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New England Legal Awards 2025

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MERGER AND ACQUISITION ATTORNEY OF THE YEAR FINALIST

Kristen Grannis, Latham & Watkins

Courtesy photo

Kristen Smith Grannis of Latham & Watkins.

Kristen Grannis, partner with Latham & Watkins, is among the finalists for the New England Legal Awards' Merger and Acquisition Attorney of the Year Award. Read a Q&A with her below.

What qualities are fundamental to becoming a successful M&A attorney?

Many of the qualities that are most important to succeeding in M&A are the same as they would be for any kind of legal work: client focus, partnership, teamwork, collaboration. It's not a coincidence that those are values that we emphasize across all of our work at Latham. I'd add too that communication is crucial—not just with our clients but with stakeholders on all sides of a deal. It's our job to understand and digest what is most important to everyone who is sitting around the table, then give our clients the full panorama of what's possible and use our know-how and creativity to reach the best outcome.

What accomplishments are you most proud of from the past year?

The day-to-day successes are meaningful, of course, and I love what I do in part because I see firsthand the ways our work can help shape a more prosperous future for this city. But I'm most proud of my contributions to the culture we've inculcated throughout our Boston office. It's a truly collaborative, cooperative place to work, which in turn is reflected in the top-level service we provide our clients. Part of the culture at work has been working with young associates, helping them visualize the future they want for themselves in this industry and showing them a path for how to get there. To that effect, I'm especially proud of my efforts to support younger colleagues who might not have been able to see themselves in the sometimes rough and tumble M&A space, just as a whole generation of pioneering lawyers supported me. It's not easy to get here, so building those relationships is very important to me.

How do you see M&A law changing in the coming years?

It's hard to anticipate precisely what the future holds, especially given geopolitical uncertainty and the pace of technological change. I think that's part of why there has been a real consolidation among law firms that are able to do this kind of sophisticated M&A. Clients increasingly seek out firms, like Latham, that offer a one-stop shop for a business' legal needs across its entire life cycle, that know how to bring together the right team of industry and market specialists. Those are the firms that have the collective institutional knowledge to be on top of whatever kind of change comes down the road. Hand-in-hand with that is being able to guide clients through interactions with a whole host of new financing sources, which are proliferating at a rapid rate.