ArentFox Schiff LLP
Attorneys

Matthew Galo

PARTNER AND PRIVATE COMPANIES INDUSTRY GROUP CO-LEADER

Matt counsels private companies and their owners and investors. He helps clients build, manage, expand and invest in successful businesses that thrive in dynamic industries.



Industries

Beverage & Food
Family Office
— Distressed Family Debt
Private Companies

Practices

Corporate & Securities

International

Australia

Education

Northwestern University Pritzker School of Law, JD, 1998

University of Notre Dame, BA, 1989

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Chicago

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Matt has extensive experience in mergers and acquisitions, restructurings, capital raising, family office formation and governance, business counseling and commercial transactions, and other strategic activities.

More than a “deal lawyer,” he partners with clients in planning and executing their growth strategies. Since 2001 he has served as M&A counsel for a $62B financial holding company, negotiating more than 60 acquisitions. He manages and executes the acquisition strategy for a multi-family office and registered investment advisor with more than $60B in AUM (as of 11/1/24) and coordinates ongoing corporate and finance representation for its affiliates. At the other end of the development spectrum, he works with entrepreneurs and growth companies to help them see around the corners ahead. He serves as outside general counsel to several long-standing private companies, including a roster of Australian, European, and UK companies for whom he serves as their lead US counsel.

Clients value Matt’s direct but friendly manner, responsiveness, accountability for himself and his teams, and skills in executing a plan.

Before law school, Matt was a lieutenant in the United States Navy (1989-1993). He served as damage control officer on the destroyer USS Stump (DD-978) and division officer aboard the battleship USS Iowa (BB-61).

Client Work

- Manages and executes acquisition strategy for a $45 billion financial holding company, and provides ongoing representation for its acquired banks and affiliates.
- Advises portfolio of food and beverage ingredient manufacturing companies in their formation, capital raising, governance and business activities, including $6 million preferred stock investment in Ecuador-based beverage ingredient manufacturer.
- Advised management team of commercial products manufacturing company in their management buyout and restructuring, and successful sale of non-core businesses.
- Advises portfolio of life science/nanotech start-ups in all aspects of formation, Series A, B, and C

rounds, spin-offs, licensing, governance, and on-going operations.

- Adjunct professor, Entrepreneurship Law Center of Northwestern University School of Law, where he supervises teams of students in their representation of entrepreneurs and start-up companies.
- Together with Tax and Estate Planning team members from our Private Companies Group, devised, planned and executed the building of a new investment, asset management and governance platform for a large family office and its diversified holdings, creating a structure that will enable smooth transition to successive generations.
- Represented large publicly owned food and beverage company in negotiation of its strategic divestitures of its non-core businesses, including certain well-known brands.

Publications, Presentations & Recognitions

Presentations

Matt has given numerous presentations to privately held and family-owned business owners, in-house legal and corporate development teams, wealth management advisers, start-up incubators and legal clinics on a variety of topics, including restructuring and business succession, corporate governance issues, negotiating mergers and acquisitions, private company ownership transition, and early stage capital raising.

- "Overcoming Challenges and Working with Entrepreneurial Clients - A Lawyer's Perspective," Northwestern Pritzker School of Law 14th Annual Entrepreneurship Law Conference, Chicago, Ill. (Mar. 1, 2019)
- "Food(ie) Entrepreneurs," 13th Annual Entrepreneurship Law Conference (Mar. 16, 2018)
- Family Business Owner Roundtable: Building an Effective Board and the Role of Outsider Directors (Feb. 25, 2013)

Recognitions

- Illinois Leading Lawyer, Law Bulletin's *Illinois Leading Lawyers Network* (2009-2021)
- *The Legal 500 United States* – M&A/Corporate and Commercial: M&A – Middle-Market (Sub-$500m) (2016, 2018, 2022 - 2023, 2025)
- Outstanding Achievements in Innovative Legal Services in Mergers and Acquisitions, Financial Times Innovative Lawyers Report U.S. (2010)

Boards, Memberships & Certifications

- Marillac St. Vincent Family Services, Member of Executive Committee and Secretary, Board of Trustees, Capital Campaign Steering Committee

Professional Activities

- Northwestern University School of Law, Entrepreneurship Law Center, Adjunct Professor

Celebrating ArentFox Schiff's Veterans: Matt Galo on Going From Military Service to Client Service

After four years in Naval ROTC at Notre Dame, Matt began serving on active duty in 1989 as a line officer in the Atlantic Fleet. He first served as a Division Officer (2nd Division - boats) aboard the battleship USS-Iowa (BB-61), and then served as Damage Control officer (DCA) aboard the Spruance-class destroyer USS Stump (DD-978). He completed his active duty in 1993, and started law school at Northwestern in 1995.

Read more

Bar Admissions

Illinois

Court Admissions

US District Court, Northern District of Illinois