

New England Legal Awards 2024

Partner of the Year Finalist: David Tolley, Latham & Watkins

By ALM Staff

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What accomplishments are you most proud of from the past year at your firm?

I am most proud of the way in which we come together as a department and take care of each other as family. That can mean working to deepen client relationships to create opportunities for more of our lawyers, which we have done; being an open door for associates to seek me out for candid conversations about their career goals and doing everything I can to help them achieve those goals—whether they include Latham as a long-term home or whether they have dreams of moving beyond Latham to careers in public service, in-house counseling, becoming a law school professor or something else.

Taking care of each other as family also means making sure all voices are heard in conversations about our department strategy, who we want to be as lawyers and what we want to accomplish together.

What makes a good and effective partner?

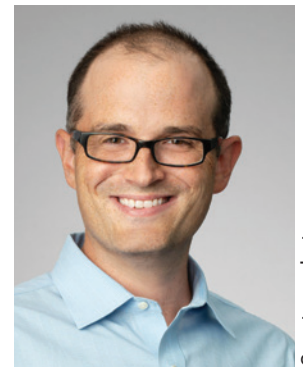
A good and effective partner understands what their fellow partners do and makes room for them in their client relationships—and then lets those partners develop and grow in those client relationships. To ensure I can best meet my clients' needs, I maintain deep and broad relationships inside the firm and know the skills that my

partners can bring to bear across different matters. I recommend approaching situations with a firm-oriented approach, asking “what’s best for the firm?” rather than “what’s best for me?” For example, I schedule regular touchpoints with my clients to identify where opportunities may exist for the firm, whether relevant to my practice or not.

It’s also essential to care deeply about firm culture and the values on which the organization is based, reflecting empathy for the people we seek to recruit and retain.

What is your best advice for associates who wish to become partners?

Treat your colleagues like your clients, because delivering excellent results for them is the best way to cultivate opportunities to develop relationships with firm clients and build a practice. Become laser-focused on performing the highest-quality work you can, and identify ways to make the client’s life easier, whether the client is internal or external, to deliver solutions that make everyone’s life easier in the long run.



David Tolley of
Latham & Watkins.

Courtesy photo