



SOUTHPORT HARBOR

Dear Clients & Friends,

We have prepared this annual update to share firm news and inform you about legal developments, many of which relate to today's news headlines. The issue covers topics ranging from changes to Connecticut and Federal tax laws to how small businesses and start-ups can effectively address sexual harassment. We also proudly highlight a significant number of firm initiatives and accomplishments.

In closing, we hope the content of this update is useful to you and reflects the unique and complementary experience and skills our attorneys provide to clients. We are thankful for the confidence and trust you place in us, year after year, and it is our pleasure to be of assistance.

Kind Regards,

Brody Wilkinson PC

Major Increases In Gift & Estate Tax Exemptions Take Effect In 2018

THERE HAVE BEEN MAJOR CHANGES in the Connecticut and federal gift and estate tax exemptions due to recent legislation. The Connecticut estate and gift tax exemption, which had been \$2,000,000 for many years, will increase to \$2,600,000 in 2018, to \$3,600,000 in 2019, and starting in 2020 will match the federal exemption. The exemption would be double for a married couple. In addition, the maximum combined gift and estate tax has been reduced from \$20,000,000 to \$15,000,000 effective 2019 (the tax due on an estate of around \$129,000,000 in 2019). The tax rate for gifts and estates exceeding the exemption is 10-12%. (Note that Connecticut did not anticipate the increase in the federal exemption and did not cap the exemption. Under a proposed bill by Governor Malloy, the Connecticut exemption would increase each year and match the federal exemption starting in 2023. We will keep you apprised of any passed legislation on our website.)

Under the recently passed federal Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, for years 2018 through 2025, the federal estate, gift and generation skipping tax (GST) exemptions will increase to approximately \$11,200,000 (indexed for inflation each year after 2018 through 2025). The exemption would be double for a married couple. However, the federal legislation is set to sunset on December 31, 2025 (which would then reduce the exemption to approximately \$5,600,000 per person indexed for inflation unless further legislation was passed). There have been no changes to the basis step-up rules so assets owned at death will still receive a step-up (or step-down if applicable) in basis to date of death value for income tax purposes. The tax rate for estates exceeding the exemption (which do not pass to surviving spouse or charity) remains at 40%.

While not part of the Act, the annual exclusion from gift tax will increase from \$14,000 to \$15,000 in 2018 (an individual may give this amount to each beneficiary without using any exemption). The amount a spouse can give to his or her non-US citizen spouse each year will increase from \$149,000 to \$152,000 in 2018.

In order for a married couple to take advantage of the federal estate tax exemption, it does not matter which spouse owns the property. Because an individual's exemption is "portable" at death for federal estate tax purposes, a spouse with no assets can pass his or her exemption to the surviving spouse (who would then have an exemption of \$22,400,000) simply by filing a timely federal estate tax return. Note that there are some limitations to portability of exemption where the surviving spouse remarries. In addition, since the GST exemption is not portable, the GST exemption would be wasted on the first spouse's death if all assets passed outright to the surviving spouse. For larger estates, use of trusts to shelter appreciation or make use of the GST exemption may still make sense.

There is no portability of the exemption for Connecticut estate tax purposes. In order to take advantage of the Connecticut estate tax exemption, the decedent spouse needs to have assets in his or her name which pass to a "credit shelter trust" for the surviving spouse (or outright or in trust for another beneficiary). If the assets simply pass outright to the surviving spouse, the exemption is wasted. Likewise, if one spouse has all the assets, but the spouse with no assets dies first, then the first spouse's exemption is wasted. Thus, ideally the couple's assets will be equally divided or at least divided so that each can fully take advantage of the exemption available.

Note that the increase in the Connecticut exemption puts us in a competitive position with nearby states. New Jersey recently repealed its estate tax (though has an inheritance tax for assets passing to unrelated people or distant relatives). New York has a current exemption of \$5,250,000. However, if the New York estate slightly exceeds the exemption, the exemption is completely wasted and the entire estate will be taxed at rates up to 16%. Massachusetts still has an estate tax exemption of \$1,000,000 with tax rates up to 16%. There is no portability of the state estate tax exemption in New York or Massachusetts. None of these states imposes a gift tax (though New York will include in the estate gifts made within three years of death for those dying before 2019).

Many of you have used your Connecticut and/or federal gift tax exemption (along with annual exclusion gifts) by making gifts to a trust for the benefit of your spouse and descendants (known as a "SLAT" or Spousal Lifetime Access Trust) or to other types of trusts. With the exemptions increasing, you may wish to gift more assets in the coming years to family members or to trusts which you have already created. This will shelter future appreciation in those assets from estate tax at your death. In addition, if a trust is set up as a "grantor trust," your retention of the obligation to pay income tax on the trust's taxable income is an additional benefit

to the trust which is not considered a taxable gift. Keep in mind that assets which are gifted will not receive a step-up in basis at death. However, as the donor, you may retain the ability to swap low basis assets in the trust for cash of equivalent value. Because the increase in the federal exemption may not last due to the sunset provisions or political developments, it may make sense to take advantage of gift planning now.

Some of you may wish to change your estate plans as a result of the increased exemptions:

- If your plan leaves the full Connecticut exemption amount to your children (which used to mean \$2 million) and the balance to your spouse, you may wish to cap that amount to a certain dollar or percent of your estate and leave the balance of the Connecticut exemption to a trust for your spouse.
- If your plan provides that on the death of both spouses you leave the GST exemption amount (which meant \$11.2 million before the new tax bill, but now means \$22.4 million for a married couple) to lifetime trusts for children and the balance outright to your children, you may wish to cap the amount going in trust for the children in order to leave more assets outright to the children, though taking full advantage of the GST exemption may be preferable especially if the child has significant assets.
- For married clients who have under \$5 million, you may wish to change your plan to leave your assets outright to the other if the only reason you created a trust was for potential Connecticut estate tax savings. Another option is to leave assets outright to your spouse but include a "disclaimer trust" which gives the surviving spouse until nine months after the first spouse's death to decide whether to put assets in trust. Keep in mind that a trust has other benefits such as protecting assets for the children in case the spouse remarries; asset protection against potential creditors; management for a spouse who needs help handling money; and protection from someone taking advantage of an elderly person.

We would be happy to assist you if you wish to engage us to make changes to your estate plan or to review your plan to see if it makes sense for you in light of the new tax law changes. *For more information, please contact Lisa F. Metz (lmetz@brodywilk.com).*

How Small Businesses & Start-Ups Can Effectively Manage Sexual Harassment In The Workplace

SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN THE WORKPLACE

has risen to the forefront of employment issues in recent months amid allegations of misconduct in the sports and entertainment industries, news media and the political arena. For employers, there are lessons to be learned and changes to be made. Small businesses and start-ups in particular face challenges in addressing

prevention and problems without the benefit of a human resources or legal department. The following are tips to help avoid, and if necessary deal, with sexual harassment incidents in the workplace:

Review or Create a Policy

A personnel policy should define sexual harassment, provide examples of offending behavior and establish disciplinary actions for violations of the policy. The policy should provide a detailed procedure for victims or witnesses of sexual harassment to report the offending conduct to designated management in a confidential manner. A clear policy will help govern employee behavior and provide the employer with the necessary documentation to handle an adverse employment action or defend against resulting litigation. If an employer has not adopted a policy it should consider doing so, but at the very least ensure that it has posted the state-issued notice regarding sexual harassment.

Conduct Training

The best way to handle a sexual harassment claim is, obviously, to avoid one in the first place by creating a zero-tolerance culture. To that end, bringing in a third party to conduct training is a worthwhile investment. Not only will a training program educate employees, but it will also demonstrate that the employer takes the issue seriously. Moreover, in Connecticut, employers with fifty (50) or more employees are legally required to provide training for all supervisory employees within six (6) months of assuming their new roles. Those to whom complaints of harassment are reported should have additional training.

Investigate Carefully

If a sexual harassment claim is reported, how the employer handles the complaint is of paramount importance. The employer must keep three major considerations in mind: (1) how to discover relevant facts; (2) how to resolve the complaint; and (3) how to handle the investigation properly to avoid the risk of a claim being made against the employer.

In any investigation, employers must avoid jumping to conclusions or taking hasty employment actions, including terminating the employment of the accused. Instead, with the assistance of counsel, an investigative strategy should be outlined covering key components such as who will perform the investigation; how to maintain confidentiality throughout the investigation; how to maintain records of the investigation; and whether any employees should be placed on leave pending the results of the investigation. Notwithstanding the outcome of the investigation, it is vital that both the complainant and the accused feel that they were heard and treated fairly. *For more information, please contact Daniel B. Fitzgerald (dfitzgerald@brodywilk.com).*

Tax Reform For Pass-Through Businesses May Lead To Business Reorganizations

THE TAX CUTS AND JOBS ACT PASSED IN DECEMBER 2017 includes provisions impacting the taxation of pass-through businesses. A pass-through

business is one in which the taxable income or loss is passed through to the business owners (not taxed to the entity) and the business owners then report the taxable income or loss as income on their personal individual tax return. Pass-through businesses are often structured as LLCs, S Corporations or sole proprietorships.

Under the new tax law, owners of pass-through businesses will be able to take a 20% deduction on their individual tax return, subject to limitations.

Here is how the deduction is calculated:

- 20% of an individual's "qualified business income" (net income from the business, excluding reasonable compensation and guaranteed payment for services) can be deducted if the taxpayer's individual income is less than a threshold amount of \$157,500 for single taxpayers or \$315,000 for taxpayers married and filing jointly (subject to inflation).
- If the taxpayer is in a specified service trade or business and the taxpayer's income exceeds the threshold amount plus \$50,000 (for single taxpayers) or \$100,000 (for married filing jointly taxpayers), then the taxpayer cannot take the deduction. Specified service trades or businesses include, but are not limited to, businesses providing health, legal, financial, brokerage and consulting services.
- In the case of a pass-through business which is not a specified service trade or business, if the taxpayer's individual income is greater than the threshold amount, then the amount that can be deducted "phases in" (meaning that the amount that can be deducted decreases as the taxpayer's income increases). The phase-in formula used to determine the amount of the deduction takes into account, among other factors, the business's W-2 wages, the taxpayer's net taxable income and the unadjusted basis of capital owned by the business. The formula is especially advantageous for pass-through entities with large amounts of wages and capital investments because these factors increase the amount of the deduction. The deduction cannot exceed the greater of 50% of the taxpayer's W-2 wages from the business, or in the alternative, 25% of the taxpayer's W-2 wages plus 2.5% of the taxpayer's share in the unadjusted basis of capital owned by the business.

In the past, pass-through businesses were considered to be more tax efficient than C Corporations. This is because C Corporations are taxed at two levels: the Corporation itself pays tax as a business and then the shareholders pay individual taxes on dividends (at 15% or 20% depending on the tax bracket, plus 3.8% medicare tax) from the business or a shareholder-employee might receive wages taxed at ordinary rates (this is sometimes referred to as the "double tax").

The question of whether it is preferential for a taxpayer to structure a business as a pass-through entity or a C Corporation will now require careful analysis of the tax consequences under the new tax law. Under the new tax law, the highest individual tax rate is 37%. Contrast this with the new tax rate of 21% for corporations. The tax consequences of being taxed once as a pass-through

entity at an individual tax rate (factoring in the pass-through deduction that is available, if any) should be weighed against the tax consequences of the double tax incurred by a C Corporation, albeit at lower rates.

Clients with questions regarding the pass-through deduction are advised to contact their accountant. Your Brody Wilkinson attorney can advise you on business structure considerations and implement any changes you might wish to make. *For more information, please contact Alyssa M. Vesco (avesco@brodywilk.com).*

CT Environmental Transfer Act Burdens May Be Mitigated With Proper Estate Planning

THE CONNECTICUT TRANSFER ACT, which imposes environmental cleanup obligations when certain real estate or business interests are transferred, may create a significant financial burden when ownership changes are made in the course of estate planning or estate settlement. This consequence can be avoided with the astute use of specific exemptions from the requirements of the Transfer Act.

The purpose of the Transfer Act is to regulate the transfer of (i) certain contaminated properties in the state; or (ii) interests in the entities that own such contaminated properties, by requiring owners to perform environmental remediation when such conveyances meet the definition of an “establishment.” An establishment includes real property or a business from which approximately one-half of a 55-gallon drum of hazardous waste has been generated in any one month since November 19, 1980, and any dry cleaner or auto body repair shop existing after May 1, 1967. The seller is responsible for the potentially onerous cost of Transfer Act compliance, unless otherwise negotiated. There are, however, many exemptions to the requirements of the Transfer Act that can help avoid this cost and still accomplish inter-familial transfers and business reorganizations.

During one’s lifetime, the following conveyances are exempt from the Transfer Act:

1. Conveyance to a sibling, spouse, child, parent, grandchild, niece, nephew, aunt or uncle;
2. Conveyance to a trustee of an inter vivos trust created solely for the benefit of one or more of the following relatives: sibling, spouse, child, parent, grandchild, niece, nephew, aunt or uncle;
3. Conversion of a partnership or limited partnership to an LLC;
4. Transfer of stock, securities or other ownership interests of less than 40%;

5. Transfer of partnership property held in the names of all of its partners to another partnership that has the same partners as the transferring partnership; and
6. Transfer of partnership property held in the names of all of its partners to an LLC whose members are the same as the partners of the transferring partnership.

Any lifetime gifting or reorganization of ownership for planning purposes should stay within the confines of these exemptions unless it is desirable for remediation to be undertaken at the time of the transfer. Additional lifetime transfers by a conservator or trustee may also be exempt with the approval of the probate court.

After death, inheritance by way of survivorship tenancy or by will or intestacy is exempt, as is any transfer approved by the probate court. When an estate is being administered, real property or business interests that would otherwise be subject to the Transfer Act should not be moved to an LLC or other entity without probate court approval. In addition, unless the buyer is willing to undertake the burden of Transfer Act compliance, the sale of a business or real property that meets the definition of an establishment should be subject to probate court approval, even if approval is not required by the operative will or trust.

When the transfer of real estate or a business interest is contemplated as part of the estate planning process, care should be taken not to trigger any environmental cleanup obligation. Also, in the course of administering a trust or estate, when property or business interests are sold or transferred to an entity such as a limited liability company, probate approval should be sought to avoid incurring immediate environmental remediation costs. *For more information, please contact Barbara S. Miller (bmiller@brodywilk.com) or Samuel R. Volet (svolet@brodywilk.com).*

How Will Partnerships & LLCs Be Impacted By New Tax Audit Rules?

AS OF JANUARY 1, 2018, new tax rules took effect for partnerships and limited liability companies. These entities are widely used by businesses and professionals because the entities themselves do not pay income tax. Until now, only the entity owners (partners and LLC members) have paid tax on the income that is passed through from the entity to the owners.

Under the new tax rules, however, the entity itself will be liable for income tax if its income is incorrectly reported or incorrectly allocated among the owners.

The new tax rules set out a series of requirements for partnerships and limited liability companies and a road map for escaping entity-level taxation.

First, each entity must appoint a “partnership representative” who will have the sole authority to act on behalf of the entity in dealing with the Internal Revenue Service, including agreeing to tax adjustments and making elections to avoid entity-level taxation.

Second, eligible partnerships and limited liability companies can elect out of the new tax rules (a so-called "opt-out election"). This will eliminate the risk of entity-level taxation. In order to qualify for this election, an entity must issue 100 or fewer Schedules K-1 to its owners, and all of the owners must be individuals, C or S Corporations, estates, and foreign entities that would be C Corporations under U.S. tax laws. The opt-out election is not available if any owner is a partnership or LLC, trust, disregarded entity (such as a single-member LLC), or estate that is not the estate of a deceased owner.

Third, if the IRS proposes a tax adjustment that is payable by the partnership or LLC under the new rules, the entity may elect to push out the adjustment (a so-called "push-out election") to the partners or LLC members who were the owners for the year under review, even if one or more of them is no longer an owner when the adjustment is determined.

The new rules will make it advisable for partnerships and LLCs to review their partnership agreements and operating agreements and consider several important points:

- How should the partnership representative be chosen, and how can the partnership representative be removed and replaced?
- Should the opt-out election be mandatory or discretionary?
- Should the push-out election be mandatory or discretionary?
- What obligations should partners and LLC members have to provide information to the partnership representative in connection with an IRS audit of the entity?
- What is the partnership representative's liability to the entity and its owners, and to what extent should the entity and its owners indemnify the partnership representative?

Partnerships and limited liability companies should seek guidance on the application of these new tax rules.

For more information, please contact Robert L. Teicher (rteicher@brodywilk.com).

CT Offers Protections To Preserve The Integrity & Use Of Conservatorships To Care For Aging Parents

CARING FOR AN AGING PARENT is hard work. Between medical appointments, financial issues, and taking away the car keys, there are many moving parts that need to be considered. In order to receive proper assistance at this delicate time, parents must appoint someone to act on their behalf through a Durable Power of Attorney and a Living Will. Unfortunately, sometimes these two tools are not enough and the

appointment of a conservator is also required. A recent *New Yorker* article extolled the dangers of conservatorships without adequate checks and balances in Nevada.

The Nevada conservatorship process created a situation in which professional conservators were appointed to care for aging residents to the exclusion of involved and responsible family members. Parents were moved in the middle of the night, over medicated, and excluded from contact with family members. The story documents outrageous examples in which these "professionals" scoured nursing homes and retirement communities for suitable targets, securing significant financial benefits for themselves.

The situations detailed in the *New Yorker* story turn the stomach. Could this happen in Connecticut? The good news is our current statutory system includes several protections designed to prevent people from being conserved improperly and professional conservators from profiting.

Almost any concerned person may file an application with the probate court seeking the appointment of a conservator for a person believed to be incapable of caring for herself. The court is required to give notice to the person about whom the application is filed, the person's family and various other interested parties. The person is entitled to be represented by an attorney who is legally and ethically bound to advocate on behalf of the person.

The Connecticut Probate Court has the power to appoint a legal representative, a conservator, for an incapacitated person to handle financial and/or personal matters. The conservator has the authority to make medical or financial decisions on behalf of the conserved person. If the court finds by clear and convincing evidence that the person is incapable of caring for herself or her finances, that the person or her finances cannot be cared for adequately without the appointment of a conservator, and that the appointment of a conservator is the least restrictive means of intervention available, the court may appoint a conservator.

The Probate Court Administrator's office, with the help of lawyers throughout the state, has begun work on developing guidelines and instructional materials to assist conservators in understanding their roles. The probate court will require period reports from the conservator about the person's physical and financial status, and will provide oversight for issues that arise.

A conservatorship is one of many tools available to help care for aging parents. Brody Wilkinson attorneys are available to assist you throughout the process. *For more information, please contact Heather J. Lange (hlange@brodywilk.com).*

Representative Matters

We represented a Connecticut-based investment group and family office in the multi-million dollar sale of an out-of-state manufacturing facility. The transaction took nearly nine months to complete and included complicated real estate, environmental compliance and union employee issues. The buyer was represented by one of the world's largest law firms. **James E. Rice, Mark W. Klein** and **Thomas J. Walsh, Jr.** worked on this matter with help from local counsel.

We represented a public corporation in connection with its expansion into a new product line through a multi-million dollar acquisition of the equipment, inventory, intellectual property and other assets of an out-of-state business. **Justin L. Galletti** and **James E. Rice** worked on this matter.

We represented the trustees of a charitable trust created nearly 100 years ago by a retired teacher. The purpose of the trust was to maintain a residence to provide respite and retreat for Fairfield County teachers. Given the changing needs of modern educators, the use and demand for the retreat had declined over the years. Applying a doctrine known as *Cy Pres* (the doctrine of approximation), we obtained a decree in the Superior Court allowing the retreat to be sold and the financial resources of the trust to be applied in the future to the greater need of modern day teachers to access opportunities for personal and professional growth. **Ronald B. Noren, Alyssa V. Sherriff** and **Barbara S. Miller** worked on this matter.

We represented a client in connection with a \$20,000,000 line of credit secured by four paintings. Two of the paintings were temporarily being shown at two different museums in which we had to obtain bailment agreements with the museums. **James M. Powers** and **Seth L. Cooper** worked on this matter.

We represented a client in connection with the tax-free reorganization of multiple family entities using a partnership division and special partnership tax election to take advantage of a corporate net operating loss. **William J. Britt** and **Robert L. Teicher** worked on this matter.

We represented a client in connection with the purchase of a historic waterfront property in Southport. The transaction presented unique and complicated title challenges as part of the property's structure extended over Southport Harbor. **Brian T. Silvestro** worked on this matter.

We defended a fiduciary in probate court against an attempt to remove the executor by the majority of the beneficiaries involving disputes over the administration of the estate and the decedent's business. **Douglas R. Brown, William J. Britt** and **Heather J. Lange** worked on this matter.

We represented a manufacturer in developing a strategy for addressing the impermissible sale of its natural health products by unauthorized sellers including a defendant who impersonated a doctor to open a sales account with the client. We helped the client revise its sales contract terms and conditions and subsequently secured a judgment in the amount of \$27,000,000 against one defendant and are currently litigating two similar cases for this client in Connecticut courts and monitoring related cases in New Jersey and Florida. **Thomas J. Walsh, Jr., Stephen J. Curley** and **Daniel B. Fitzgerald** worked on this matter in conjunction with the client's general counsel.

Accolades & Credits

Brody Wilkinson was named to the 2018 "Best Law Firms" list by *U.S. News & World Report* and *Best Lawyers*. The firm was also recognized with a Tier 1 ranking in the Metropolitan Stamford region in the area of Trusts and Estates. Firms included in the 2018 "Best Law Firms" list are recognized for professional excellence with persistently impressive ratings from clients and peers. Achieving a tiered ranking signals a unique combination of quality law practice and breadth of legal expertise. "Best Law Firms" rankings are based on a rigorous evaluation process that includes the collection of client and lawyer evaluations, peer review from leading attorneys in their field, and review of additional information provided by law firms as part of the formal submission process. For more information on methodology, visit bestlawfirms.usnews.com/methodology.aspx and bestlawyers.com/about/MethodologyCT.aspx.

Peter T. Mott, Ronald B. Noren, Douglas R. Brown and **James E. Rice** were selected by their peers for inclusion in the 24th Edition of *The Best Lawyers in America* © 2018. **Mr. Mott** and **Mr. Noren** were selected in the field of Trusts and Estates; **Mr. Brown** was selected in the two fields of Litigation (Trusts and Estates) and Trusts and Estates; and **Mr. Rice** was selected in the field of Energy Law. *Best Lawyers*® lists are compiled based on an exhaustive peer-review evaluation. For the 2018 Edition of *The Best Lawyers in America*®, 7.3 million votes were analyzed, which resulted in approximately 55,000 leading lawyers being included in the new edition. Lawyers are not required or allowed to pay a fee to be listed; therefore inclusion in *Best Lawyers*® is considered a singular honor. *Corporate Counsel* magazine has called *Best Lawyers*® "the most respected referral list of attorneys in practice." For more information, visit <http://www.bestlawyers.com/about/MethodologyCT.aspx>.

Eight Brody Wilkinson attorneys were recognized in 2017 by Super Lawyers. **William J. Britt** (Estate Planning & Probate), **Douglas R. Brown** (Estate Planning & Probate), **Stephen J. Curley** (Business Litigation), **Barbara S. Miller** (Environmental), **Peter T. Mott** (Estate Planning & Probate) and **Ronald B. Noren** (Estate Planning & Probate) were named to the "Connecticut Super Lawyers" list. In addition, **Daniel B. Fitzgerald** (Employment & Labor) and **Justin L.**

Galletti (Business & Corporate) were selected as "Connecticut Rising Stars." All eight attorneys were featured in a special supplement of the November 2017 issues of *Connecticut Magazine* and *New England Super Lawyers Magazine*. Based on a rigorous, multiphase peer-review process, Super Lawyers is a credible, comprehensive and diverse listing of attorneys in more than 70 practice areas. Super Lawyers listings are used as a resource guide to assist businesses and individuals in hiring legal counsel. Super Lawyers is published by *Law & Politics* as a special supplement in top newspapers and city and regional magazines across the country. The published list represents no more than 5% of the lawyers in the state. For more information on the Super Lawyers selection process, visit www.superlawyers.com/connecticut/selection_details.html.

Brody Wilkinson's Trusts & Estates practice and **Peter T. Mott** were recognized in the Chambers High Net Worth 2017 Guide. The High Net Worth Guide is Chambers' first publication directed specifically at the private wealth market. Brody Wilkinson's Trusts & Estates practice received a ranking in the category of Private Wealth Law in the state of Connecticut. Only eight firms in the state, with just two based in Fairfield County, were awarded this designation. As the smallest of the firms selected, this recognition is a significant accomplishment. Mr. Mott received a "Band 1" ranking as a practitioner in the category of Private Wealth Law. He is one of seven private wealth lawyers in the state to achieve this highest ranking.

Ronald B. Noren was elected vice chairman of the Board of Trustees of Bridgeport Hospital as well as chairman of the Director Affairs Committee. In addition, Mr. Noren was re-elected to a one-year term as president of the Preston Mountain Club.

Thomas J. Walsh, Jr. was elected a Fellow of the American Bar Foundation in recognition of his outstanding leadership and achievement in the legal profession and his dedication to the welfare of the community. Mr. Walsh also concluded his three-year term as chair of the American Bar Association's Middle Market and Small Business Committee. In addition, he was re-appointed to the Board of the Fairfield Museum and History Center and serves as chair of the Nominating Committee.

Peter T. Mott moderated a panel discussion at the Fall meeting of the American College of Trust and Estate Counsel (ACTEC) on the topic of "New Edition of ACTEC Engagement Letters." Mr. Mott also presented at an American Bar Association (ABA) webinar on "The Updated ACTEC Commentaries on the Rules of Professional Conduct: Current Ethical Issues for Estate Planners." In addition, Mr. Mott spoke as a panelist on "Ethics in Estate Planning & Elder Law: The Hard Ones" at the ABA National Conference on Professional Responsibility.

Douglas R. Brown spoke on "Highlights of the 2017 Probate Court Rules of Procedure" for the statewide seminar "Hot Topics in Probate" sponsored by The Connecticut Probate Assembly and the Connecticut Bar Association (CBA). He also presented at a CBA seminar on "The Essentials of Estate Administration."

Brian T. Silvestro serves as chair of Leadership Greater Bridgeport, a program operated by the Bridgeport Regional Business Council to expose future business leaders to the greater Bridgeport region. Mr. Silvestro recently ran two leadership programs which included a tour of Bridgeport and an economic development discussion hosted at the Bridgeport office of a Fairfield County architectural firm.

Robert L. Teicher attended the 2017 New York University Institute on Federal Taxation, the leading annual national conference for tax lawyers.

Heather J. Lange served as secretary of the Connecticut Bar Association's Estates and Probate Section. She also served as chair of the Bridgeport YMCA in 2017 and as an Ambassador to the American Quarter Horse Foundation. In addition, she competed in the American Quarter Horse Association's Select World Championship Show in Amarillo, Texas, where she placed 4th in Showmanship-At-Halter.

James M. Powers attended the Florida Bar Association's 2458 Attorney Trust Officer Liaison Conference held in Palm Beach, Florida.

Peter T. Mott and **Lisa F. Metz** co-authored an update to their chapter entitled, "Lifetime Asset Transfers" in *A Practical Guide to Estate Planning in Connecticut* published by MCLE New England in August 2017.

Justin L. Galletti was appointed to the Board of Directors of Harbor Light Foundation, a Connecticut-based non-profit organization that provides programs and support for autistic children and their families.

Mark W. Klein was appointed to the Connecticut Department of Banking's Securities Advisory Council. Council members provide advice and recommendations to the Connecticut Department of Banking regarding securities and business opportunity laws and regulations.

Jennifer A. Basciano attended the 2017 New York State Bar Association's Trusts & Estates Law Section annual meeting in New York City.

Trusted Advisors, Practical Solutions

ATTORNEYS

Jennifer A. Basciano
William J. Britt
Douglas R. Brown
Seth L. Cooper
Stephen J. Curley
Daniel B. Fitzgerald
Justin L. Galletti
Mark W. Klein
Heather J. Lange
Lisa F. Metz
Barbara S. Miller
Peter T. Mott
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James E. Rice
Alyssa V. Sherriff
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