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Wigdor Grows Practice with Pickup of Three Experienced Employment Attorneys



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Law Firm Hiring



Andrew Denney



High-profile employment firm Wigdor LLP recently added three experienced attorneys to its roster, bringing the plaintiff-side boutique's headcount to 16.

The firm is joined by partners Marjorie Mesidor, a veteran attorney with almost 20 years of experience that includes a stint as managing partner at Phillips & Associates; and Meredith Firetog, who was recently a partner at Sanford Heisler Sharp.

Monica Hincken, who practiced at Long Island employment boutique Valli Kane & Vagnini for almost a decade, joins Wigdor as of counsel.

In an interview with the Law Journal, the new hires said they were drawn to Wigdor because of the firm's reputation for successfully handling cases on behalf of clients who are taking on powerful and deep-pocketed institutions.

"We see cases in the news all the time—interesting theories, different ways of approaching difficult issues and consistency of approaching any kind of Goliath, no matter who the defendants, no matter which company, no matter how much money and power, there is no fear in going up against those entities. That's what Wigdor is known for," said Firetog who, prior to her five-year tenure with Sanford Heisler, clerked for U.S. District Judge Gregory Woods of the Southern District of New York and worked as an associate for Simpson Thacher & Bartlett.

In her years in practice, Mesidor has recovered about \$47 million in awards and settlements, and her wins include a \$2 million jury verdict handed up for a plaintiff in a hostile workplace suit against the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey.

When asked about the cases she is especially proud of, Mesidor said she represented an undocumented female worker who was being sexually harassed by her employer. After a resolution in the case, Mesidor said her client was able to update her immigration status and ultimately went on to law school.

“This is not only a job for me—it’s also my life’s work,” Mesidor said. “For me it’s the trifecta: being on the right side of the law for people who have been discriminated against, it’s something that directly impacts my community for me as a woman of color and I get to make money doing it. I sleep well at night knowing I advocate for my clients—I hate bullies.”

Hincken was part of a trial team representing a former food and beverage director for Omni Hotels and Resorts in a long-running wage discrimination case. A federal jury in Dallas awarded \$25.1 million to Hincken’s client, consisting primarily of punitive damages.

“For her to hear that verdict meant so much to her,” Hincken said. “It was such a great day because she had been fighting for a very long time.”

Phillips & Associates did not respond to a request for comment on Mesidor’s departure.

In a statement to the Law Journal, Sanford Heisler Sharp chairman David Sanford said Firetog was promoted to partner at the firm because of her “excellent work in individual and class Title VII, Title IX, and ERISA matters.”

“We are proud of her work and know she will continue her excellence at Wigdor,” Sanford said.

Valli Kane & Vagnini said of Hincken’s hire at Wigdor: “Monica brings a wealth of experience to her new firm, after almost a decade of exemplary work for Valli Kane & Vagnini. Her tenure with us will serve her well as she transitions into the next phase of her career.”

Founded in 2003, Wigdor LLP has recovered about \$2 billion in settlements, firm founding partner Douglas Wigdor said.

The firm has amassed a long list of headline-grabbing cases over its two decades of existence.

Founded together with Scott Gilly and the late Kenneth Thompson, who died in 2016 while serving as Brooklyn District Attorney, the firm’s first big case was a class-action suit against Macy’s for alleged targeting of Black, Hispanic and Asian shoppers for suspected shoplifting.

In more recent cases, Wigdor LLP is representing former Miami Dolphins head coach Brian Flores in a racial discrimination suit against the NFL; and an ex-associate for DLA Piper who alleges the firm fired her for requesting maternity leave.

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