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# He's Back: Andy Sandler Launches New D.C. Firm with Ex-Buckley Partners

The lawyer who retired last year and ex-Buckley partner Andrea Mitchell announced they're launching a new firm: Mitchell Sandler, joined by another Buckley partner, Robyn Quattrone.

By Jenna Greene | May 01, 2019

Last year, Andy Sandler did something rare for a successful lawyer: He walked away from the law.

He had quite the run. In 2009, he left Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom, where he headed the consumer financial services enforcement and litigation practice, to co-found Buckley



**Andrea Mitchell, Robyn Quattrone, and Andrew Sandler, of Mitchell Sandler.**  
Courtesy photo.

Sandler. As chairman and executive partner, he grew the firm in nine years to number 171 on the Am Law 200, with profits per equity partner of \$2.48 million in 2017.

And then in February of 2018, he announced (<https://link.law.com/click/16746629.2336/aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cubGF3LmNvbS9saXRpZ>) at age 61, he was retiring from the practice of law, exiting the firm to serve as chairman of Treliant Risk Advisors, the financial services industry consulting firm he founded, CEO of compliance software provider Asurity, and to run his private investment company, Temerity Capital Partners.

Oh also, he bought a minor league baseball team, The Kannapolis Intimidators.

But like that first love you never quite get over, Sandler in the intervening 14 months discovered something else: "I missed practicing law," he said.



On May 1, he and ex-Buckley partner Andrea Mitchell announced they're launching a new firm: Mitchell Sandler, joined by another Buckley partner, Robyn Quattrone.

The majority women-owned and managed firm will focus on financial services regulatory, enforcement and litigation matters, representing banks, mortgage and specialty finance companies, credit card issuers and fintech companies.

The trio "go way back," Sandler said—they all worked together at Skadden. Mitchell describes him as "My mentor. I grew up under his practice at Skadden, and he introduced me to some of my most important clients."

But Sandler, who joins as senior partner, is clear that this time around, he's taking a back seat in firm management. "I've had my turn" at Buckley Sandler, he said.

Mitchell will serve as managing partner, and Quattrone will be chief operating officer.

"Andrea and Robyn want to build something—their own model, and with a women's perspective," Sandler said. "I'll be there to advise when asked. I intend my role to be supporting them...I do not wish to play a management role."

Also joining the firm: Alex Acree, co-founder and former managing director and general counsel of Fenway Summer Ventures and Stephen LeBlanc, who worked previously with Mitchell, Sandler, and Quattrone as a litigator at Buckley.

The new firm sees an opportunity to focus on mid-size and community banks, which are often hard-pressed to pay big firm hourly rates.

"The inspiration for our law firm stemmed from a recurring question—'Are law firms currently set up to meet the business challenges and opportunities of tomorrow?'" Mitchell said. "I didn't know the answer, but decided to formulate the concept for a law firm that started with a blank slate."

"We understand the competing demands that our clients are facing today," she continued. "They are expected to help achieve their company's business goals, embrace diversity and inclusion principles, and obtain superior legal advice at a reasonable cost. At Mitchell Sandler, we are prepared to share the responsibilities placed on our clients."

Quattrone added, "When we decided to start our own firm, we agreed that our central focus would always be on people—and that includes everyone—staff, attorneys, our families, and, of course, clients."

Sandler, who spent the past year as a client rather than a lawyer, said he has “a new perspective on the need to make the client relationship less transactional. I do not like paying my lawyers by 10 minute increments for routine advice; I don’t want to be that lawyer this time around.”

“We want to stay small, with high expertise and low overhead, and measure our value differently,” he continued. “We want to use retainers, value billing and other approaches to replace hourly billing whenever the client is willing to do so. We want clients to understand that we prefer to be compensated for the value that we provide, not for the amount of time we spend.”

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