



# 10 Rising Stars of Private Equity and M&A Law

By Mark Malyszko

**I**nstitutional Investor News has identified 10 individuals we expect to shape the private equity and M&A legal field in the years to come, profiling each in our inaugural edition of *10 Rising Stars of Private Equity and M&A Law*. The cream of the crop, these individuals are ready to lead the way forward in a demanding and increasingly complex segment of the financial services industry.

Nominees were submitted by investment banking, finance and legal professionals throughout the business world and were vetted and selected by our business publishing staff. Culled from top law firms around the globe, the selected individuals have demonstrated through their diligence, expertise and dedication that they are the legal dealmakers of the future.

The winning nominees come from a variety of legal backgrounds and represent clients in a host of industries, including biotechnology, energy, financial services, gaming, healthcare and information technology. Drawing upon their legal experience in the U.S. and Europe, they have led international and cross-border transactions in both emerging and established markets around the globe.

Looking forward, our winning nominees overwhelming-

ly said private equity will evolve over the next decade to become less reliant on leveraged buyouts and that—in the wake of a policy change by the Federal Reserve Board—will have opportunities to grow in the banking sector. Overall, they believe that the industry is strong and will continue to be a force in financial and corporate transactions.

Other noteworthy points about our Rising Stars:

- All are partners at their respective law firms;
- Beyond basic law degrees, 30% have an LL.M., including one who has an LL.B. from South Africa;
- 10% are private equity fund formation specialists, in addition to being private equity M&A lawyers;
- 40% work in New York City and 10% in Washington, D.C.;
- Their average age is 39 (the youngest being 35 and the eldest being 44).

Selecting the 10 Rising Stars was a difficult task, as many outstanding individuals were nominated. We would like to thank the nominees and those who nominated them for making this list possible, and we look forward to charting the professional progress of our Rising Stars in the years to come.



### GEORGE NEMPHOS

Managing Partner

Duane Morris, Baltimore

Age: 39

**Education:** Georgetown University Law Center (LL.M. in Taxation); University of Baltimore School of Law (J.D.); Boston University (B.S. in Journalism/Communications)

**Mentor:** Wilburt Sirota, Chair, Baltimore Office, Duane Morris

Nemphos joined Duane Morris in 2006 and aided in the establishment of the firm's Baltimore office that year, a feat he called his greatest accomplishment. As managing partner, he counsels private equity and venture funds on formation issues, as well as their subsequent target acquisitions, and provides general merger and acquisition services to their portfolios. He has handled transactions within numerous industries, with particular experience in the telecommunications, fiber-optic and wireless technology, industrial services, restaurant and healthcare sectors.

Recently, Nemphos led a team of lawyers representing industrial services company Atlantic Industrial in its \$257 million acquisition by The Brock Group, a specialty contractor. He negotiated all aspects of the transaction, which involved considerations inherent to the sale of a portfolio company of one private equity entity to another, as well as Atlantic's status as a double-breasted company. He also represented Yorkshire Global Restaurant Corp., as well as its subsidiaries Long John Silver's Restaurants and A&W Restaurants, in their sale to Yum! Brands for about \$300 million.

Prior to Duane Morris, Nemphos spent some 10 years at what is now the law firm of DLA Piper. In 1996, he joined Baltimore-based Piper & Marbury as an associate and, following its merger with Chicago-based Rudnick & Wolfe in 1999, became a partner in 2002. Prior to that, he was a deputy general counsel at a technology company called ThermoChem Inc., where he began his legal career.

Nemphos said challenges no doubt lie ahead for private equity and M&A, but he stressed that the success of a transaction lies with the deal itself. "Good deals will always get done," he said, adding that going forward there is likely to be more due diligence and digging by the players involved in any deal.