

Rising Star: Skadden's Alec J. Jarvis

By Jaqueline McCool

Law360 (June 30, 2022, 2:02 PM EDT) -- Skadden Arps Slate Meagher & Flom LLP partner Alec Jarvis has played a lead role in counseling some of the country's prominent companies on the tax aspects of their mergers and acquisitions, earning him a spot among the tax attorneys under age 40 honored by Law360 as Rising Stars.

WHY HE'S A TAX ATTORNEY:

Jarvis said studying and practicing tax law came easily to him as he began pursuing his passions in college. As an economics major, Jarvis said he loved to think about how the economy works, and realized what a large role tax played in public policy. He said that as he got further into his studies, pursuing tax made sense for him as a more quantitative thinker.

"It just seemed like tax was kind of everywhere, and you had to understand tax to understand public finance," Jarvis said. "I just found that a lot of what I was learning kind of gelled with me."


THE BIGGEST CASE OF HIS CAREER:

Jarvis said the biggest case of his career came when he represented Fortive in a reverse mortgage trust deal. The backdrop of the case complicated things, with a cross-border element and the impending approval to the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act. Jarvis said all the moving parts made the case his most notable. Ultimately, Jarvis said he was proud they were able to use the new rules laid out by the TCJA to get the client the best possible results.

"Tax is hard enough when the rules are set, but when they're changing on you in the middle of a deal, it just makes things that much more complicated," Jarvis said. "We're juggling normally, but this was like juggling while riding a unicycle."

OTHER NOTABLE CASES:

Jarvis is currently continuing to advise Pfizer on final steps in a series of transactions after having advised on the company's \$12.7 billion



Alec J. Jarvis
Skadden

Age: 38
Home base: New York
Position: Partner
Law school: NYU School of Law
First job after law school: Associate at Skadden

joint venture with GlaxoSmithKline PLC, which successfully closed in 2019. Jarvis drew parallels between the Fortive case he worked on and the Pfizer case.

He said, "A lot of what I was describing about the Fortive transaction is true here. A lot of what we've been doing has been dealing with the local tax considerations."

Jarvis has also notably worked as tax counsel to independent energy company Southwestern Energy and advised Las Vegas Sands Corp. on the tax aspects of a series of real property sales.

HIS PROUDEST MOMENT AS AN ATTORNEY:

His proudest moment wasn't a specific case, or a big win. Instead, Jarvis said the proudest moments of his career have been when people come to him for advice that isn't just about tax. He said that cultivating mentorship has always been important to him. He said one of the most pertinent examples of this was when an associate came to him to say she was thinking about pursuing a different career opportunity. Jarvis said he was happy she felt she could come to him and get unbiased advice, and although she ultimately chose to leave her position, he felt he gave her the best advice possible.

"I want people to think of me as someone who's going to give you the unbiased, unvarnished truth, even if it's not necessarily what's best for me in the short term," Jarvis said.

ON THE FUTURE OF THE PRACTICE:

The end of the conglomerate boom is what Jarvis foresees as a continuing pattern in his practice. He said the trend away from conglomerates will likely continue for a while as a way for businesses to unlock shareholder value.

"For now it seems like where we were having this conglomerate boom, [it] seems to have turned to the reversal of that," Jarvis said.

— *As told to Jaqueline McCool*

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.