

## New York Law Journal



### DISTINGUISHED LEADER: Sven G. Mickisch



**Sven G. Mickisch of Skadden.**

**W**hat are some of your proudest recent achievements? I am proud of the financial services team we have built at Skadden and the incredible results we have been able to achieve for our clients.

The team is as strong as it has ever been—due in part to the additions of Bao Nguyen from the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency (OCC)/ Federal Reserve and Alessio Evangelista from the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCen). Plus, our internal pipeline of star performers, such

as Matt Nemeroff, who was recently elevated to partner, Tim Gaffney who is recognized by clients and the legal media as a rising star in banking, and Makala Kaupalolo, who is an incredibly talented senior associate. The combination of attracting seasoned regulators and advancing homegrown talent has made this team what it is today, and we are incredibly well positioned for the future.

# DISTINGUISHED LEADER

The list of our client results—which, to me, is the defining factor of how good a team we have built—is too long to detail. I will cite just two examples of work that has been very gratifying: we were able to help Jeff Leerink and his team at SVB Securities, in a difficult situation relating to the collapse of SVB Financial, rescue his business from the wreckage; and we ultimately were able to close the Flagstar/NYCB merger following a complicated and drawn out regulatory process. Both matters demonstrate the strength of our ability to navigate complex situations and achieve the desired solution for our clients.

**Name a lawyer or mentor whose leadership inspired you.** There have been many mentors and sponsors who inspired me and made an enormous difference in my career so far. I will mention four who stood out: Bill Rubenstein and Bill Sweet, who led the financial institutions group when I was an up-and-coming lawyer, for their commitment to my development and molding me into the lawyer I am today; Peter Atkins, who is a senior statesman in the legal field and in many ways shaped Skadden into the institution it is today, for showing me what it means to think ahead and anticipate client service solutions; and

Eric Friedman, the outgoing executive partner of Skadden, for spotting me early on and giving me the opportunities to develop in leadership roles at the firm.

**How are the business and profession of law changing, and how should lawyers adapt for the future?** It is an extremely competitive and dynamic marketplace for elite law firm advice and if you are not getting ahead of the competition, you are already behind. Complacency and thinking that what has worked in past will work in the future is still too prevalent in the legal world. And the technological change that is coming to law with the advent of usable AI will make that even more true in years to come.

**What is the best advice for someone considering a career in law, or someone already in the profession who is seeking to make a greater impact?** The practice of law is a rewarding profession and attracts some of the brightest minds. If you want to be challenged and grow as a person, law is a great profession to choose. Keep an open mind, take on challenging assignments and go out of your comfort zone to continue growing in your career.