

Partner Profile



Francis J. Aquila

Partner since 1992

Brooklyn Law School, J.D. 1983

Columbia University, A.B. 1979

"Dealmaker of the Year" for representation of InBev in its acquisition of Anheuser-Busch; his client noted that Frank is "just one of those guys who never lets you down."

(The American Lawyer, 2009)

"Global M&A Lawyer of the Year"
(Atlas M&A Awards, 2010)

Frank Aquila is "widely recognized as 'one of the world's finest M&A lawyers'"

(Who's Who Legal 2015)

Cited as one of the most important people in corporate governance and inside the boardroom by The National Association of Corporate Directors (2011, 2012, 2013, 2014)

Two time recipient of the *Burton Award for Legal Achievement* (2010 and 2005)

Law360 Life Sciences MVP (2013)

Frank Aquila has a broad multidisciplinary practice that includes extensive experience in mergers and acquisitions. He also regularly counsels boards of directors and board committees on corporate governance, crisis management and matters affecting corporate policy and strategy. Mr. Aquila has been engaged in many high profile matters that include activism, cross-border transactions, leveraged buyouts, proxy contests and unsolicited bids as an adviser to global leaders such as **Amgen, Anheuser-Busch InBev, Avon, Diageo, International Airline Group, Kraft Foods Group, Navistar International, Pharmacia and United Rentals**.

Mr. Aquila has been repeatedly cited as one of the world's leading mergers and acquisitions lawyers. The breadth of his practice has resulted in his being recognized as one of a small number of lawyers ranked by **Chambers Global** in Band 1 (their top tier), as an **American Lawyer "Dealmaker of the Year"** and as a recipient of the **Atlas Award** as "**Global M&A Lawyer of the Year**." For his work in corporate governance, Mr. Aquila has been regularly named by the National Association of Corporate Directors (NACD) to their "**Directorship 100**" – one of the 100 most influential people in corporate governance and inside the boardroom. He is also a two-time winner of the **Burton Award for Legal Achievement** (2005 and 2010). In 2009 Mr. Aquila was selected by the **American Bar Association** as a "**Legal Rebel**" – one of the profession's 50 leading innovators. In 2014 **Global M&A Network** recognized him as one of the top 50 lawyers and in 2015 the **National Law Journal** named him as one of M&A's "**Trailblazers**." **Law360** named Mr. Aquila a **Life Sciences MVP** in 2013.

During the course of his career, Mr. Aquila has advised numerous clients in many of the largest global transactions that have been transformational across a range of business sectors. In pharmaceuticals he represented **The Upjohn Company** in its merger with **Pharmacia** to create **Pharmacia & Upjohn** and its subsequent acquisition of **Monsanto** to form **Pharmacia**. In beverage alcohol Mr. Aquila represented **Grand Metropolitan** in its combination with **Guinness** to form **Diageo** and **Diageo** in its acquisition of **Seagram Wine & Spirits**. In brewing he represented **InBev** in its successful bid for **Anheuser-Busch** and **Anheuser-Busch InBev** in its follow-on deals to acquire **Grupo Modelo**, **Oriental Brewery** and its pending bid for **SABMiller**. In biotech he represented **Amgen** in its acquisitions of **Abgenix** and **Onyx**. In aviation he represented **British Airways** in its combination with **Iberia** to form **IAG International Airlines Group**. In consumer packaged goods Mr. Aquila represented **Pillsbury** in its combination with **General Mills** and **Kraft** in its merger with **H.J. Heinz** to form **The Kraft Heinz Company**. In equipment rental he represented **United Rentals** in its acquisition of **RSC** to form the world's largest equipment rental company.

Mr. Aquila is a member of the Firm's Management Committee. Previously, Mr. Aquila was the co-managing partner of Sullivan & Cromwell's General Practice Group and in that role he was responsible for almost 500 lawyers in 12 offices around the world. This group includes the Firm's corporate, financial institutions, securities, mergers & acquisitions, corporate governance, real estate, leveraged finance, private equity, project finance, restructuring and intellectual property transactional practices.

Other Selected Transactions Include:

- **Avon Products** in its acquisition of **Silpada Designs** and its divestiture of **Avon Japan**
- **Collective Brands** in its sale to a consortium including **Wolverine Worldwide** and in its acquisition of **Stride Rite**
- **EchoStar** in its attempted acquisition of **Hughes Electronics** from **General Motors**
- **Western Resources** in its hostile bids for **ADT** and **KCP&L**
- **Optimer Pharmaceuticals** in its acquisition by **Cubist Pharmaceuticals**
- **Navistar International** with respect to its agreements with **Icahn Partners** and **MHR Fund Management**