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Stamford's Wofsey, Rosen, Kweskin & Kuriansky marks a century in law

By Bill Fallon

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In 1915, Abraham Wofsey, with a fresh-minted law degree from New York University, opened a solo practice in Stamford.

A century later, the firm employs 25 attorneys and an equal number of support staff at its 600 Summer St. office. It also is affiliated with the New Canaan law office of Ed Mellick, counsel to the firm.



Attorneys Steven Frederick and Marshall Goldberg of law firm Wofsey, Rosen, Kweskin & Kuriansky. The black-and-white photos are firm founders, absent the original founder, Abraham Wofsey, whose son is pictured in the leftmost photo. Photo by Bill Fallon

The firm since 1952 has been known as Wofsey, Rosen, Kveskin & Kuriansky (WRKK). The modern lobby of the office features the pictures of the latter three and of Abraham Wofsey's son, also Abraham. The old guard has every right to be proud as evidenced by a recent conversation with Steven Frederick and Marshall Goldberg, two of the firm's attorneys.

"What distinguishes us from the huge firms is that those lawyers have files and we have clients," said Goldberg, a 39-year WRKK attorney who ticked off his areas of practice: "Transactional law, commercial real estate, mergers and acquisitions, corporate law."

"It's why we're all here," said Frederick, a litigator whose subspecialty is employment law with 25 years with WRKK.

Other firm specialties include divorce and family law, landlord/tenant law, wills, trusts and probate law and personal injury law.

They identified WRKK as a full-service firm. "Everything except SEC registration work," they said.

Goldberg and Frederick spoke at a long, modern conference table, glass-topped and subtly rigged for communication. Most of the firm's work is in Connecticut, with New York second. Yet for all the complexity of operating a mid-sized law firm in a massive marketplace and the evident modernity of their office, their love of the law was clear.

"The law is gray," Frederick said. "There are lots of right answers. There are lots of wrong answers. You need someone to help you sort through it. This is what we do. We're one of the rare firms that still thinks of the law as a profession. We treat our clients well and make them better off after they've met us. And that, by the way, leads to a lot of referrals."

The firm is a "lockstep partnership."

"Some — very few — do it," Goldberg said

"Because of that, we're more productive," Frederick said. "We work for clients and we work for the entire firm. If you come to me or any lawyer with a problem and I'm not the best suited to help you, there is no incentive for me to hold on to the matter."

Goldberg laid out the firm's HR policy: "We hire the smartest people we can find. They must be intellectually interested. They must learn every detail of a client's business, whatever it is."

"We have a model here that works," Frederick said. "Something I won't forget was a long time ago. One of the senior partners told me of the tremendous kick he got out of bringing in a new client. He knew it was good for the firm."

Goldberg said that in the firm's entire history, only one partner has ever quit. He called that track record "extraordinary." He said the firm is both constantly looking to hire good people and conscious of its size. When he joined there were 10 lawyers.

“We’re fearful of the Wall Street model of superspecialization and splintering,” Goldberg said. “Our model is to get a lot of work and to have good people to get it done without becoming too big.”

Frederick, who previously worked on Wall Street, said, “It’s a good niche. It allows us to serve individuals and large corporations. We can do both and we can do both at the same time.

“We are proud that many of our clients have been affiliated with our office for decades, and many families have been our clients for generations,” he said.