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A man with glasses, wearing a dark pinstriped suit, white shirt, and patterned tie, stands with his arms crossed in a law library. He is positioned in front of wooden bookshelves filled with numerous blue-bound legal volumes. The shelves extend into the background, creating a sense of depth. The lighting is warm, highlighting the man and the texture of the books.

**Nolan S. Taylor of
Dorsey & Whitney LLP**

Attorney of the Month

Judge Jennifer Brown

Judicial Profile

Nolan S. Taylor of Dorsey & Whitney LLP

People First

By Vicki Hogue-Davies

It's a given that exceptional legal expertise is necessary to build a truly premier law practice. Not always as obvious, however, are the other contributors to success. The corporate practice group at Dorsey & Whitney's Salt Lake City office operates within the philosophy that it is the people and the way they are carefully developed and empowered that makes the difference. The practice group, which focuses primarily in mergers and acquisitions, private equity and capital markets, includes five partners and six associates.

"We hire the smartest people with the finest characters and highest emotional intelligence we can find and give them the support, training, resources and environment to succeed," says Nolan Taylor, managing partner of the Salt Lake City office and senior partner and founder of the corporate group. "We give them opportunity and a sense of ownership and that leads to a level of client focus, loyalty and productivity that I really haven't seen elsewhere during my years in practice."

Strong Corporate Practice

Taylor, who started the current corporate practice 20 years ago, has been an M&A and capital markets attorney for 30 years. As a trusted adviser to companies and boards of directors, he has led clients through hundreds of transactions and corporate governance issues.



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He brought the practice group to Dorsy's international platform in 2000 because he felt the move would allow the group to grow and flourish, which it has. The group has grown over the years and the reputations of its attorneys continue to increase. In just one example, four of the Salt Lake City corporate group's lawyers were voted by their peers to the Best Lawyers in America 2016 list. They include Alan Bell, Samuel Gardiner, David Marx and Taylor, who was also named a Best Lawyers' Lawyer of the Year for capital markets work in 2016 and M&A work in 2011.

Bell, who leads the corporate group for the Salt Lake City location, moved to Dorsy with Taylor, where he has built a national private equity and fund formation practice. He attributes his decision to join the group to his desire to work with Taylor.

"Nolan is the reason I left the firm I was with in 2000," Bell says. "It was his reputation as one of the premier corporate lawyers, not only in Utah but in the Rocky Mountain region that drew me. He is a

natural leader and very good with people. I had heard so many things about him and felt 'that is the type of person I want to work with.' I believe he's one of the best at what he does."

complexities, brought the parties together when it looked like the deal might not survive, closed the deal, and got a great result for the client. I learned a lot watching him as he worked through this complex and difficult transaction."

Taylor, who is also a member of the firm's global policy committee, is quick to point out that the practice group's success is based on team effort and that the entire firm operates in a collaborative way.

"The firm has highly collaborative practice groups that work together on a daily basis," he says. "We are very careful about bringing in exceptional lawyers who have personalities that will mesh well with others."

In addition to Bell, the other corporate group partners, including Gardiner, Marx and Layne Smith, are also high

achievers.

Gardiner joined the group right out of law school. He focuses his practice in mergers and acquisitions and has become the co-head of the firm's global mergers and acquisitions group.

"Sam is an example of what people have

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As an example, Bell recounts one deal that he worked with Taylor on several years ago. "We represented the seller in a complicated transaction involving dozens of subsidiaries of a holding company," he says. "It was a lengthy and difficult negotiation process. Nolan worked through the



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At a Glance



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Salt Lake Practice Areas

Corporate
Trial
Finance & Restructuring
Intellectual Property
Mining & Natural Resources
Real Estate

Dorsey & Whitney is an international law firm with more than 550 lawyers in 19 offices in the United States, Canada, Europe and Asia.

Salt Lake Corporate Partners

Nolan S. Taylor
Samuel P. Gardiner
Alan W. Bell
David Marx
Layne T. Smith

Firm Corporate Practice Recognition

Top 10 for M&A Deals Completed in U.S., Thomson Reuters, 2015
No. 13 for M&A Deals Completed Worldwide, Thomson Reuters, 2015
22nd Consecutive Year that Dorsey Ranked in Top 10 for U.S. Deals Completed, Thomson Reuters, 2015
Capital Markets Law Firm of the Year, Global 100 Award, M&A Today, 2013-2016
Mergers & Acquisitions Practice Law Firm of the Year, DealMakers Monthly, 2014
Securities & Capital Markets Law Firm of the Year, Finance Monthly Global, 2014

been able to achieve in the environment built on the philosophy the group follows,” Taylor says.

Marx joined the group early in his career. “As a sought after securities lawyer, David has helped build what I believe is the largest public company practice in the market,” Taylor says. “We have represented companies and underwriters in SEC registered public offerings such as the recent IPOs of People’s Utah Bancorp and Great Basin Corporation. We’ve also completed IPOs and follow-on offerings for some of the most significant public companies in the state.”

Smith, who also came to Dorsey as a young lawyer, rounds out the group. “Layne is an exceptional mergers and acquisitions lawyer with particular expertise in health care and technology transactions,” Taylor says.

“Our goal of hiring very smart people of high character and emotional intelligence and giving them opportunities to grow and build something has paid off, as we have worked together for many years,” he continues.

New associates joining the group are trained in its team-based system. They are carefully mentored by the partners and given a large amount of responsibility to allow them to more quickly develop in their careers. And the collaborative system is also of great benefit to clients.

“We are intensely client focused, so nobody works in a silo,” Taylor says. “We have multiple lawyers, including partners and associates, connected to every client. Client relationships are not hoarded by one person and clients know they can always reach a Dorsey team member 24/7. That combined with the high level of Dorsey experience and expertise locally, nationally and internationally is a pretty powerful client service offering.”

Community Activities

The attorneys also offer their time and expertise to the community. Every partner and associate is expected to and does take on pro bono work. Dorsey & Whitney has met the American Bar Association pro bono challenge every year since 1983. All of its practice groups are involved in those efforts. Partners at the firm, including within the corporate group, also contribute to the Dorsey & Whitney Foundation, which was founded in 1982. The foundation supports charitable causes in communities where the firm’s employees live and work.

“The foundation donations that are attributable to our Salt Lake City partners are directed by those partners themselves,” Taylor says. “A number of our lawyers are active with a number of charitable organizations and civic and community groups. Many are on the boards of charitable organizations. Giving back to our communities is an integral part of the Dorsey & Whitney culture.”

Whether working together in the office or to help the community, it is the sense of putting people first that Bell most enjoys about his career with the firm.

“I view the partners and associates I work with not only as colleagues but really friends,” he says. “You spend a lot of time at work and to feel that sort of friendship and collaboration makes you excited to go to work. It is a long career and really enjoying the people I work with has been great for me.”

Taylor concurs that for Dorsey and its corporate group, it all really begins and ends with people.

“Our group’s biggest achievements have had to do with the hiring and development of the members of our team,” he says. “Our clients are our first priority, but superior client service begins with having talented people. The ability to work with some of the best known companies in this market and do significant work for them is an important achievement. As you do sophisticated work for satisfied clients you end up getting more clients.”