John M. Williams III

Partner

jwilliams@gibsondunn.com

T: +1 949.451.3923

Orange County



John M. Williams is a partner in Gibson Dunn's Orange County office and is a member of the firm's Mergers & Acquisitions and Private Equity Practice Groups.

John has extensive experience in representing boards of directors and private equity funds in structuring, negotiating and closing transactions for public and private companies. These transactions have included domestic and cross-border mergers, stock and asset acquisitions, joint ventures and restructurings. He also has significant experience in advising boards of directors in corporate governance, securities compliance and general corporate matters. John has also served as counsel to investment banks as an advisor in securities and M&A transactions.

John has been selected by members of the southern California legal community for inclusion in *The Best Lawyers in America*® as an expert in mergers and acquisitions every year since 2008. Over the course of his career, John has represented clients in a wide range of industries including manufacturing, hospitality, energy, consumer/retail, sports, life sciences, communications, technology and industrial.

John received his Juris Doctor *cum laude* from Georgetown University where he was Editor-in-Chief of *Law and Policy in International Business*. He holds a Master's Degree in public administration with an emphasis in intergovernmental management from the University of Southern California and a Bachelor of Arts in political science from the University of California at Irvine. He is admitted as a member of the Bars of California and Washington, D.C. Prior to attending law school, John worked in municipal management in California and then spent several years in Washington, D.C. as the assistant director of a legislative advocacy firm.

An active member of the Orange County community, John is the Chair of the Board of Governors of the Orange County Community Foundation (OCCF), a nonprofit organization which manages assets in excess of $850 million and facilitates annual grants of over $100 million from family offices and other donors to nonprofit organizations that have been reviewed and screened by OCCF. He also sits on the Board of Councilors for the School of Social Sciences at the University of California, Irvine.

Representative Transactions:

- WM Technology, Inc.: Represented the founders of this technology company in a $1.5 billion merger with Silver Spike Acquisition, a publicly-traded SPAC.
- Cellular Biomedicine Group: Advised this publicly-traded biotech company in connection with a management-led going private transaction.
- Compass Diversified Holdings: Represented this publicly-traded private equity firm in the $450 million acquisition of BOA, a designer and marketer of dial-based fit systems for footwear, headwear and medical bracing products.

Capabilities

Mergers and Acquisitions
Betting and Gaming
Capital Markets
Emerging Companies / Venture Capital
Energy and Infrastructure
Life Sciences
Power and Renewables
Private Equity
Securities Regulation and Corporate Governance
Sports Law

Credentials

Education

Georgetown University - 1991 Juris Doctor
University of Southern California - 1987 Master Public Administration
University of California - Irvine - 1985 Bachelor of Arts

Admissions

California Bar

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- MGM Resorts International: Represented MGM in the sale of Circus Circus Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas for $825 million.
- MGM Resorts International: Represented MGM in the acquisition of Empire City Casino and Racetrack in New York for $850 million.
- MGM Resorts International: Represented MGM in the acquisition of the Hard Rock Rocksino in Ohio for $1.06 billion.
- HMI Cardinal: Represented the shareholders of HMI Cardinal, a manufacturing company based in Louisville, Kentucky, in the sale of the company to private equity firm Riverside Companies.
- Viant Technology/Time Inc.: Represented Viant in the acquisition of the company by Time Inc.
- MGM Resorts International: Represented MGM in a joint venture transaction with Anschutz Entertainment Group to develop and operate the T-Mobile 20,000 seat arena in Las Vegas.
- Special Committee of the Board of Directors of Uranerz Energy Corporation: Advised the independent committee in its proposed merger with Energy Fuels, Inc. to create the largest integrated uranium production company in the United States.
- Compass Group: Represented this private equity firm in the acquisition of SternoCandleLamp.
- Argyros family/DST Systems, Inc.: Represented the Argyros family in a proposed proxy contest involving DST Systems, Inc. and the subsequent repurchase of the family's equity position.
- Richland Towers: Represented the shareholders of Richland in the sale of the company to American Tower Corporation.
- MGM Resorts International: Represented MGM in a joint venture to finance, develop and operate a resort and casino in Baltimore, Maryland.
- Edison International: Represented Edison in a joint venture transaction with TIAA-CREF and Cook Inlet Region, Inc. to form and finance an entity to fund development of wind energy projects in North America.
- Walters Wholesale Electric Co.: Represented the shareholders of Walters in the sale of the company to Consolidated Electrical Distributors, Inc.
- Edwards Lifesciences: Represented Edwards in the acquisition of Embrella Cardiovascular as well as more than ten other acquisitions and dispositions.
- The Ergo Baby Carrier, Inc.: Represented Ergo Baby in the acquisition of baby products maker Orbit Baby, Inc.
- Compass Group: Represented Compass in the acquisition of The Ergo Baby Carrier, Inc.
- Diedrich Coffee, Inc.: Represented Diedrich Coffee in a public company merger transaction with Green Mountain Coffee Roasters.
- Document Sciences Corporation: Represented Document Sciences in the sale of the company to EMC Corporation.
- Johnny Rockets Group, Inc.: Represented the private equity owners of Johnny Rockets in the sale of the company to private equity firm RedZone Capital Management.
- Advantage Sales and Marketing: Represented the management team at Advantage in the sale of the company to a private equity buyer.
- Edison Mission Energy: Represented Edison in the sale of a 50% equity interest in Brooklyn Navy Yard Cogeneration Partners to Delta Power Company.
- Edison Mission Energy: Represented Edison in the sale of James River Cogeneration Company to NRG Energy, Inc.

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- Knott's Berry Farm: Represented the shareholders of this amusement park operator in the sale of the company to publicly-listed Cedar Fair, L.P.

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