

Top 100 Law Firm Highlights



Winston & Strawn LLP

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41 OVERALL PRESTIGE

LOCATIONS

Charlotte, NC • Chicago, IL • Los Angeles, CA • New York, NY • Newark, NJ • San Francisco, CA • Washington, DC • Beijing • Geneva • Hong Kong • London • Moscow • Paris • Shanghai

MAJOR DEPARTMENTS & PRACTICES

Appellate & Critical Motions • Corporate & Financial • Employee Benefits & Executive Compensation • Energy • Environmental • Financial Services • Government Regulations & Regulatory Affairs • Health Care • Intellectual Property • International Arbitration • Labor & Employment • Litigation • Maritime & Admiralty • Real Estate • Restructuring & Insolvency • Tax • Trusts & Estates

THE STATS

No. of attorneys: 923

No. of offices: 14

Summer associate offers: 80 out of 120 (2009)

Managing Partner: Thomas P. Fitzgerald

Hiring Partners: Joseph J. Torres

PRACTICE AREA

#19 White Collar Defense

QUALITY OF LIFE

#10 Office Space

REGIONAL

#6 Chicago

#17 Northern California

#18 Washington, DC

THE SCOOP

Winston & Strawn has an enviable 150+ year track record. A series of mergers, office openings and lateral hires has shaped a global law firm with 14 offices across the United States, Europe and Asia with a client roster listing such deep-pocketed clients as McDonald's, Philip Morris, and Verizon.

Cornerstone clients and a global focus

Winston & Strawn has long been identified with Fortune 100 companies in diverse transactions and litigation. Its work for Philip Morris includes a track record of success in its defense against a series of billion-dollar class-action lawsuits accusing the company of deliberately withholding information on the health risks of smoking. McDonald's also entrusts the firm with high-stakes work, and General Electric has depended on the firm since the early 1990s.

Pharmaceuticals figure prominently among the firm's client mix, including Abbott Laboratories, Sun/Caraco, Teva and Wyeth. The firm also has carved out a niche serving such accounting and financial services clients as PricewaterhouseCoopers, Ernst & Young, and Grant Thornton. The firm's more pronounced global approach to legal services is evidenced by its recent expansion into Asia, its increased international arbitration activity in Geneva, new IP and litigation hires in Paris, plus recent awards to the Paris office.

Expansion in the U.S. and Asia

In January 2008, the firm opened a new office in Charlotte, America's second-largest banking center. Since its opening, the office has moved to expanded space in Charlotte's Hearst Tower, and grown steadily in headcount and specialty areas. It beefed up its litigation practice through the addition of a team of partners from

Hunton & Williams, and added additional labor and employment attorneys. It now has nearly 30 attorneys and was recently ranked in the Charlotte Business Journal in their "Top 25 List for Largest Area Law Firms." In late 2008, the firm opened its first Asian office in Hong Kong. In 2009, Winston further expanded with offices in Beijing and Shanghai. The Asian offices have concentrated in corporate and transactional matters, complemented by the firm's international trade team. In April 2010, Winston added a litigation group to its Asian capabilities.

ASSOCIATE LIFE

"I am very happy with my job at Winston, primarily because of the great esteem in which I hold my immediate co-workers. The partners for whom I work are congenial and dedicated to the advancement of their associates. I do not know if the same can be said of all partners in other offices, but the Charlotte crew is wonderful."

—Charlotte associate

"I have plenty of interesting and diverse work. The partners do an excellent job of allocating work load to ensure that no one is working disproportionate hours."

—Energy associate

Firm Culture

"Socially, the culture is pretty quiet and people keep to themselves for the most part, although lawyers in the same classes do socialize together. Professionally, everyone I work with is very respectful. I feel I'm given as equal an opportunity to succeed as anyone."

—Litigation associate

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"Lawyers in my office frequently grab lunch together. In addition, the lawyers in my class regularly hold a happy hour."

-San Francisco associate

"I consider my hours eminently reasonable for my compensation. My week is roughly divided in equal parts, one part sleep, one part work, one part play. I definitely feel like my work-life situation is in balance."

-San Francisco associate

Associate/Partner Relations

"I see associates treated well by partners in general—as co-workers, not minions. Some partners seem to take a special interest in mentoring and training junior associates to max out their talents."

-San Francisco associate

"Within our practice group, the relationship is good. Associates work directly with partners, and receive constructive feedback on a continual basis. Additionally, the work that associates are exposed to is very high level."

-Chicago associate

"Naturally partners are higher up than associates on the totem pole, but I have never felt disrespected in my experience as a first-year associate. On the contrary, I have felt that partners are more than willing to speak to associates as colleagues."

-Litigation associate

Office Space

"Depends on the office location. Most are very luxurious."

-Corporate associate

"Incredibly well designed and comfortable. The office space is one of the reasons I decided to come to Winston."

-New York associate

HOURS/MONEY

"I work a lot of hours, but manage to still maintain a healthy family balance, largely through understanding partners and the ability to work remotely as needed. At least the work that keeps me so busy is interesting."

-Litigation associate

"The firm recently lifted its salary freeze, and associates are again eligible to receive market salaries."

-Energy associate

Professional Development

"Formal training varies by department, and my practice area is very strong in terms of training. Winston has a formal mentoring and advising program, which has varying degrees of success but is definitely viewed as a plus overall. The program pairs up associate mentors for the first few years, and then partner advisors after that, and Winston provides a budget for the pairs to go to lunch, get together for drinks, or whatever format the pairs see fit to use. I think it shows a strong commitment to mentorship as part of the firm's program for integrating attorneys at all levels."

-Senior associate

DIVERSITY

The firm's Diversity Committee has helped implement several new policies and efforts as it executes its multi-year strategic plan. One change concerns the maternity leave policy, which has been expanded to 18 weeks paid leave. Another is a change to its EEOC statement, which now includes nondiscriminatory language regarding sexual or gender identity, which helped the firm win a 100% rating for the past three years from the Human Rights Campaign Foundation, and designation as a "Best Place to Work for GLBT Equality." The firm also has an LGBT Affinity Group that is open to staff and attorneys.

The Diversity Committee recently created a series of procedures outlining how partners can and should be more diversity-conscious when putting together client proposals and business pitches. It also has formed task forces to revamp junior associate work assignment procedures and re-evaluate part-time work policies.

PRO BONO EFFORTS

Winston & Strawn is a leading example of a law firm committed to excellence in serving its clients and the public interest. Its public service commitment is one of the firm's core values. The firm encourages public interest law work and expects lawyers to spend a minimum of 35 hours annually on approved pro bono matters. In the last year, total pro bono hours reached an all-time high of 55,000, averaging 73 pro bono hours per lawyer. It recently implemented an expanded pro bono credit policy that allows associates to receive base compensation credit for the first 50 hours of approved pro bono work each year in addition to full bonus credit. The firm's pro bono commitment and efforts have been well-recognized. Since 2000, Winston has received more than 50 awards for its public interest law efforts.

In 2010, the firm and its attorneys took a leadership role in Haiti earthquake relief efforts by making a combined donation in excess of \$100,000 to Partners in Health, an international non-governmental organization that has provided significant medical and social services to Haitians for a number of years. The firm, led by one of its Paris partners, has had a longtime relationship with Partners in Health and also has played a key role in facilitating pro bono legal assistance to foundations, businesses, and other entities providing needed assistance to Haitians. Winston's role in the recent Haiti relief efforts was profiled in *The American Lawyer*. In 2010, Winston also partnered with McDonald's in a pro bono effort to assist female immigrants who are victims of domestic violence. The lawyers have worked with the women in applying for a U Visa, which is granted to certain crime victims and some family members in exchange for cooperating with law enforcement authorities. Another team of attorneys from the firm's Los Angeles office secured the release from prison of a battered woman convicted of second-degree murder through a successful habeas petition.

Since 2008, the firm has been actively involved in the Chicago Bar Foundation's citywide Investing in Justice campaign, which raises funds to support pro bono and legal aid agencies. Winston chairman Dan Webb has led the effort which over the past four years has resulted in Winston attorneys and the Winston & Strawn Foundation contributing in excess of \$300,000 to support the public interest law community.