

Shook Hardy Elects 1st Woman To Replace Longtime Leader

By **Shayna Posses**

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The chair of Shook Hardy & Bacon LLP's pharmaceutical and medical device division, the largest practice group of its kind, has been elected to succeed the product liability attorney who has served as chair for the last 15 years, becoming the first woman to lead the firm, Shook Hardy announced on Monday.

On Jan. 1, 2017, John F. Murphy will pass the torch to Madeleine M. McDonough, a former clinical pharmacist well-known for helping top pharmaceutical companies such as Pfizer Inc. navigate product liability, regulatory and related issues, the firm said on Monday. The pair will collaborate on a transition plan over the next six months before Murphy returns to full-time practice in January, according to Shook Hardy.



Madeleine
McDonough

When Murphy agreed to his third five-year term as chair, he said that he felt 15 years was long enough, thinking that fresh ideas and a fresh approach would do Shook Hardy good, the attorney told Law360 on Monday. That gave the firm plenty of time to think about replacing him, Murphy said, and he's thrilled that McDonough was finalized as the pick on Friday.

"I couldn't be happier with Madeleine being my replacement," he said. "I think she's going to be terrific."

A real strength of hers is maintaining and fostering client relationships, a trait that will serve her well as chair, Murphy said. McDonough also has innovative ideas about the practice of law and the legal industry in general, Murphy said.

McDonough has been a "lifer" at the firm, she told Law360 on Monday. She was a summer associate and came back after graduating from the University of Kansas School of Law in 1990, she said. Now, she splits her time between her hometown of Kansas City, Missouri, and Washington, D.C.

When asked why she's stuck around for 26 years, McDonough pointed to the clients and her colleagues at the firm.

"I have tremendous clients who feel a strong loyalty to the firm, and the people that I work with are truly incredible," she said. Although she has been offered many opportunities to leave over the years, McDonough said, "I never did it because I really feel very fortunate to be with this firm."

McDonough has held a number of leadership roles during her time at Shook Hardy. On top of chairing the pharmaceutical and medical device division, the attorney is in her 10th year on the Shook Hardy executive committee and co-chairs the agribusiness and food safety practice and life sciences and biotechnology group, according to the firm.

Before becoming a lawyer, McDonough worked as a clinical pharmacist, experience that informs her representation of clients that span a number of industries, including pharmaceutical, animal health, medical device, food and beverage and cosmetics, according to Shook Hardy.

She handles product liability, toxic tort, personal injury and commercial matters, in addition to helping clients navigate U.S. Food and Drug Administration regulations, the firm said. McDonough also counsels her clients on litigation prevention methods and emerging international legal developments, as well as corporate governance and related issues, according to the firm.

When she takes over, McDonough said that she wants to continue her focus on anticipating emerging legal needs and trends.

“I really like trying to see around corners and identify what issues will affect our clients,” she said. “I think it makes us better lawyers, and I think our clients really appreciate that we’re keeping ahead of the substance of their industries.”

In addition, the attorney said that she wants to make sure Shook Hardy is cross-pollinating practice areas and geographic locations to provide clients the best possible service, saying that she aims to break down any “silos” that might exist between the 12 offices.

During Murphy’s time as chair, some of his biggest accomplishments were adding new practices such as cybercrime and data privacy and opening offices in places such as Denver Philadelphia, Seattle, and Orange County, California, he said.

Murphy said that he hopes the firm continues to grow going forward and he believes it will with McDonough at the helm.

Murphy looks forward to returning to practicing full-time. Trying cases, as well as working with clients to try to keep them out of the courtroom, is his first love, he said.

“It’s really kind of a second chance to live my first love over again,” he said.

Murphy has more than 25 years of trial experience with corporate clients that include Ford Motor Co., Cerner Corp. and ConocoPhillips Co., according to the firm.

McDonough received her bachelor of science from the University of Missouri-Kansas City School of Pharmacy in 1985, her law degree from the University of Kansas School of Law in 1990 and her master of laws in global health law from the Georgetown University Law Center in 2012.

Murphy earned his bachelor of arts from the University of Connecticut in 1976 and his law degree from the Washington and Lee University College of Law in 1979.

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