

Sheppard Mullin Adds 2 Greenberg Traurig Immigration Pros

By Jonathan Randles

Law360, Los Angeles (September 14, 2012, 5:21 PM ET) -- Sheppard Mullin Richter & Hampton LLP has bolstered its immigration practice by adding two professionals from Greenberg Traurig LLP to its labor and employment practice in Washington, D.C., and Los Angeles, the firm announced Friday.

Dawn M. Lurie has joined Sheppard Mullin as a partner in the firm's labor and employment practice group and leads the firm's business immigration and compliance practice in Washington. Special counsel Mahsa Aliaskari, who worked with Lurie at Greenberg Traurig, has also joined the firm's labor and employment group and will be based out of the firm's office in the Century City neighborhood of Los Angeles, Sheppard Mullin said.

Lurie is considered a leading expert on immigration law and has particular expertise with the EB-5 Immigrant Investor Program and government work site investigations, according to Jonathan Stoler, co-chairman of Sheppard Mullin's labor and employment group. Lurie is also an authority on monitoring and compliance issues related to the U.S. E-Verify program and also has experience in Office of Special Counsel immigration-related matters, Sheppard Mullin said.

"We are very excited about having Dawn in our firm," Stoler told Law360. "The experience she has with the EB-5 entrepreneur investment visa program is one that is truly unique. We feel like we've caught lightning in a bottle with her and we hope to capitalize on that."

Stoler said Sheppard Mullin's clients had shown interest in the EB-5 visa program and Lurie's expertise gives the firm the flexibility to expand its immigration offerings to a growing clientele.

Lurie, who has more than 20 years experience, regularly counsels developers and private equity funds about issues related to EB-5 projects and EB-5 Regional Centers, the firm said. She also advises corporations on a variety of compliance-related issues, particularly related to Form I-9 employment eligibility verification and Student and Exchange Visitor Information System matters, according to the firm.

Lurie's addition to Sheppard Mullin coincides with the firm's continuing global expansion. In July, Sheppard Mullin won approval to open offices in South Korea.

Lurie said in a statement she was impressed by the strength of Sheppard Mullin's immigration practice as well as the firm's transactional practices, including the corporate and real estate practice, which she said she often leverages in connection with her compliance work.

"Sheppard Mullin's successful expansion and entrepreneurial culture have also been very attractive to me. I look forward to continuing to grow my practice with Mahsa, as well as my new partners throughout the firm," Lurie said in a statement.

Aliaskari, meanwhile, has represented employers before the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, Immigration and Customs Enforcement as well as the U.S. Department of Labor in connection with immigration-related employment and compliance matters, Sheppard Mullin said. She assists professionals and skilled workers across various industries in obtaining immigrant and nonimmigrant visas, the firm said.

Lurie and Aliaskari both received their law degree from American University Washington College of Law.

Sheppard Mullin employs about 600 attorneys in 16 offices located in the United States, Europe and Asia. The firm has 50 attorneys based in its Washington, D.C., office and 50 attorneys based in its Century City office with 90 attorneys in its labor and employment practice group overall.

--Editing by Katherine Rautenberg.

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