

Covington Picks Up 2 Kirkland Partners To Lead PE Practice

By **Kat Greene**

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Covington & Burling LLP has hired a pair of partners from Kirkland & Ellis LLP experienced in handling mergers and acquisitions, leveraged buyouts and other transactions in industries including life sciences, media, technology, automotive, defense and hospitality to head up the firm's private equity practice in New York, the firm said Tuesday.

Amy Wollensack and Sergio Urias have joined Covington as co-chairs of the practice group, bringing their expertise handling a wide range of transactions driven by private equity firms and related matters, bolstering the firm's offerings for clients in that space in both the U.S. and Latin America, Covington said.

The pair have strong reputations in the private equity community, according to Covington's corporate practice chair Scott Smith.

"They bring the needed leadership for the future growth of our private equity practice," Smith said in a statement.

Wollensack has represented clients in domestic and international transactions across industries such as health care, life sciences, technology, media and entertainment, food and beverage, financial services and automotive, according to her firm bio.

She has represented ICV Partners LLC, for example, in a handful of transactions including several acquisitions and the sale of its portfolio company Cargo Airport Services, according to the bio. At Kirkland, she was promoted to partner in early 2014.

She was an undergraduate student at the University of Richmond before obtaining a master's of science in nursing at the Medical College of Virginia and a law degree from Washington University Law School.

She said in a statement that the firm's client list is a good fit for her and Urias' practice and clients.

Wollensack and her partner, she said, "will be joining a strong team, which includes all of the practices needed to support our middle market private equity clients. We are enthusiastic about the many expert



Sergio Urias



Amy Wollensack

practices at Covington that will add further value to our clients, making it a one-stop shop for private equity deals."

Urias, meanwhile, has worked with several private equity funds and their portfolio companies in deals including Murray Energy Corp.'s acquisition of a Colombian coal mining business from Goldman Sachs & Co., according to his firm bio.

He was also on a team of attorneys representing Brazilian hospital operator Rede D'Or Sao Luiz as The Carlyle Group made an investment in the company in April 2015, and guided Warburg Pincus as one of its portfolio companies, Sterling Financial Corp., was purchased by Umpqua Holdings Corp. in a deal valued at \$2 billion in September 2013.

Urias received his juris doctor degree from Escuela Libre de Derecho in Mexico and a Master of Laws degree from Harvard Law School.

He said in a statement he's looking forward to working with Covington's Latin American practice in addition to his private equity work.

"Covington has leading corporate, arbitration, investigative, regulatory and public policy practices that make it a perfect fit for inbound and outbound Latin American work," he said.

Wollensack and Urias weren't available for further comment on Tuesday.

--Editing by Nicole Bleier.