

Sustainable Success

An Interview with
George Stamboulidis, Partner, Baker & Hostetler LLP

EDITORS' NOTE *A seasoned litigator, George Stamboulidis has tried dozens of complex federal jury trials as prosecutor and as defense attorney. Recognized for his experience in the areas of white collar crime and business defense, he is regularly engaged by corporations, directors, and officers to advise and defend in complex federal grand jury and regulatory investigations. He is trusted for his integrity and sound judgment in corporate monitorship positions and has been appointed a federal monitor an unprecedented four times by the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ). Stamboulidis is Co-Leader of BakerHostetler's national White Collar Defense and Corporate Investigations practice. He is a nationally recognized lecturer on corporate criminal liability and the use of proactive defense tactics and has conducted a continuing legal education program for members of the New York External Bank Fraud Committee, and annually lectures on financial responsibility and financial fraud prevention at the Major League Baseball Rookie Career Development Program.*



George Stamboulidis

FIRM BRIEF *One of the nation's largest law firms, Baker & Hostetler LLP (bakerlaw.com; BakerHostetler) helps clients throughout the world to address their most complex and critical business and regulatory issues. With five core national practice groups – business, employment, intellectual property, litigation, and tax – the firm has more than 900 lawyers located in 14 offices in the U.S. BakerHostetler is recognized for its role as court-appointed counsel to the Securities Investor Protection Act (SIPA) Trustee in the recovery of billions of dollars in principal lost in the Ponzi scheme perpetrated by Bernard L. Madoff. Additionally, BakerHostetler is widely regarded as having one of the country's top 10 tax practices, a nationally recognized litigation practice, data privacy practice, and an industry-leading middle market business practice.*

Would you touch on the history of the firm and where it stands today?

BakerHostetler was founded in 1916 by Newton Baker, who was then tapped to serve as Secretary of War under President Woodrow Wilson. Our firm has long been recognized for its unwavering commitment to understanding and meeting client needs. We help our clients compete, grow, and protect their businesses in today's highly complex global business and regulatory environment. We are not just lawyers but advisors and partners to our clients.

Many of our clients are familiar names – Caterpillar, Colgate-Palmolive, Ford Motor Company, Progressive Insurance, The E. W. Scripps Company, and Siemens. Our clients are diverse and include nearly half the FORTUNE 25, as well as such iconic institutions as Major League Baseball. Some of our client relationships span 60, 70, 80-plus years.

Today, we have more than 900 attorneys in 14 offices across the U.S. working out of five core practice groups: Litigation, Business, Employment, Intellectual Property (IP), and Tax. Within these groups are many deep-bench practices, including antitrust, bankruptcy, healthcare, energy, class action, e-Discovery, middle market M&A, complex commercial litigation, privacy and data protection, patent prosecution and trademark protection, international tax, white collar, securities, real estate, and corporate investigations. Our attorneys have broad knowledge and experience in many industries, including energy, media, manufacturing, healthcare, financial services and insurance, consumer products, and hospitality.

In January, we merged with premier IP boutique Woodcock Washburn, which doubled the size of BakerHostetler's already substantial IP practice to 140 attorneys, and we entered three new markets – Atlanta, Philadelphia, and Seattle. This combination greatly enhanced our ability to help clients maximize the value of their intellectual property through high-level counsel, including patent prosecution, litigation, and IP transactions, particularly for technology companies, and patent-rich universities and research institutions.

As court-appointed counsel to Securities Investor Protection Act (SIPA) Trustee Irving H. Picard, BakerHostetler has been working since December 2008 to unravel, deconstruct, and litigate one of the largest and most complex financial frauds in U.S. history – Bernie Madoff's decades-long Ponzi scheme. The firm's selection as the leader of this global investigation and its ongoing litigation was based on its attorneys and their diverse experience in complex business litigation, bankruptcy law, white-collar criminal investigation, securities litigation, e-discovery, and corporate finance. This recovery far exceeds any prior restitution effort related to Ponzi schemes both in terms of dollar value and percentage of stolen funds recovered.

What key markets are you focused on?

We've had significant growth and expansion in New York, D.C., Houston, and Los Angeles, as well as a number of our other offices. We were

recognized as the fastest growing law firm in Washington, D.C. in 2013 by *Legal Times* and as the largest non-Texas based law firm in Houston by the *Houston Chronicle*.

We opened the New York office with three litigators in July 2001 and, through very talented and diverse lateral growth, we quickly expanded the office to its current size of almost 160 attorneys specializing in a variety of practice areas, including corporate transactional work, complex financial litigation, bankruptcy, white collar and securities, data breach and privacy, IP, IT, labor and employment, real estate, and tax, among others. All of this remarkable growth was achieved by adding lateral attorneys in small numbers as opposed to adding larger groups or mergers with other firms. While such targeted and precise growth is more time-consuming and costly, it has proven beneficial to the firm's clients due to our resulting culture and high attorney retention rates.

What is the role of community engagement for the firm?

Our attorneys and staff are civic-minded, and enjoy making a difference in the communities where we live and work. This is a founding principle of our firm. Soon after founding our law firm, Newton Baker was called by President Wilson to serve as Secretary of War. His public service mentality is a tradition that is alive and well in the firm today. Each office is deeply involved in its community, from supporting organizations focused on healthcare and education to those combatting domestic violence. In New York, our attorneys are very active in a number of civic-minded organizations, including the Legal Aid Society, Her Justice (formerly known as InMotion), the Citizen's Crime Commission, the Citizen's Budget Commission, the National Kidney Foundation, the ABA, and local bar associations. In addition to supporting them financially and with their time, our attorneys and staff work pro bono to help clients in need through many organizations.

What is your role in leading the New York practice?

Lawyers, especially the ones here at Baker, are naturally goal-oriented and driven to provide excellence for our clients. A big part of my role is to focus that talent in a way that our services are fully integrated for our clients. It's not enough to solve today's problems – as a leader you also have to keep a watchful eye on the challenges still on the horizon.

Like an architect, law firm leadership starts with a vision for the future. The long-term success of any organization is rarely random. True, sustainable success is built on a foundation of planning and careful preparation. ●