

McDonald Hopkins Announces New Co-Presidents to Lead Firm Into the Future

JAMES GISZCZAK and JAMES STIEF

ELECTED CO-PRESIDENTS EFFECTIVE OCTOBER 1, 2022



Monday, April 4, 2022

CLEVELAND – McDonald Hopkins LLC has announced the election of James Giszczak and James Stief as co-presidents, with a shared vision of building on the Cleveland-based business advocacy law firm’s already successful culture that has made it a destination for a growing base of talented attorneys and venerable clients.

The move to a two-president system is designed to allow Stief and Giszczak to collaborate on the responsibilities of firm management, capitalizing on their complementary strengths, while also allowing them to continue to actively practice law and maintain their robust practices.

This marks the first time in McDonald Hopkins’ 92-year history that it will be managed by co-presidents. It also signals the first time that presidential duties will extend beyond the firm’s home office in downtown Cleveland’s Fifth Third Center. In addition to Cleveland, McDonald Hopkins has strategically located offices in Chicago, Columbus, Detroit and West Palm Beach.

Giszczak, who is currently Chair of the firm’s Litigation Department and Co-Chair of its Data Privacy and Cybersecurity Practice Group, is based in Detroit. Stief Chairs the Business Law Department while working



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out of the firm's Cleveland office. They have served together previously as longtime members of the McDonald Hopkins Executive Committee and Board of Directors.

“One of the fundamental strengths of McDonald Hopkins is our culture of teamwork across practice areas and across offices,” said Giszczak. “We look forward to taking that to the next level as co-presidents, and to working together in the best interest of the entire firm. For both of us, McDonald Hopkins was a ‘destination firm.’ We are committed to building on that idea, to leveraging our core strengths and entrepreneurial spirit to make it a destination firm for many more.”

Giszczak and Stief were elected by a vote of firm members on March 22.

“The members’ decision to vote to allow for the firm to be managed by two presidents was forward-thinking and made while considering what would be best for the Firm. This decision will enhance the ability of the Firm to continue attracting great clients and talented attorneys,” said Stief. “Jim and I have complementary skill sets. We will divide responsibilities accordingly, maximize our strengths, and continue to spend time managing our respective vibrant legal practices.”

Giszczak and Stief will succeed Shawn Riley, who served two three-year terms as president. Riley chose not to seek a third and final term due to a desire to see the firm benefit from its initiative to develop young attorneys, which has created a wealth of potential future leaders he believed were ready to take on expanded roles.

“We have invested quite a bit of our resources and time over the past several years providing training and coaching to the next generation of leaders,” said Riley, who has served in management roles at McDonald Hopkins for more than 20 years and will remain in his position as Chairman of the Board of Directors. “This transition will open spots and provide many of those people with a chance to take on new opportunities as leaders.

“The past two decades, particularly the past six years, have been interesting, exciting and rewarding, but they also seem to have flown by. It has been an honor and a privilege to serve as president of McDonald Hopkins, and while I thoroughly enjoy the role, I gave a great deal of thought to whether I should run for a third term. It is time to make room for our leaders of the future.”



James J. Giszczak



James E. Stief



Shawn M. Riley