

RISING STAR: WILLKIE'S DANIEL MUN

BY ARMIE MARGARET LEE

Years before he became a corporate lawyer, Daniel Mun, who was born and mostly raised in Singapore, spent two-and-a-half years in the island nation's military as a tank platoon commander.

That experience, Mun said, taught him the importance of teamwork and how to operate effectively in high-pressure environments.

His love of working on complex and challenging situations and solving problems drew him to the field of law, said Mun, who made partner at Willkie Farr & Gallagher LLP in New York effective Jan. 1.

After his stint in the military, Mun attended King's College London, then went on to Columbia Law School. He worked at Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison LLP for nearly a decade prior to joining Willkie in 2017.

Being an M&A and PE lawyer "requires knowledge of and interest in a wide range of subjects and businesses," he said. "Each deal, each business model is unique. The parties you represent have constantly changing priorities and motivators."

Among the key lessons he has picked up is that in this field, "you really have to learn how to follow the money early in your career. What clients are interested in are identifying the real business issues and developing sound commercial solutions to those issues."

Mun also pointed to the importance of managing client expectations in terms of the time and cost needed to get deals done.

Recent transactions he worked on include Franchise Group Inc.'s (FRG) purchase of Sears Hometown and Outlet Stores Inc.'s outlet business, Vintage Capital Management LLC's sale of Buddy's Home Furnishings to



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Liberty Tax Inc., which later changed its name to Franchise Group, Sterling Group LP's acquisition of Polychem Corp. and Aquiline Capital Partners LLC's purchase of Relation Insurance Inc. from Parthenon Capital Partners LP and Century Equity Partners LLC.

Willkie partner Russell Leaf, who worked with Mun on deals for Vintage Capital and Franchise Group, said Mun can "distill complicated issues down to digestible pieces and really understands the client's business objectives."

Leaf added that Mun is able to quickly identify complex issues and come up with "workable, pragmatic and business-oriented solutions."