

Michael Best: DC offices continue building unparalleled team

Posted on Tuesday, Apr 25, 2023

>> **WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop.](#)**

Michael Best Strategies LLC (Strategies) and Michael Best & Friedrich LLP (the firm) are continuing to grow their unparalleled team of government and legal experts, delivering clients wins across a vast collection of industries. This week, Strategies and the firm announced two new additions to their Washington, D.C. offices. Joe Keeley, most recently Former Chief Counsel and Deputy Staff Director of the U.S. Senate Budget Committee, joins Strategies as a Partner and the law firm as Senior Counsel in the Intellectual Property Practice Group. Nicole Vele, former United States Air Force Judge Advocate General (JAG), joins the law firm as Senior Counsel in the Regulatory Practice Group.

On the heels of other prominent hires like former Chief Legislative Advisor to the Joint Chiefs of Staff Erik Berdy and former Texas Land Commissioner George P. Bush, Michael Best Strategies LLC and Michael Best & Friedrich LLP display its continued commitment to growing its depth of talent in Washington and throughout the country.

*“We’re thrilled to be welcoming Joe and Nicole to our D.C. team,” said **David Crass, Managing Partner of Michael Best’s Washington, D.C. office and Chair of the Firm’s Federal Practice Group.** “Considering their extensive backgrounds, coupled with highly accomplished works serving on Capitol Hill and as a JAG for the U.S. Air Force, Joe and Nicole will be huge assets to Strategies and the law firm and our growing procurement and national defense practices.”*

About Joe Keeley – Keeley joins Michael Best’s DC office to build on its track record of client success on Capitol Hill and beyond. Keeley previously served as Chief Counsel and Deputy Staff Director to the Senate Budget Committee coordinating federal budget efforts and collaboratively developing advocacy

campaigns. Keeley also staffed both the House and Senate Judiciary Committees and was the only Chief Intellectual Property Counsel of both the House and Senate in decades, providing him unique bipartisan and bicameral experience. Keeley's addition will bolster the firm's impact on clients on judicial issues such as intellectual property, technology, drug pricing, Section 230 Immunity, and more.

In addition to being a seasoned professional on Capitol Hill, Keeley is an intellectual property lawyer and will assist the firm's IP clients in advancing and responding to legislative and regulatory developments impacting them.

Keeley received his B.A. from the University of Pennsylvania and his J.D. from George Mason University. He is also a LEED Accredited Professional with top-secret security clearance.

About Nicole Vele – Prior to joining Michael Best & Friedrich LLP, Vele served as a Judge Advocate General for the United States Air Force. During her service, she was hand selected to serve as Team Lead for the Commercial Litigation Field Support Center and was also awarded the Air Force Test Center's 2019 Albert M. Kuhfeld Outstanding Young Judge Advocate award.

Nicole has significant experience in federal government procurement and will be a key member of the Firm's integrated government procurement practice.

In her previous role as Chief of the Field Support Center at Joint Base Andrews, Vele led a team providing expert contract law advice to Air Force lawyers worldwide on a variety of contracting issues including solicitations, source selections, modifications, claims, terminations, contracting officer's final decisions, and corrective actions. She also provided vital analysis and legal support and reduced litigation risk for multiple major acquisitions and contracts.

Vele earned her B.A. from Marquette University, her M.S. in Organizational Leadership & Quality from Marian University, her M.S. in Educational Leadership & Policy Analysis from the University of Wisconsin School of Education, and her J.D. from the University of Wisconsin Law School. Most recently, Vele earned her LL.M. in Government Procurement with highest honors from the George Washington University Law School.