

2011 LAW FIRM

RAINMAKERS

BY PATRICK FOLLIARD

IN THE FOLLOWING PAGES, THIS YEAR'S ESPECIALLY DIVERSE SWATH OF 16 PARTNERS AND PRINCIPALS FROM ACROSS THE COUNTRY SHARE THEIR TAKE ON WHAT MAKES A RAINMAKER. THERE IS NO FOOL-PROOF BLUEPRINT TO GENERATING BEAUCOUP BUSINESS, ONE ATTORNEY ATTESTS. IT DEPENDS ON PERSONALITY AND COMPETENCY. WHATEVER THE APPROACH, HE ADDS, PERSISTENCE IS ESSENTIAL.

SELECTED FROM A POOL OF NOMINEES SUGGESTED BY LEADING FIRMS NATIONWIDE, EACH ATTORNEY MAINTAINS A BOOK OF BUSINESS OF \$2 MILLION OR MORE A YEAR. WHILE MOST INTERVIEWED HAVE NOTED THE CHANGING ECONOMY, ALL HAVE FOUND WAYS TO MAKE IT WORK. WHATEVER THE ATMOSPHERE, THEY AGREE: RAINMAKING REMAINS THE BEDROCK OF PRIVATE PRACTICE.



Partner, Kirkland &
Ellis LLP
New York, NY

Years
Practicing:
20
Area of Practice:
Private Equity

EUNU CHUN

“We’re not a lockstep compensation firm,” says Eunu Chun. “You can make a good living without bringing in a lot of business, but if you want to achieve an off-market level of personal income you can make more if you bring in more. I’ve lost more pitches than you can imagine, but if you get a five to 10 percent yield rate you’re doing great.”

When Chun joined Kirkland as the global firm’s first-ever direct-from-law-school associate, he was very conscious that he was a guy from a non-establishment background going into an establishment place, so he spent a lot of time watching and learning. “Looking back, those years are a blur. I was working way too hard. Eventually, I figured out how to get ahead and found my voice.

“Private equity is run by young people, and early on I had the opportunity to play the principal role in transactions and was working directly with clients. Soon I had my first client. Once tagged as a billing partner I could go out and get more work. Within a few years I was doing all my own work.” Today he represents a handful of private equity funds in leveraged buyout transactions.

The son of Korean immigrants, Chun grew up in Chicago’s predominantly white northern suburbs where he excelled academically but always felt a little out of place. During his undergraduate experience at Harvard, and even more so at Columbia Law School, he says, the world really opened up. “In diverse New York City, my confidence soared. People’s first impression of me was no longer driven by my ethnicity which had been the case in high school. The shackles were off, and I realized that I could achieve bigger success than I’d previously imagined.”