

Latham Snags Longtime SEC Corporate Finance Leader for National Office

As an SEC associate director, Michele Anderson oversaw the Office of Mergers and Acquisitions as well as the Office of International Corporate Finance and the Office of Structured Finance.

BY BRUCE LOVE

What You Need to Know

- Michele Anderson will join Latham & Watkins' National Office in mid-October.
- Latham's National Office markets itself as a central resource for complex U.S. securities law questions.
- Anderson spent almost 25 years at the SEC—the last seven as an associate director of the Office of Corporation Finance.

A 25-year veteran of the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission has left public service to join Latham & Watkins' securities-law focused National Office.

Michele Anderson arrived at the SEC in 1998. Since then, she has been a stalwart of the Division of Corporation Finance and has led many of the agency's rulemaking initiatives in the space.

Anderson will join Latham's Washington office in mid-October as a partner in the firm's National Office—a service billed as a central resource for complex U.S. securities law questions and a provider of “clear, pragmatic, and

action-oriented” U.S. securities law advice.

Anderson is the latest addition to the National Office, which was founded in 2010, is co-chaired by Alex Cohen and

Joel Trotter, and taps the expertise of more than 30 Latham partners.

“We generally describe part of our function as air traffic control,” said Cohen, explaining that the National Office “takes the time” to understand “tricky” SEC problems for clients and ensures that issues flow to the “right people” in Latham's large bench of securities, M&A and corporate lawyers.

Cohen was the SEC's deputy GC and deputy chief of staff when the agency was responding to the 2008 financial crisis. Trotter had a leadership role on the watchdog's IPO Task Force



Michele Anderson of Latham & Watkins.

Courtesy photo

and was a principal author of the IPO-related provisions of the JOBS Act of 2012.

“A lot of what we do is in the vein of pattern recognition, in terms of seeing emerging trends from the SEC and from what Latham’s lawyers are seeing,” said Trotter. “We frequently have disclosure questions that come out of litigation scenarios, or we have transactional scenarios that touch on areas of enforcement. We’re constantly interfacing with the broader [Latham] team and involving a very interdisciplinary group of SEC lawyers.”

When looking for a place to start her private practice career, Anderson said Latham’s National Office was a big lure.

“There are other firms that try to say that they do something similar, but I am absolutely convinced—after meeting people across the firm—that their culture of collegiality, and their team-first approach to getting work done for their clients supports this kind of thing. They value it, clients value it, and I’m just so excited to be a part of it,” she said.

Anderson had served at the SEC for the entirety of her legal career so far, joining right after graduating from law school in 1997, and working her way up to the upper echelon at the securities watchdog. From 1998 to 2001, Anderson was an attorney-

adviser in the agency’s Division of Corporation Finance. For the next three years she served as special counsel in the Office of Mergers and Acquisitions (OM&A), becoming the legal branch chief of Corporation Finance in 2004. In 2008, Anderson returned to the office of M&A as chief, reaching associate director level in 2015, where she has remained for the past seven years.

As a Corp Fin associate director, Anderson oversaw OM&A as well as the Office of International Corporate Finance and the Office of Structured Finance.

Anderson also directed the rulemaking initiatives in the division, as well as no-action, interpretive, and exemptive positions on domestic and cross-border M&A transactions, federal proxy rules, and the registration, disclosure and reporting requirements that apply to foreign issuers and issuers of asset-backed securities.

“I knew that I could really leverage my knowledge and all my specialized experience from the SEC at Latham—in part because of its dedicated National Office, but just as well the fact that it has a top tier M&A practice and a top tier capital markets practice,” said Anderson. “I can’t think of a better fit for my set of skills.”