



Dear Clients & Friends,

We are delighted to publish the 2026 edition of our Client Newsletter. As we reflect on the past year, we are proud to share our accomplishments, successes, milestones and insights.

This issue spans a range of topics, including balancing care and autonomy for aging loved ones with diminished capacity, navigating legal compliance challenges in the rapidly growing influencer marketing industry and developing income tax planning strategies in the face of shortened life expectancy. Additionally, we spotlight principal **David R. Hermenze**, who was honored by Best Lawyers® as *Lawyer of the Year* in his field of Trusts & Estates within the Stamford metropolitan region, and welcome associates **Hannah E. Ellis** and **Ashley E. Blume** to the firm.

We hope you find this content both valuable and engaging as it showcases the unique and complementary skills our attorneys bring to clients. If you wish to opt in to receive our digital client updates, please complete the news sign-up form on the BW website and remember to follow us on LinkedIn, X and Facebook. As always, we are grateful for your continued trust and support.

Best Regards,

Brody Wilkinson PC

Conservatorships and Guardianships: Balancing Care and Autonomy For Older Adults

AS THE POPULATION AGES, FAMILIES INCREASINGLY FACE DIFFICULT DECISIONS

about how to support aging parents or loved ones who may be experiencing diminished capacity. When an individual can no longer safely manage personal or financial affairs, a conservatorship or guardianship may be considered. Courts in Connecticut and New York, however, approach these proceedings cautiously, emphasizing personal rights and favoring the least restrictive means of protection whenever possible.

What Is a Conservatorship or Guardianship?

A conservatorship (the CT term) or guardianship (the NY term) is a court-ordered legal arrangement in which a judge appoints another person to assist or act on behalf of an adult who is found to lack sufficient capacity to manage certain aspects of their life.

While terminology varies, the roles generally fall into two categories:

- Personal Decision-Making Authority: responsible for personal and medical decisions, including health care, living arrangements and day-to-day needs
- Financial Decision-Making Authority: responsible for managing financial affairs such as income, bank accounts, property and payment of expenses

In both Connecticut and New York, these appointments may be voluntary, when an individual recognizes the need for assistance, or involuntary, when the court determines—after a formal legal process—that intervention is necessary. Courts often appoint a family member or trusted individual but may select a professional fiduciary if circumstances require.

Preference for Less Restrictive Alternatives

Both Connecticut and New York law require courts to consider alternatives that preserve as much independence as possible before imposing a conservatorship or guardianship.

Common alternatives include:

- Powers of Attorney for financial decision-making
- Health Care Proxies or Representatives for medical decisions
- Advance Directives or Living Wills
- Joint Accounts or Representative Payee Arrangements
- Limited or Supported Decision-Making Agreements where available

When court intervention is unavoidable, judges are required to tailor the authority granted as narrowly as possible. Rather than removing all decision-making rights, courts may authorize assistance only in specific areas where help is clearly needed.

Why Courts Treat Conservatorships and Guardianships as a Last Resort

Although these legal arrangements can provide important protection, they also significantly affect personal freedom. Individuals subject to a conservatorship or guardianship may lose control over finances, medical decisions, housing choices and, in some cases, the ability to revise estate planning documents.

Because of these consequences, courts in both states recognize that such arrangements:

- Limit personal autonomy and legal rights
- Can be expensive, time-consuming and emotionally difficult
- Require ongoing court oversight to prevent misuse or abuse of authority

To safeguard individual rights, courts generally require representation for the person facing the appointment and impose reporting and monitoring requirements on the appointed decision-maker.

Conclusion

There are many different factors to consider surrounding conservatorships and guardianships. It is important to consult with legal counsel to explore options when clients or loved ones are not fully able to manage their affairs and make informed decisions. *For more information, please contact Heather J. Lange (hlange@brodywilk.com) or another BW attorney.*

Brands and Influencers Beware: The Legal Issues Around Content Compliance

AS OF JUNE 2025, Bloomberg surmised that the influencer marketing industry was worth \$30 billion. As the industry grows, compliance with disclosure requirements has become even more important.

The Rise of Class-Action Lawsuits

An influencer is one who inspires or guides the actions of others and is able to generate interest by posting across social media platforms. Brands hire influencers to promote products, services, technology and experiences through storytelling across social media platforms. Storytelling may take the form of video content, a carousel post, a caption on a still image, a podcast, a YouTube channel or live streaming. However, since content creation can be done relatively inexpensively and informally, influencers can sometimes forget their legal disclosure obligations while telling the story. As a result, influencers and brands have become the subject of class-action lawsuits alleging

violation of Federal Trade Commission disclosure requirements.

Brands such as ALO Yoga, Celsius and Revolve, together with their influencer partners, have been hit with class-action lawsuits demanding in the tens to hundreds of millions for failing to properly disclose in violation of Federal Trade Commission disclosure requirements.

With respect to the April 2025 \$50 million class-action lawsuit filed against Revolve, a fashion retailer often crowned as the creator of the influencer marketing industry, it was alleged that Revolve and its influencers failed to disclose paid partnerships in violation of Federal Trade Commission guidelines. The claimants said it had the effect of misleading consumers by disguising posts as organic and independent. Although this case has now moved to arbitration as a result of the mandatory arbitration clause and class-action waiver, this case has become a regulatory wake-up call.

Material Connection Disclosures

Regardless of whether they are a consumer, expert or virtual influencer, if the influencer received any form of compensation — such as payment, affiliate commissions, discount-based earnings, free products, services or any other material connection — it must be disclosed. A material connection is anything that a reasonable consumer would want to know before making a purchase and includes personal, financial, family or employment relationships. The Federal Trade Commission states that the disclosure must be “clear and conspicuous,” meaning that it must be immediately noticeable and understandable to the average viewer.

Consumer, Expert and Virtual Endorsements

Influencer content must comply with Federal Trade Commission disclosure requirements. The Federal Trade Commission distinguishes between a consumer endorsement and an expert endorsement and treats them as separate categories with different rules.

A consumer endorsement means that an endorser must have actually used the product and shared their truthful personal experience. The disclosure must use clear, simple language and the content must reflect “honest opinions, findings, beliefs or experience.” The influencer’s message must be authentic. The endorsement must also be representative of what the consumer will generally achieve with the promoted product.

An expert endorsement must have evidence that supports their claims at an expert or professional level, ensuring that their evaluation methods are not misleading. If the endorser’s promotion represents directly or indirectly that the endorser is an expert, with respect to the message shared, the endorser must possess the represented expertise. It does not matter how many followers an expert has. What matters is the level of qualification they possess. The expert’s “evaluation must have been conducted in a manner that would normally be expected of someone with the same degree of expertise.” If the expert shares that they used a method

of testing and did not actually use the method or have a basis for their endorsement, the influencer may be liable.

Recently, the Federal Trade Commission addressed disclosure requirements for virtual influencers. A virtual influencer is one that is created by artificial intelligence, is hyper-realistic and human-looking, and is created to act like a real-life influencer. Virtual influencers must avoid making statements about having personal experience with a product and misrepresenting the virtual influencer’s capacity, such as indicating that the virtual influencer enjoyed driving a specific car.

Social Media Platforms Introduce Requirements

The Federal Trade Commission is not alone in imposing disclosure requirements. Social media platforms now have their own guides on disclosures and additional requirements for influencer marketing. Content disclosure must be tailored to each platform to ensure it is consistent with the platform’s user experience. The placement of the disclosure is critical and may be subject to change depending on the social media platform. If the consumer has to hunt for the disclosure, it is not a sufficient disclosure.

Conclusion

In light of increased consumer scrutiny and class-action lawsuits, compliance is imperative. The failure to comply with disclosure requirements exposes both brands and influencers to significant legal, financial and reputational risk. To mitigate this, brands and influencers should work together to ensure compliance with disclosure requirements by including disclosure terms in influencer agreements, monitoring posts for compliance, using clear disclosure language and confirming the material relationship. *For more information, please contact Ashley E. Blume (ablume@brodywilk.com) or another BW attorney.*

Thoughtful Management of Asset Basis When Time May Be Limited

WHEN A CLIENT (or a client’s family member) is facing a shortened life expectancy, personal well-being, medical decisions and family matters quite rightly take priority over financial concerns. That said, when consistent with the client’s goals and wishes, there may be income tax planning strategies worth considering to help avoid unnecessary tax burdens. This article primarily focuses on planning strategies related to the management of income tax basis.

At death, assets includible in a decedent’s estate (other than certain assets such as retirement plan benefits) receive a new income tax basis equal to their fair market value at death. This means that those assets receive a “step-up” in basis if the fair market value is greater than the current basis or may receive a “step-down” in basis if the fair market value is less than the current basis.

Attaining a Step-Up in Basis

Assets that receive a step-up in basis avoid being subject to capital gains tax on the appreciation that occurred from the time of purchase to the date of death. Therefore, it can

be beneficial to hold low-basis assets until death to avoid capital gains on that appreciation.

A client who has low-basis assets may wish to gift those assets to an individual (such as the client's parent) with a shortened life expectancy and then have that individual donee at death leave the assets back to the client with a new stepped-up basis. This type of planning is generally viable only where the gift to the donee will not cause the donee's estate to be subject to estate tax (i.e., because the individual's taxable estate is below the applicable estate tax exemption amount). Congress has placed important limits on this strategy. In particular, the tax law denies a step-up in basis for appreciated property that is gifted to a person within one year of that person's death if the property then returns to the donor (or the donor's spouse). As a result, a basis adjustment is available only if the recipient survives for at least one year after receiving the property. However, the donee may leave the property to certain types of trusts for the benefit of the donor since that trust would not be considered the same as leaving the property to the donor.

Another technique involves the client creating an irrevocable trust and making a gift of low-basis assets to the trust (using gift/estate tax exemption) and granting a general power of appointment over the trust assets to an individual with a shortened life expectancy (such as a parent). A general power of appointment gives an individual the power to direct how the assets pass at their death, and if the power is not exercised, then the assets pass as provided under the trust document. Those assets will be included in the estate of the holder of the general power of appointment and will receive a step-up in basis at death. Although there is always the risk that the individual will actually exercise the power and leave the assets to someone not intended by the client, the client would likely only give this power to a trusted and close family member.

Avoiding a Step-Down in Basis

If the market value of an asset has declined below its original purchase price, the asset's income tax basis will step down at death to its lower fair market value. This means that the estate will not be able to get a capital loss when the asset is sold. However, if the client sells the asset prior to death, then the client would be able to offset capital gains incurred in the same tax year with the capital loss. Remaining losses can be carried forward but not after the death of the taxpayer. Alternatively, the client may gift depreciated assets before death since the donee will take the donor's basis (this is known as "carryover basis").

Utilizing a "Swap" Power

For clients who have previously established certain types of trusts known as "grantor trusts" (i.e., a trust drafted with certain provisions so that the grantor of the trust is considered the owner for income tax purposes), there may be opportunities to reposition assets to achieve more favorable tax results, assuming that the

grantor has adequate cash or high-basis assets. Often, these trusts will include a substitution power that gives the grantor the right to "swap" assets of equivalent value held by the trust without triggering income tax. However, even without the swap power included in the trust, if the trust is a grantor trust, then the trustee may choose to sell assets to the grantor of the trust without any income tax consequences. This exchange will result in low-basis assets being included in the client's estate and receiving a step-up in basis at death.

Otherwise, if the low-basis assets remained in the trust, they would not receive a step-up in basis, assuming the trust assets are not included in the grantor's estate. Similarly, a client with assets that have a basis greater than their current fair market value may transfer those assets to the grantor trust in exchange for other assets of the same value, allowing those assets transferred to the trust to avoid a step-down in basis at death. In this context, the one-year look-back rule described above does not apply because this transfer of assets is not a gift.

Conclusion

Income tax basis planning near the end of life is a nuanced and highly technical area that must be approached with care. While these strategies are not appropriate in every situation, thoughtful tax basis planning may help reduce unnecessary capital gains taxes and preserve more wealth for intended beneficiaries. Professional guidance is essential to ensure that any such strategies are implemented properly and without unintended tax consequences. *For more information, please contact Hannah E. Ellis (hellis@brodywilk.com) or another BW attorney.*

David R. Hermenze: Four Decades, One Calling



IN 2021, DAVE HERMENZE AND HIS PARTNERS, ED MARCANTONIO AND JIM FUNNELL,

joined Brody Wilkinson through a strategic merger with their former Westport-based law firm, Hermenze & Marcantonio. In 2026, Dave was honored by Best Lawyers® as *Lawyer of the Year* in his field of Trusts & Estates within the Stamford metropolitan region. Given the

significance of this recognition, which he also received in 2022 and 2024, we asked Dave to reflect on his 40-year career and share some of the insights he brings to his practice today.

Q: What does being named *Lawyer of the Year* in Trusts & Estates mean to you?

A: I'm especially proud of this achievement because it's ultimately awarded by my peers. This practice area is a cozy corner of the law, which I would enthusiastically recommend to any young lawyer. We're a close-knit, collegial group not only in Connecticut but across the

nation. We fancy ourselves as the intellectuals of the law, valuing collaboration and learning over conflict and discord. While I don't think I can hope to win the ongoing *LOTY* competition with my partner, Peter Mott, who has received this distinction more times than I have, I'll strive once again to live up to this much-appreciated honor.

Q: How did you come to focus your career on Trusts & Estates Law?

A: I wanted to be a lawyer from a very young age. I loved history and reading biographies, and it seemed to me that most of the great Americans had been military heroes, inventors or lawyers. I knew my chances of triumphing in battle or inventing the next lightbulb were slim. But given my strengths in reading, writing and analysis, I believed I could become a capable — perhaps even a good — lawyer. Tax classes were my favorites at Cornell — individual income tax, corporate tax, partnership tax, estate tax, fiduciary income tax and international tax — so I planned to focus on corporate tax law at a large firm in Stamford after I graduated. When I was exposed to that firm's estate planning practice, which was highly tax-planning driven (the estate tax exemption was \$600,000 per person back then, compared to \$15 million today), I found that I enjoyed working with individuals and families more than working for corporations. That realization changed everything.

Q: What are the biggest misconceptions clients have about estate planning?

A: I think people often assume estate planning is either something only the very wealthy need or something that can wait. Neither is true. Another common misconception is that the process is overwhelmingly technical. My job is to make it understandable — to translate the legal and tax components into clear, practical choices for all my clients, regardless of the size of their estates.

Q: What concerns are clients raising most often about estate planning today?

A: I find that the greatest concern expressed by most clients is ensuring that the inheritance they pass to their children is as well protected as possible from third parties, including the government through the probate process and taxes, creditors through lawsuits, as well as divorcing spouses. This concern applies whether the beneficiaries are minor children, young adults or individuals in their 50s and 60s. It doesn't reflect a lack of trust in their judgment or prudence. Rather, clients want to provide their beneficiaries with a structure that protects them, not one that controls them.

Q: How do you guide clients who are reluctant to begin the estate planning process?

A: I explain that estate planning is an act of care for themselves and the people they love. It doesn't have to be overwhelming and they don't need to have all the answers when they walk in the door. A good plan

provides clarity, comfort and a sense of control. Starting the process is almost always the hardest part. Once we begin, clients are often surprised by how straightforward — and even empowering — it feels.

Q: How do complex families or business interests shape your approach to estate planning?

A: I start by listening. Every family has its own history, dynamics and concerns — and businesses are no different. Before we talk about documents or structures, I want to understand what matters most to the people involved. From there, we build a plan designed to protect relationships as much as assets and to minimize the risk of future conflict. That involves drafting clear, plainspoken documents, helping clients make thoughtful fiduciary choices and building in flexibility so the plan can adapt as circumstances change.

Q: How have the past five years unfolded for you and your original partners since the merger?

A: When we moved the entire firm — ourselves, our staff, our computers, desks, even the paperclips — to Southport, our only hesitation was leaving behind our Westport address, which was important to us, even though our clients spanned the region from New York City to upper Fairfield County. Five years later, I'm pleased to share that our clients haven't held the change against us, and with the added strength of Brody Wilkinson's 25-lawyer team, we're now better positioned than ever to serve them.

Q: What do you appreciate most about practicing law at Brody Wilkinson?

A: Having a solid team behind me has made all the difference. Our Trusts & Estates Group includes one senior associate and three associates with strong technical skills and a confident client presence. This depth allows me to assign a backup attorney to every matter, ensuring that another attorney at the firm is closely familiar with each client's circumstances. If I'm fortunate to enjoy continued good health, I plan to practice for at least another 10 years, reaching the 50-year milestone that several Brody Wilkinson attorneys have already surpassed. Looking further ahead, the same depth of our team gives me tremendous comfort knowing that I'll be able to transition my client relationships — many now spanning two generations — in a thoughtful, orderly way that best serves those families.

Hannah E. Ellis Joins Trusts & Estates



WE ARE PLEASED TO WELCOME ASSOCIATE HANNAH E. ELLIS

to the firm's Trusts & Estates Group. Hannah practices in the areas of estate planning, trust and estate administration and taxation. She works closely with clients to draft customized estate plans, taking the time to listen carefully and understand their unique goals and priorities. Hannah is

admitted to practice in Connecticut and is a member of the Connecticut Bar Association and the Fairfield County Bar Association.

Ashley E. Blume Joins Business & Finance | Real Estate



WE ARE PLEASED TO WELCOME ASSOCIATE ASHLEY E. BLUME to the firm's Business & Finance and Real Estate Groups. Ashley practices in the areas of general corporate matters, business transactions, outside general counsel services and commercial real estate. She also assists clients with trademark

clearance, prosecution and analysis. Ashley's clients range from entrepreneurs and start-ups to larger privately held companies. She brings unique experience and insights to her legal practice from her prior work at a leading children's apparel manufacturer. Ashley is admitted to practice in Connecticut and New York. She is a member of the Connecticut Bar Association and the New York City Bar Association.

Representative Matters

We represented a public company in connection with the acquisition of a manufacturing and distribution facility in Tennessee for \$6 million. The facility features 77,000 square feet of manufacturing and warehouse space on 12 acres, with potential expansion capacity of up to 60,000 additional square feet. Our work included negotiations with the seller and tenant to secure a Right of First Refusal waiver, an option and a shortening of the tenant's term. **Justin L. Galletti** worked on this matter.

We successfully shepherded an estate to conclusion involving a Will contest and a controversial agreement between the contestant and the heirs. **Douglas R. Brown** and **Heather J. Lange** worked on this matter.

We represented the owners of a retail service business in the sale of assets of more than 10 locations to a private-equity-backed strategic buyer. The transaction included the owners' leasing of the real estate for several of the locations to the buyer as well as an agreement for the owners to potentially develop future locations for the buyer. **Mark W. Klein** and **Thomas J. Walsh, Jr.** worked on this transaction.

We represented a service-based educational business with multiple locations in structuring a buyout arrangement between its principals to be funded by buy-sell insurance. The transaction included the preparation and amendment of operating agreements

for the business to incorporate the buyout provisions. **Mark W. Klein** worked on this transaction.

We successfully defended clients from having their inheritance eliminated under an in terrorem clause. **Heather J. Lange** and **Daniel B. Fitzgerald** worked on this matter.

We represented an employee in the buyout of the founder of a medical technology sales organization. **Thomas J. Walsh, Jr.**, **Mark W. Klein** and **Ashley E. Blume** worked on this matter.

We successfully represented a decedent's estate in defending a claim for back rent brought by a landlord. **Douglas R. Brown** and **Heather J. Lange** worked on this matter.

We helped a business client successfully conclude a series of high-profile lawsuits alleging antitrust violations and anti-competitive behavior. **Thomas J. Walsh, Jr.** and **Daniel B. Fitzgerald** worked on these matters in collaboration with litigation counsel.

We negotiated a multi-family settlement to terminate a multi-million dollar trust. **Heather J. Lange** and **Daniel B. Fitzgerald** worked on this matter.

We represented a food-related business in connection with a reorganization and capital raise to facilitate expansion and growth, as well as with the lease of a food preparation and distribution center. **Justin L. Galletti** worked on this matter.

We successfully represented a surviving widower in a dispute with his deceased wife's relatives during estate settlement. **Douglas R. Brown** and **Daniel B. Fitzgerald** worked on this matter.

We successfully represented trust beneficiaries in forcing an executor to complete estate settlement after nearly 10 years and recovering their related legal fees. **Douglas R. Brown** worked on this matter.

We represented the owner of a commercial condominium in connection with the subdivision of a unit and the sale of one of the resulting units. **Justin L. Galletti** worked on this matter.

We successfully represented a conservator in conservatorship proceedings involving the conservator's father and his father's girlfriend's influence. **Douglas R. Brown** worked on this matter.

Accolades & Credits

Brody Wilkinson was named in the 2026 edition of Best Law Firms® published by Best Lawyers®. Notably, the firm was also recognized with Tier 1 rankings in the areas of **Business Organizations, Commercial Finance Law, Commercial Transactions/UCC Law, Corporate Law, Litigation — Trusts & Estates, Real Estate Law** and **Trusts & Estates**, plus a Tier 2 ranking in the area of Energy Law in the Stamford metropolitan region. Best Lawyers® is the oldest and most respected Purely Peer Review® research and accolades company in the legal profession. The 2026 rankings are based on the proven methodology of Best Law Firms®, which relies on qualitative and quantitative data on legal skill sets, achievements and client successes collected through a

submission process managed by Best Lawyers®. For more information on methodology, visit <https://www.bestlawyers.com/methodology>.

Seventeen Brody Wilkinson lawyers were selected by their peers for inclusion in *The Best Lawyers in America*® 2026 edition. In addition, **David R. Hermenze** was named *Lawyer of the Year* in his field of Trusts & Estates within the Stamford metropolitan region. **Douglas R. Brown** and **Heather J. Lange** were selected in the fields of Trusts & Estates and Litigation — Trusts & Estates; **Seth L. Cooper** was selected in the fields of Commercial Finance Law, Commercial Transactions/UCC Law and Real Estate Law; **Jennifer A. Basciano**, **James D. Funnell, Jr.**, **David R. Hermenze**, **Edward Marcantonio**, **Lisa F. Metz**, **Peter T. Mott**, **Ronald B. Noren** and **Alyssa Sherriff Tramontano** were selected in the field of Trusts & Estates; **Justin L. Galletti** was selected in the fields of Business Organizations, Closely Held Companies & Family Business Law, Commercial Finance Law, Commercial Transactions/UCC Law, Corporate Law and Real Estate Law; **Mark W. Klein** was selected in the field of Closely Held Companies & Family Business Law; **James E. Rice** was selected in the field of Energy Law; **Brian T. Silvestro** was selected in the field of Real Estate Law; **Robert L. Teicher** was selected in the field of Tax Law; and **Thomas J. Walsh, Jr.** was selected in the fields of Business Organizations, Closely Held Companies & Family Business Law, Commercial Transactions/UCC Law, Corporate Law and Real Estate Law. For the 2026 edition of *The Best Lawyers in America*®, more than 13.7 million votes were analyzed, which resulted in more than 76,000 leading lawyers being included in the new edition. *Lawyer of the Year* honors are awarded annually to only one lawyer per practice area in each region with extremely high overall feedback from their peers, making it an exceptional distinction. Lawyers are not required or allowed to pay a fee to be listed. Therefore, inclusion is considered a singular honor. *Corporate Counsel* magazine has called *The Best Lawyers in America*® “the most respected referral list of attorneys in practice.” For more information, visit <https://www.bestlawyers.com/methodology>.

Ten Brody Wilkinson lawyers were recognized in 2025 by Super Lawyers. **Douglas R. Brown** (Estate Planning & Probate), **Seth L. Cooper** (Real Estate), **James D. Funnell, Jr.** (Estate Planning & Probate), **Justin L. Galletti** (Business & Corporate), **David R. Hermenze** (Estate Planning & Probate), **Heather J. Lange** (Estate Planning & Probate), **Edward Marcantonio** (Estate Planning & Probate), **Peter T. Mott** (Estate Planning & Probate), **Ronald B. Noren** (Estate Planning & Probate) and **Thomas J. Walsh, Jr.** (Business & Corporate) were named to the “Connecticut Super Lawyers” list. In addition, **Lauren R. Cimbol** (Estate Planning & Probate) and **Kimberly T. Smith** (Estate Planning & Probate) were each recognized as a “Rising Star.” 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 <https://www.superlawyers.com/about/selection-process>.

Brody Wilkinson’s Trusts & Estates practice and **Douglas R. Brown**, **David R. Hermenze** and **Peter T. Mott** were recognized in the *Chambers High Net Worth Guide 2025*, a publication directed specifically at the private wealth market. Brody Wilkinson’s Trusts & Estates practice received a ninth consecutive ranking in the category of Private Wealth Law in Connecticut. Only eleven firms in the state were awarded this esteemed designation. Additionally, David and Peter received individual rankings in the category of Private Wealth Law and Douglas received a ranking in the category of Private Wealth Law Disputes. Douglas is one of four lawyers in Connecticut to achieve this ranking. For more information on the *Chambers* selection process, visit <https://chambers.com/about-us/methodology>.

Three Brody Wilkinson lawyers were selected for inclusion in *The Legal 500’s* 2026 Elite City Rankings inaugural edition in Connecticut. **Justin L. Galletti**, **Mark W. Klein** and **Thomas J. Walsh, Jr.** were all awarded Corporate and M&A rankings in Connecticut. Elite City Rankings are a series of city-focused lists published by *The Legal 500* that recognize individual lawyers who handle significant, high-level work across the full spectrum of practice areas. *The Legal 500* is a prominent UK-based publishing and benchmarking platform that conducts global legal research to help corporate clients and law firms make informed decisions. *The Legal 500* compiles its Elite City Rankings series based on its own market research and extensive data submitted by lawyers and clients. For this inaugural edition in Connecticut, *The Legal 500* relied exclusively on independent, market-led research without a formal submission and interview process. Firms were identified through *The Legal 500’s* existing knowledge of the U.S. legal market, a review of leading practitioners and practices active in Connecticut, publicly available information and qualitative insight gathered through its ongoing engagement with firms across related practice areas. For more information, visit <https://www.legal500.com>.

Ronald B. Noren was elected to a three-year term on the Board of Trustees of Bridgeport Hospital and was elected chairman of the Nominating and Governance Committee.

Thomas J. Walsh, Jr. spoke in a webinar on business sales and valuations presented by the education platform Financial Poise.

Peter T. Mott attended the 2025 Association of Professional Responsibility Lawyers (APRL) conference in Toronto, where he spoke on a panel. The discussion titled “Deal or No Deal: Ethical Dilemmas in Transactional Law” explored key ethical issues, providing insights and strategies related to conflicts of interest, civil and ethical

Trusted Advisors, Practical Solutions

ATTORNEYS

Jennifer A. Basciano	Mark W. Klein
Ashley E. Blume	Heather J. Lange
William J. Britt	Edward Marcantonio
Douglas R. Brown	Lisa F. Metz
Lauren R. Cimbol	Peter T. Mott
Seth L. Cooper	Ronald B. Noren
Stephen J. Curley	James E. Rice
Hannah E. Ellis	Brian T. Silvestro
Isaac B. Ellman	Kimberly T. Smith
Daniel B. Fitzgerald	Alyssa Sherriff Tramontano
James D. Funnell, Jr.	Robert L. Teicher
Justin L. Galletti	Thomas J. Walsh, Jr.
David R. Hermenze	

negotiations, client fraud, confidentiality, attorney-client privilege and multi-jurisdictional practices. As a fellow of the American College of Trust and Estate Counsel (ACTEC), Peter is a member and past-chair of the ACTEC Professional Responsibility Committee.

Peter T. Mott and **Alyssa Sherriff Tramontano** spoke at the 47th Annual UCLA/CEB Estate Planning Institute in a remote live session on "How to Do a Proper Conflicts Check." Their presentation guided estate planning practitioners in the California legal community through key steps, offering practical tips on best practices, risk mitigation strategies and compliance to protect clients and avoid ethical pitfalls. Their recorded MCLE-accredited program is active on the CEB's platform for continued on-demand learning.

Kimberly T. Smith was elevated to a senior associate within the firm's Trusts & Estates Group. In addition, Kimberly led a "Friday Jeans for Charity" campaign this February at the firm in connection with her fundraising efforts for the Boston Marathon. By donating funds each Friday, participating attorneys and staff wore jeans to the office in support of a good cause. Proceeds benefited the Claudia Adams Barr Program in Innovative Basic Cancer Research at Dana-Farber Cancer Institute. This was Kimberly's fifth marathon.