

Gibbons Launches Higher Education Industry Team



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WHEN SCHOOLS FAIL TO MEET high standards of conduct and compliance to which they are rightfully held in our society, the blowback can range from a fine to a lawsuit to the devastating human and reputational damage brought on by extreme cases, such as the abuse scandals recently uncovered at Michigan State University and Ohio State University. However, given the expansive and distinctive regulatory regime that impacts nearly every aspect of their operations, academic institutions may need assistance just keeping up.

In this environment, Gibbons P.C. recently launched its Higher Education Team, a multidisciplinary, focused group of attorneys brought together to address the many unique regulations governing academic institutions, a key segment of the firm's client base and a substantial component of the New Jersey economy and its research and development environment.

Kristin D. Sostowski, Esq., a Director in the firm's Employment & Labor Law Department, leads the Higher Education Team. Members of the team have worked in various capacities with more than half of the four-year colleges and universities in New Jersey, several other higher education institutions in the region and related governmental entities.

"With four public research universities, seven state colleges, 15 independent schools and 19 community colleges, New Jersey is a national leader in higher education," explains Gibbons Chairman and Managing Director, Patrick C. Dunican Jr., Esq., a member of the Higher Education Team. "By implementing a



Members of the 50-attorney Gibbons Higher Education Team, with Team Leader Kristin D. Sostowski, Esq., (second from right)—Inset: Gibbons Chairman and Managing Director, Patrick C. Dunican Jr., Esq., a member of the Higher Education Team.

team approach to our service to higher education clients, we are dedicating the administrative infrastructure and management resources necessary to more fully support these institutions, with their growing influence and significance and very specific needs that cross multiple, and often overlapping, disciplines."

The attorneys on the Higher Education Team at Gibbons provide advice, counsel, training and litigation services to both public and independent



For more information about the Gibbons Higher Education Team, visit gibbonslaw.com/higher-education.

educational institutions in connection with laws particular to the field—most notably, Title IX—as well as their distinct requirements for financing, building, hiring, firing, contracting with vendors, licensing and protecting intellectual property, advocating for their interests, and undertaking various corporate transactions and other key operations.

Members of the Team also conduct internal investigations on behalf of these clients and represent them in external investigations. In addition, the Higher Education Team provides advice on crisis management and works with

crisis communications firms to ensure that the reputations of our university clients are preserved at all times when conflicts arise.

The multidisciplinary structure of the Higher Education Team enables Gibbons to provide more holistic services. For example, for one New Jersey public university, the firm currently provides ongoing legal support pertaining to public-private partnerships, academic medical center matters, general corporate law, intellectual property concerns, construction projects, employment issues and labor relations, as well as matters specific to higher education institutions.

About Gibbons P.C.—With 200 attorneys, Gibbons is a leading law firm in New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, and Delaware, ranked among the nation's top 200 by *The American Lawyer*. Gibbons has been recognized nationally for its work—for example, as one of only 20 law firms on the *National Law Journal's* inaugural "Midsize Hot List"—as well as regionally. The *New Jersey Law Journal* has awarded Gibbons a "Litigation Practice of the Year" designation four times in recent years. *Law360* has also highlighted the firm's multidisciplinary litigation strength, and its contributions to several high-profile corporate and real estate transactions in the public and private sectors, in its "Regional Powerhouse" series. The firm has been certified as a great workplace by the independent analysts at the Great Place to Work® organization. For more information about Gibbons, visit gibbonslaw.com. ■