

Hodgson Russ Names Immigration Duo Practice Co-Chairs

By **Adrian Cruz**

Law360 (July 27, 2023, 3:51 PM EDT) -- New York-based Hodgson Russ LLP announced that it named two experienced immigration partners as the new co-chairs of the firm's immigration practice.

Partners Chelsea N. Latta and David J. Wilks were named co-heads of the Hodgson Russ immigration practice, according to the firm's Tuesday announcement. The group, which comprises five attorneys, three paralegals and two staff members, focuses its work on corporate immigration, representing companies on a variety of work visa petitions and applications, professionals looking to work in the U.S. and foreign companies looking to expand to the U.S.

"We're in a really great place where there's a lot of great opportunities to build what I think is a really growing area of law," Wilks told Law360 Pulse on Thursday. "Business immigration has been around for a long time, and I think that with companies thinking internationally as a default and immigration not getting any less complex, it's a really great opportunity to be a partner and counselor for companies."

The two attorneys have been working as practice co-chairs since May, and Wilks said the decision to name two co-chairs will bring a greater variety of experiences, leadership styles and ideas to the table, which he said bodes well for both the practice group's current success and future growth.

"We're looking to build stability and I think with having two co-chairs, we resonate on a lot of ideas, but we also bring different ideas and strengths to the table, which I think makes room for a lot of different types of attorneys, paralegals and staff to work with us," Wilks said. "What we're trying to do is create a sandbox for people to excel and build what they want to build within the stability of a 200-year-old law firm."

One of the main issues that Wilks said the firm's immigration clients are currently facing is the stagnant nature of immigration reform, noting that most of the changes are volatile and liable to change with each administration, making it hard for corporations to develop long-term plans for hiring foreign employees.

"A lot of changes in immigration are policy driven, which can change with each administration," he said. "The fact that the rules are somewhat unstable can be quite challenging for a company trying to have a solid base with their employees. H1-B numbers are capped at 65,000 for the general population, and those numbers were set decades ago and don't reflect what the current labor market really needs."

Wilks, who's been with Hodgson Russ since 2020, graduated from Cornell University Law School, and his practice focuses on working with companies, nonprofits, universities and entrepreneurs on



Chelsea N. Latta



David J. Wilks

temporary and permanent residence petitions. He also represents foreign medical degree recipients on their efforts to obtain waivers and lawful status and individuals looking to obtain marriage-based permanent residence and U.S. citizenship.

Latta has been with Hodgson Russ for her entire career, joining in 2014 after graduating from the State University of New York at Buffalo Law School. She mainly works with companies in the technology, manufacturing, financial services and higher education industries looking to hire foreign national employees but also works with corporations looking to develop companywide immigration programs.

Latta wasn't immediately available for comment Thursday.

--Editing by Emma Brauer.

All Content © 2003-2023, Portfolio Media, Inc.