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Former DOJ Assistant Chief William Johnston Joins Bird Marella as Partner

Bird Marella proudly announces that former U.S. Department of Justice Assistant Chief William E. Johnston has joined the firm's partnership as of March 5, 2024.

Mr. Johnston most recently served in the Fraud Section of the Criminal Division of the U.S. Department of Justice in Washington, D.C. He was the supervising prosecutor on hundreds of fraud cases across the country in various industries, including the technology sector, financial services, healthcare, and government programs. In his role as Assistant Chief, Mr. Johnston oversaw many of the Fraud Section's enforcement programs, coordinating closely with the SEC, FTC, and the FDIC Office of the Inspector General.

Mr. Johnston brings extensive trial experience in the full range of white collar offenses, including accounting fraud, bank fraud, securities fraud, money laundering, and obstruction of justice. He recently co-led the trial team that obtained convictions against the former executives of Outcome Health, a high-profile Chicago-based healthcare technology startup, for a $1 billion scheme to defraud the company’s clients, investors, and lenders. During his decade-long tenure at the DOJ, Mr. Johnston was twice honored with the Assistant Attorney General's Award for Exceptional Service, among other recognitions.

"We are excited to welcome Will to our white collar defense group. He is an impressive trial lawyer with tremendous experience and insight in a broad array of industries. There is no doubt he will be an excellent addition to the firm's partnership and our government investigations and enforcement practice," said partner Ariel Neuman.

Managing partner Paul Chan adds, “Will is a stellar attorney and will be a valuable asset to our clients. We are thrilled to have someone with his unique experience join the firm. Will’s addition to Bird Marella further strengthens our white collar defense practice and helps solidify the next generation at Bird Marella."

Bird Marella's distinguished white collar defense and government investigations practice is nationally known as reflected by the firm’s Band 1 ranking for Litigation: White Collar Crime & Government Investigations by Chambers USA. Bird Marella was founded over 40 years ago by former Assistant U.S. Attorneys, and Mr. Johnston's addition to the firm continues and strengthens its decades-long legacy as one of the country's top firms for white collar defense.

Mr. Johnston shares, "I'm excited to start a new chapter of my career as a partner at Bird Marella.

The firm's national profile and boutique structure make it the perfect setting for me to build a practice representing clients facing government investigations and enforcement actions. I look forward to working with this talented team and expanding on the firm's extensive white collar practice."

Read more on *Law360* here and the *Daily Journal* here (subscription required).