

MVP: King & Spalding's Nikki Reeves

By Al Barbarino

Law360 (October 13, 2020, 10:57 AM EDT) -- Nikki Reeves, co-chair of King & Spalding LLP's 350-strong life sciences and health care industry group, was retained in April by Amryt Pharmaceuticals to facilitate its acquisition of Aegerion Pharmaceuticals out of bankruptcy, earning her a spot among Law360's 2020 Compliance MVPs.

HER BIGGEST ACCOMPLISHMENT THIS YEAR:

Entering the U.S. pharmaceutical landscape is challenging. But in the case of Irish pharma company Amryt, it's exponentially complex given that the company has struck several settlement agreements with U.S. regulators tied to the Aegerion acquisition, Reeves said.

"This is already a very heavily regulated environment," she said. "In addition, Amryt is carrying these very complicated settlement agreements. They are very onerous, burdensome and challenging."

She is guiding Amryt through the agreements, including with the U.S. Department of Justice and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, while also handling the company's day-to-day compliance matters and communications with its clientele in the medical community.

"It's an exhilarating assignment given its great importance to the success of the company," Reeves said, citing the assignment as her biggest accomplishment of the year.

HER PROUDEST MOMENT THIS YEAR:

Reeves founded the firm's Ad Hoc Sunshine and State Law Compliance Group coalition more than 15 years ago, now made up of more than 70 pharmaceutical and medical device manufacturers.

She's especially proud of her team's work this year in counseling clients on burdensome new state regulations known as drug price transparency laws, all while keeping close tabs on a host of other federal and state regulations.



"So many companies rely on our firm for this," she said. "The value of the coalition is so great because we really get into the complexities of what these very detailed laws require."

WHY SHE IS AN FDA AND HEALTH CARE REGULATORY COMPLIANCE ATTORNEY:

Reeves' interest in the space dates back to a five-year internship she began in high school working within pharmaceutical company GlaxoSmithKline's regulatory department.

Though an English major in college, she continued to thrive off of the variety, intricacy and interaction that the internship brought her, leading her to pursue a career in health care law.

"I love the role of partnering with clients on handling their challenging business compliance and regulatory issues," Reeves said. "For me it's all about maintaining those relationships on a day-to-day basis."

There's never a dull moment, Reeves added, noting that she has to stay up to speed on the business practices and complex regulations surrounding drug and medical device companies involved with everything from oncology to psychiatry to dermatology.

"I have to be an expert in a wide variety of different areas," she said.

HER ADVICE FOR JUNIOR ATTORNEYS:

Reeves said one challenge for junior attorneys is understanding the context of a problem and how the client will put advice to work.

To get an intimate look into the issues clients deal with, she recommended that junior attorneys attend conferences or webcasts where multiple viewpoints are shared.

"Pause for a moment to understand the shoes that the client is in," she said. "Even seasoned lawyers are not always able to do it, but I think that's the best way to build a relationship with the client."

— *As told to Al Barbarino*

Law360's MVPs are attorneys who have distinguished themselves from their peers over the past year through high-stakes litigation, record-breaking deals and complex global matters. A team of Law360 editors selected the 2020 MVP winners after reviewing more than 900 submissions.