

## MVP: Covington's Amy Toro

By Adam Lidgett

*Law360 (September 23, 2022, 2:02 PM EDT)* -- Throughout the past year, Amy L. Toro of Covington & Burling LLP led life sciences companies like Sanofi and AstraZeneca through deals worth well into the billions, earning her a spot among Law360's 2022 Life Sciences MVPs.

### **HER BIGGEST ACCOMPLISHMENT IN THE PAST YEAR:**

On a larger scale, Toro said that collectively, it's been a really challenging time throughout the COVID-19 pandemic to try to get parties focused on their deals, given that there were few face-to-face negotiations.

But in the past year, she was still able to work on many transactions.

For example, she represented AstraZeneca in a multibillion-dollar transaction with Ionis Pharmaceuticals to come up with a treatment for a fatal liver condition called transthyretin amyloidosis, according to the firm.

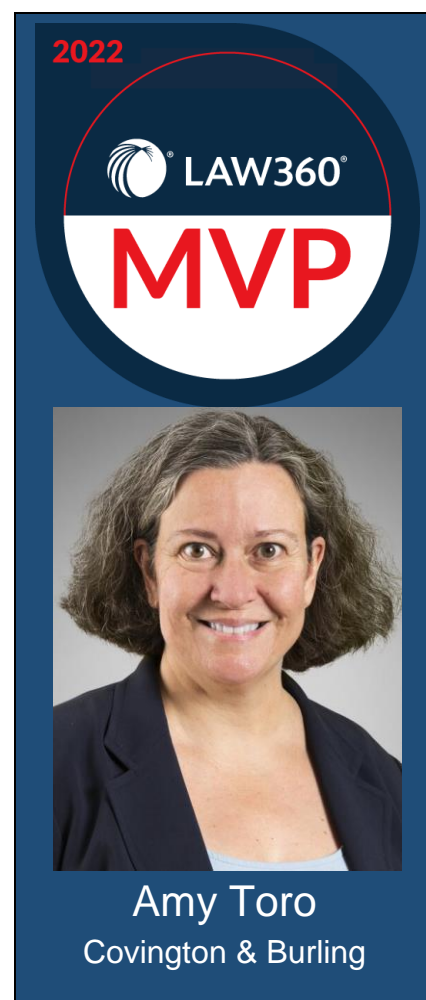
But she said her biggest accomplishment this year was announced in March, when she led Sanofi's alliance with IGM Biosciences, which could be worth up to \$6 billion, to develop a way to fight various cancer, immunology and inflammation targets.

"One of the things that was interesting about it was that it started off being an oncology collaboration, and it expanded into immunology and inflammation," she said.

She said that made it challenging because there were different departments involved and different stakeholder interests, but it was interesting to expand out into multiple areas and understand the distinction between oncology, which purely relates to cancer, and immunology, referring to all immune diseases.

### **HER PROUDEST MOMENT OF THE PAST YEAR:**

Toro said she was also very proud of the work she did for Sanofi in the digital health and artificial intelligence areas.



She said she and the firm worked with the company on a number of deals, but pointed specifically to a project announced in January, in which she represented Sanofi in a deal worth as much as \$5.2 billion with biotech company Exscientia. That deal would apply the artificial intelligence of Exscientia's business to cancer and immunology research, the companies said at the time.

"The idea is that they're using artificial intelligence to identify drug candidates using computers," Toro said. "It's a relatively new area, so that was also interesting."

#### **WHY SHE'S A LIFE SCIENCES ATTORNEY:**

A hundred percent of Toro's work is in the life sciences field, she said, with most of that work in the form of collaborations, licensing, and mergers and acquisitions.

"It's an industry that is constantly evolving, and it has a lot of different dimensions," she said.

On one hand, there is the scientific aspect of her practice, she said. But on the other, she sees it as important from a public health perspective, particularly for supporting research and development.

"I also appreciate the exposure to the antitrust aspects of the industry, and the pricing and reimbursement areas," she said.

#### **WHAT MOTIVATES HER:**

Toro referred to herself as a lifetime learner, saying that being able to see the industry evolve and to be involved in the latest in terms of deal structures is something she enjoys.

"I feel like I learn something every day and use it for the benefits of my clients," she said.

#### **HER ADVICE FOR JUNIOR ATTORNEYS:**

Finding an area of law that you actually like to practice is the best advice starting out, Toro said.

"Because every law practice can be stressful and time-consuming," she said. "But if you really love the area you're practicing in, that makes everything easier."

— *As told to Adam Lidgett.*

*Law360's MVPs of the Year are attorneys who have distinguished themselves from their peers over the past year through high-stakes litigation, record-breaking deals, and complex global matters. A team of Law360 editors selected the 2022 MVP winners after reviewing more than 900 submissions.*

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