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TOP LAWYERS OF THE DECADE 2011-2020

Katharine A. Martin

Giving a thumbs up to the social networks

No sector had more impact on the world over the past decade than social media companies. Their platforms, especially Twitter, helped to elect and then cripple a U.S. president, fueled political revolutions and social movements around the globe and roiled markets. A key figure in the rise of this phenomenon was Katie Martin, a corporate lawyer in Palo Alto who took the company public.

Martin, chair of the board at Wilson Sonsini Goodrich & Rosati, specializes in representing late stage and public companies in securities law, corporate governance, public offerings and mergers and acquisitions. She began work with Twitter around 2013.

"It was a very exciting moment because companies always transform when they go through an IPO process just because of the nature of changing from being

private to public," Martin said.

Over the last eight years, Martin and her team have guided the social media giant through multiple transactions including debt transactions, mergers and acquisitions including when the company took on an investment last year by Silver Lake and entered into a cooperation agreement with Elliott Management Corp.

"When you recognize how important a company is to society, not just to you as a professional, but in the world, you recognize that they have the ability to choose anybody to come and advise them," she said of Twitter generally. "It's an absolute honor and privilege to represent a company of that magnitude that is that important. The issues they face are complicated and sophisticated, we as a firm are very proud of the fact that we've built expertise in areas that enable us to be able to keep up with them and represent them to the extent that they need relative to the issues they face."

Other major transactions Martin has been involved in include Twitter's \$1.15 billion convertible notes offering in 2018.

She also worked with other innovative California companies like Lyft Inc., one of the compa-



Gary Wagner / Special to the Daily Journal

nies transforming the transportation sector and gig economy, as well as LinkedIn, which touts itself as the world's largest professional network with more than 722 million members in more than 200 countries and territories.

Martin grew up in San Jose in the 1970s, a time when technology was transforming the area.

When she was in college, her father left his engineering job at a large company and joined a startup, which sparked her interest in the venture backed lifecycle

of companies in Silicon Valley.

"It was very easy for me as a lawyer to decide I wanted to work on the corporate side and that I wanted to get involved with technology companies given my dad's history," Martin said. "[Technology] has been a primary area of focus for me during my career, not just because of the fact that my dad had that background, but also just because of the abundance of companies in the area that were focused on technology and innovation."

— Kamila Knautd

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