration with the charity Bridging the Bar, is offering its first paid internships for aspiring lawyers who come from under-represented communities. (*The Guardian*)
- AIG in-house leader *Caroline Krass*, the Biden administration's *nominee* for Defense Department general counsel, *revealed* that she has earned \$3 million at the insurance company since Jan. 1, 2020, and also expects a bonus of up to \$1 million; *Business Insider* surveyed what it describes as the top bankers, brokers, and investors transforming litigation finance "from a niche practice to a multibillion dollar corporate industry"; Hollywood Reporter released its lists of the top 100 Hollywood "power" lawyers and top music lawyers of 2020. (*Hollywood Reporter*)

Laterals, Moves, In-House

- President Biden announced his intention to nominate Georgetown University top lawyer *Lisa Brown* as general counsel at the Department of Education. She earlier worked in the Obama and Clinton administrations. Her nomination has to be confirmed by the Senate. (*Inside Higher Ed*) The NFL's Seattle *Seahawks* said *Ed Goines*, the team's vice president, general counsel & government affairs for about the last seven years, is now its chief legal officer; New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio named NYC law department lawyer *Georgia Pestana* to become its new chief lawyer, as corporation counsel. She would be the first woman and first Latina to have the job. (*NYC.gov*)
- Trial firm *McKool Smith* grabbed N.Y.-based intellectual property litigators *Steven Rizzi* and *Ramy Hanna* from King & Spalding, where they were partners. They arrive as principals; management-side worklaw firm *Littler* promoted three executives to program director within its CaseSmart and onDemand platforms; Mitchell Silberberg & Knupp elected three partners to take over as the firm's new co-chairs. (*Businesswire.com*)

Technology

- A fashion model is suing law firm Goldberg Segalla for allegedly leaking her social security number and other personal information in a data-breach case she filed against her former modeling agency. (*Reuters*)

Legal Education

- University of Miami is getting *blowback* after the school fired its popular law school dean, citing concerns over his fund-raising efforts; Kim Kardashian, reality TV star and daughter of a famous lawyer, said she failed her first try at California's so-called baby bar exam. (*CNN*)

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Law Firms

Steptoe & Johnson (DC)
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