

# Briefs

RAISES ■ BENCH-BAR ■ MERGERS ■ GRADS ■ IN MEMORIAM

## Seven in 10 Employers Planning Bonuses and Raises, Survey Shows

**S**eventy percent of lawyers polled said their law firms or corporate legal departments plan to award their associates pay raises and bonuses this year, while 15 percent said that no additional compensation would be given.

The survey by Robert Half Legal includes responses from 200 lawyers at the largest law firms and corporations in the United States.

“After several years of staff reductions and salary freezes, employees who don’t feel rewarded sufficiently may be considering other job opportunities,” said Charles Volkert, executive director of Robert Half Legal. “To avoid losing top talent, employers in the legal field increasingly are bolstering employee retention programs, including offering raises and bonuses.”



“The costs associated with recruiting and training new legal team members often outweigh compensation-related expenses for existing staff,” Volkert added. “Firms with leaner budgets might offer non-monetary incentives, such as additional time off, flexible scheduling or telecommuting, as a way to improve employee satisfaction and reward hard work while also helping their organization’s bottom line.”

Volkert offers these additional tips for retaining valued staff:

- **Promote professional learning.** By

emphasizing training, organizations demonstrate they support the long-term success of their staff. Cost-effective ideas include supporting mentor relationships and online classes.

- **Provide well-defined career paths.** Challenging assignments enhance employee job satisfaction and also serve to identify future leaders. Consider how tasks might be reassigned to advance someone’s career goals.

- **Emphasize your firm’s culture.** Remind employees about those aspects of your work environment that are hard to find elsewhere.

- **Publicly praise contributions.** Appreciation and recognition can go a long way to foster loyalty. Publicly acknowledge individual and team successes to let employees know their efforts are appreciated. ■

## Special Early-Bird Savings for the 2011 Bench-Bar & Annual Conference

**C**atch early-bird savings now when you register for the Philadelphia Bar Association’s Bench-Bar & Annual Conference Oct. 14-15 at Harrah’s Resort Atlantic City. Visit [philabenchbar.org](http://philabenchbar.org) to save \$80 on your registration fee. But hurry, this offer ends on Friday, Sept. 16!

Earn up to 7 CLE credits through 15 unique course offerings while enjoying excellent networking opportunities with members of the bench and bar. And don’t miss the spectacular Friday Night Grand Reception at The Pool at Harrah’s, with its 90-foot glass domed ceiling and tropical atmosphere – a highlight of this year’s Conference.



The 2011 Bench-Bar & Annual Conference is co-chaired by Shelli Fedullo and Jeff Gross. This year’s sponsors include Iron Mountain and JAMS. Plus, get your onsite “passport” stamped by each sponsor,

and be automatically registered to win an iPad 2!

Visit [philabenchbar.org](http://philabenchbar.org) for a full list of CLE offerings, and be sure to register today to take advantage of special early-bird pricing! ■

# 16 Law Firm Mergers Reported During First Quarter of 2011

**T**here were 16 law firm mergers and acquisitions announced in the United States in the first quarter of 2011, but most of them came in January, according to Altman Weil MergerLine.

"The January mergers were likely in the works last fall and were announced to coincide with the new fiscal year," said Altman Weil's Ward Bower. "Although we expect 2011 to be a rebound year for law firm mergers, it's still too early to conclude that the market is back."

The largest and most significant merger announced in the first quarter was the combination of 3,500-lawyer global law firm DLA Piper and its Australian affiliate DLA Phillips Fox, a 600-lawyer firm headquartered in Sydney. There was a second cross-border deal in the first quarter of 2011. Dickinson Wright, a Detroit-based firm with 261 lawyers, acquired 26-lawyer Aylesworth LLP in Toronto.

These deals continue the 2010 trend of international mergers involving U.S.

law firms exemplified by the mergers of Hogan & Hartson and Lovells LLP, Sonnenschein Nath Rosenthal and Denton Wilde Sapte, and Squire Sanders & Dempsey and Hammonds.

The balance of reported 2011 combinations involved either the acquisition of small firms with 20 or fewer lawyers or the merger of two small firms. These deals followed one of two primary patterns. Law firms in larger markets made geographic moves to expand into new cities, while firms in smaller markets formed same-city combinations.

In addition to the 16 new law firm combinations announced between January and March 2011, there were eight deals announced last year that

were finalized on Jan. 1 of this year. They include the Squire Sanders and Hammonds marriage and Kilpatrick Stockton's acquisition of Townsend and Townsend and Crew. ■



## Employment Rate for New Law School Grads at 15-Year Low, NALP Reports

**T**he overall employment rate for new law school graduates is at its lowest level in 15 years, according to a survey by the NALP.

The Employment Report and Salary Survey for the Class of 2010 found the overall employment rate to be 87.6 percent. The survey measures the employment rate of the Class of 2010 as of Feb. 15. The employment rate has fallen more than four percentage points since reaching a 20-year high of 91.9 percent in 2007 and marks the lowest employment rate since the aftermath of the last significant recession to affect the U.S. legal economy.

A bare majority of employed graduates obtained a job in private practice. At 50.9 percent, this percentage dropped a full 5 percentage points from 2009 and is thus a considerable contrast to the previous 17 years, when the percentages ranged from 55 to 58 percent.

Employment in business was 15.1

percent, the highest that NALP has measured. The percentage of jobs in business had been in the 10 to 14 percent range for most of the previous two decades, except in the late 1980s and early 1990s when it dipped below 10 percent. About 32 percent of these jobs were reported as requiring bar passage, and about 29 percent were reported as JD preferred.

A little more than 8 percent of these business jobs represent graduates working for agencies that place individuals in temporary legal, law clerk, or paralegal jobs, similar to the Class of 2009 and down from just more than 11 percent for the Class of 2008. ■

### Get Published in

## THE PHILADELPHIA LAWYER

The Editorial Board of this magazine welcomes submissions from attorneys and other professionals who wish to share their expertise on law-related topics.

Articles must be original and previously unpublished.

Manuscripts should adhere to the following word counts:

- \* Major Law-Related Articles: 2,000 words
- \* Other Law-Related Features: 1,500 words
- \* General Interest: 1,500 words
- \* Fiction: 1,000 words
- \* Practice Areas: 750 words
- \* Essays or Humor: 750 words
- \* Book Reviews: 750 words

*For more information  
about submitting articles,  
e-mail: [tplmag@philabar.org](mailto:tplmag@philabar.org).*

### IN MEMORIAM

James F. Gannon  
Mar. 17, 2011, Age 83

James J. McCabet  
Apr. 20, 2011, Age 81

Anthony F. List, Sr.  
Apr. 11, 2011, Age 68

Steven A. Arbittier  
May 14, 2011, Age 72

Please send In Memoriam notices to  
[tplmag@philabar.org](mailto:tplmag@philabar.org).

*Have you considered a contribution to the Philadelphia Bar  
Foundation in memory of a deceased colleague?  
For information, call Gene Sirni,  
Foundation Executive Director, at 215-238-6334.*