

New Release

For Immediate Release

Law Firm Mergers Have a California Focus in Q3

WASHINGTON, D.C., October 2, 2023 – Fairfax Associates tracked 11 completed mergers in the third quarter of 2023 (meaning the effective date of the merger occurred during Q3 2023), bringing the total completed mergers for the first three quarters of the year to 41.

The third quarter saw Midwest and East Coast firms combining with California firms, with 4 of the 11 reported mergers involving California firms. This includes the largest merger of the quarter, Philadelphia-based Saul Ewing's (351 lawyers) combination with Freeman Freeman & Smiley (50) of Los Angeles and Orange County. Cleveland-based Tucker Ellis (219) combined with the Orange County-based business litigation boutique of Connor, Fletcher & Hedenkamp (6), Detroit-based Clark Hill (602) merged with Los Angeles firm, Barton Klugman & Oetting (10), and Winston-Salem based Womble Bond Dickinson (896) combined with San Francisco financial services litigation boutique Simmonds & Narita (5). This brings the total inbound mergers into California to 7 in 2023.

Clark Hill accounted for three mergers in the third quarter. In addition to the Los Angeles acquisition, the firm also combined with Funkhouser Vegosen Liebman & Dunn (16) of Chicago, and with HBMO Solicitors in Dublin (10), the only cross-border merger for the quarter. This brings Clark Hill to 5 mergers in 2023, following combinations with two Philadelphia firms earlier in the year.

Additional mergers in Q3 included Cincinnati-based Dinsmore & Shohl (615) with Orlando-based Mateer Harbert (19), and Philadelphia-based Fox Rothschild (910) with Aboyoun Dobbs (5) of Morristown, New Jersey.

Looking forward, there is one announced merger already set to close in Q4, and it again involves a Midwest firm combining with a California firm – Kansas City-based Spencer Fane (389) is set to combine with Pahl & McCay (15) of San Jose. That merger was set to close October 1 and will be included in Fairfax Associates' Q4 numbers. As widely reported, there are at least two potential significant mergers in the works which could be effective in Q4 as well.

Fairfax Associates collects data from published reports, press releases and direct reports from law firms. Mergers are reported where the acquired firm has five or more lawyers. Upon routine verification of the data, some historical numbers may have been updated since previously issued reports, and the number of mergers contained herein may change as additional mergers are announced.

###

About Fairfax Associates

Fairfax is a specialist firm of highly experienced consultants focused on serving clients in professional services, and in particular, law firms. Our services and areas of focus include merger strategy and search, merger integration, strategic planning, partnership issues including partner compensation, and governance and organization. We work with the largest international and national law firms and leading firms of all sizes.

CONTACTS

Lisa Smith
202.365.4180

Kristin Stark
415.215.9294

lisa.smith@fairfaxassociates.com

Kristin.stark@fairfaxassociates.com