



LAUREN M. SCHUSTER

SENIOR ASSOCIATE

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Lauren Schuster is a member of the firm's Corporate Services group, focusing her practice on employee benefits, compensation and tax.

She regularly advises public and private companies on employee benefits, compensation and employment tax matters, including equity and incentive compensation plans, nonqualified deferred compensation plans, retirement and welfare plans, fringe benefit plans and employment agreements. She assists employers seeking to establish, design and implement equity, incentive, deferred compensation and severance plans. When benefits issues arise, she counsels benefit plan sponsors through corrections and plan audits.

Lauren also has experience counseling clients through all stages of complex mergers and acquisitions with respect to compensation and benefits matters. Lauren conducts due diligence and drafts memoranda explaining and quantifying risks associated with compensation and benefits plans. She has guided both buyers and sellers through cross-border and domestic, public and private transactions, and is skilled in negotiating and providing comments on transaction agreements. Lauren counsels benefit plan sponsors and assists with integration matters.

In addition, Lauren is dedicated to advancing diversity and inclusion initiatives, and has past experience serving in leadership capacities for affinity organizations. She is an active participant in the firm's Inclusion and Women's Inclusion Network programming.

BACKGROUND

Before joining Armstrong Teasdale, Lauren focused her legal practice on executive compensation and employee benefits. She also previously worked as a student investigator for the U.S. Department of Labor, Employee Benefits Security Administration.

EDUCATION

- Loyola University Chicago (J.D., *magna cum laude*, 2014)
 - Alpha Sigma Nu, National Jesuit Honor Society
- Missouri State University (B.S., 2006)
 - International Business Administration and Spanish

PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

SERVICES AND INDUSTRIES

Corporate

Employee Benefits and
Executive Compensation

Tax

Mergers and Acquisitions

Agribusiness and Food

Consumer Products and
Services

Health Care and Life Sciences

Manufacturing and Innovation

Technology

Private Equity and Venture
Capital

ADMISSIONS

Missouri

Illinois

Wisconsin

- American Bar Association
- National Association of Stock Plan Professionals
- National LGBT Bar Association
- Armstrong Teasdale Inclusion Committee

ACCOLADES

- *The Best Lawyers in America*® Ones to Watch, Corporate Law, Employee Benefits (ERISA) Law (2021-present)

EXPERIENCE

\$65 Million Sale of Specialty Home Furnishings Business

Represented the seller, a manufacturer of specialty home furnishings, in its acquisition by a leading brand aggregator in numerous different consumer products spaces. The sale, for \$65 million in cash and equity, represented the buyer's first acquisition in the home furnishings space. We also provided counsel on employment, employee benefits, tax, patent, and intellectual property aspects of the transaction.

\$1 Million-Plus in Tax Liability Avoided

Secured several releases for employment and tax-related claims against a client. Inaccurate tax advice had led the company's board of directors to issue options that did not comply with Section 409A of the Internal Revenue Code. We were able to avoid tax liabilities for the client and option holders without triggering IRS action, and obtained release agreements from all option holders.

Review of Benefit Plans for Buyers and Sellers in Transactions

Assisted buyers and sellers with the review of benefit plans in mergers and acquisitions. Identified issues with the target's 401(k) plan and provided recommendations related to correction program filings.

Termination of Pension Plans for Employers

Assisted employers with complete and partial terminations of defined benefit pension plans. Prepared determination letter applications for submission to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), required participant notices, and filings to the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation (PBGC).

Termination or Conversion of Employee Stock Ownership Plans (ESOPs)

Assisted buyers and sellers with the acquisition of ESOP-owned companies, including terminating or converting the ESOP in connection with the transaction.

THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

January 6, 2023

For Your Benefit Newsletter, January 2023

April 18, 2022

For Your Benefit Newsletter, April 2022

December 21, 2021

For Your Benefit Newsletter, December 2021

August 3, 2021

For Your Benefit Newsletter, August 2021

April 9, 2021

100% COBRA Premium Subsidy – Immediate Action Required from Employers

March 17, 2021

For Your Benefit Newsletter, March 2021

March 12, 2021

Paid Leave Tax Credits under the American Rescue Plan Act

July-August 2020

Recent Legal Changes for Retirement Plans and IRAs

Illinois Banker

June 18, 2020

For Your Benefit Newsletter, June 2020

June 15, 2020

Supreme Court Rules that Title VII Protects Gay and Transgender Workers

May 5, 2020

IRS Issues Detailed FAQs on the Employee Retention Credit under the CARES Act

May 1, 2020

Agencies Extend Benefit Plan Deadlines During the COVID-19 Outbreak Period

vol. 66, no. 4 / Spring 2020

Equity-Based Compensation for Corporations, Partnerships and LLCs

St. Louis Bar Journal

March 19, 2020

New Paid Leave Requirements for Employers of Fewer Than 500 Employees

January 9, 2020

New SECURE Act Makes Changes for Employer-Sponsored Plans

December 20, 2019

For Your Benefit Newsletter, December 2019

July 18, 2019

For Your Benefit Newsletter, July 2019