



2019 RISING STAR

Robert Blaustein

Robert Blaustein of Kirkland & Ellis LLP has helped steer private equity firm Warburg Pincus through multiple billion-dollar transactions, including a \$13 billion global fund and the \$1.2 billion sale of Warburg's portfolio of Asian assets, earning him a spot among the fund formation attorneys under age 40 honored by *Law360* as Rising Stars.

The biggest deal of his career:

One blockbuster fund Blaustein worked on was Warburg Pincus XII LP, a \$13.4 billion private equity fund that closed in late 2015. The process required coordination across offices in New York, Europe, Hong Kong and the U.S. west coast, and was at that point one of the biggest funds Kirkland had ever worked on, Blaustein said. Blaustein helped supervise much of this effort, participating on calls and updates and ensuring that potential investors had their needs met.

"It was a tremendous opportunity and scope of work," Blaustein said. "It was a multi-month effort of coordination and working across time zones and making sure everything stayed coordinated. But it was an

oversubscribed fund and a really great result for the client."

That engagement also helped solidify Warburg's relationship with Kirkland, he said. Blaustein has since acted as a lead partner in numerous Warburg fundraises, including a recent \$4.25 billion China and Southeast Asia-focused fund that was the successor to a \$2.2 billion China-focused fund that closed in 2016.

Why he's a deals lawyer:

Blaustein said he enjoys working with a range of decision makers on each deal and navigating an ever-evolving field.

On most deals, Blaustein said he'll work with deal professionals, CEOs, head legal functions, finance professionals and investor reporting teams, among others.

"You get such an amazing feel for the full organization," he said. "You really

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get a high-level perspective about the different aspects of your clients and really understand the business. It really enables you to be a great adviser.”

And the field itself has been changing in recent years, with clients growing increasingly creative with deal structures and investments, he said.

“Over the last couple of years, [the field] has been evolving so rapidly in terms of how creative people are being, how many different ways there are to put money to work and how many different ways there are to invest,” Blaustein said. “It’s been so dynamic.”

How he sees the field changing in the next 10 years:

The field will likely continue to grow more complex, Blaustein said, and technology will also affect the practice of law.

“I think [one change will be] adopting technologies to make the practice more efficient and to really focus on where as a law firm you’re able to drive guidance and drive value for your clients and continue to

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deliver on what they’re paying for,” Blaustein said.

And as deal structures and client needs continue to evolve, insightful guidance will only become more important, he said.

“There’s going to be a premium placed on being able to give really good, really high-level commercial advice, and I think that’s going to continue to evolve as businesses get more complex,” he said.

What motivates him:

Blaustein said he enjoys deals work and is continuously striving to improve his practice.

“At this point, I have 10-plus years of experience in the industry ... but I’m also still very clearly at a point in my career where I’m learning and I’m hungry and I’m looking to get better,” he said.

“There’s so much going on that’s cutting-edge, where things are changing so quickly,” he said. “It’s formed a really good sweet spot where I’ve broadened my practice, rather than just focusing on a few core competencies. It’s been a really good opportunity,” Blaustein said.

“But mostly, I just like the work. I like my clients,” he said. “I like trying to be good at it and keep getting better.”

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