

*A letter from our Managing Partner,
Gregg A. Eisenberg*

2020 Year In Review

There is nothing more gratifying than being able to serve others and make a difference for our clients.



Coming out of a year that few of us could have ever imagined, and none of us wants to experience again, we are stronger as a firm and more deeply committed to our clients and to one another.

This is not an achievement we take lightly. Our ability to not only continue to serve our clients but also deepen their trust in us speaks to the skill, resourcefulness, and determination of our entire team.

The year started as anticipated, at a record-setting pace for the firm. The economy was the best I've seen, continuing its longest expansion on record. That booming start for all of us made the hard stop in mid-March even more jarring. Most, if not all, of our clients were severely impacted by the COVID-19 crisis in some manner, and those effects varied by business, industry, and geography. Most of our clients had an immediate need for business-critical support and strategic advice.

Benesch responded.

In a very short time, we equipped our employees to work remotely, thanks to the extraordinary efforts of our IT team and our team of Benesch First Responders. These 31 Benesch teammates continued to fulfill their vital roles in our physical offices, despite risks to their own health and the health of their families, to enable the rest of the firm to serve clients in a seamless manner. They are firm heroes and have our deepest appreciation and respect.

Attorneys across the firm provided a lifeline for our clients and their businesses, working across practices and disciplines to deliver comprehensive guidance on the near-constantly evolving pandemic.

The firm established a COVID-19 Task Force and an online COVID-19 Resource Center to consolidate the more than 100 client alerts produced in 2020 and provide access to federal, state, and local information hubs. Our clients were following our advice and guidance daily, and using our content to operate their businesses under extreme circumstances.

We formed even deeper client relationships during 2020. The very technology that allows us to work apart from one another has also kept us closer. Connecting with you through the brave new world of video has only heightened what we have always known to be true: Our clients value Benesch not only for our legal and business knowledge and experience but also for our personal, service-driven approach.

Of course, the pandemic was not the only watershed event of 2020, as shocking proof of our country's ongoing need to recognize and overcome racial and social injustice unfolded before us. While the firm's strategic plan already included an initiative to increase the firm's diversity and inclusion, the events of 2020 caused us to dig deeper. We not only re-examined our efforts but also doubled down on them, with particular emphasis on being more involved and creating a greater impact in the communities where we live, work, and serve.

Among other actions, our response included doubling our pro bono billable hours credit program in order to encourage pro bono work focused on achieving

racial justice, eradicating systemic racism, addressing police brutality, and strengthening police-community relations. We implemented a firm match for monetary donations our team members make to not-for-profit organizations focused on racial equality and police-community relations. And we joined the Law Firm Antiracism Alliance (LFAA), a collaborative of more than 200 law firms united in a mission to identify and dismantle structural or systemic racism in the law. I'm sure these are only the beginning of our efforts.

None of our efforts on these fronts, whether marshalling our forces against the pandemic or against social and racial injustice, would have been possible without the intense work of our management team. As soon as the shutdown occurred, Jeff Wild, our Chief Strategy Officer, scheduled a weekly call with our leadership team and practice group leaders to make sure our clients were all being served and their urgent business needs were being addressed, and that our attorneys and staff were also well cared for. Thanks to Jeff, our C-suite—John Banks, Laura Dutt, Tim Flanagan, Liz Gilmore, Jeanne Hammerstrom, and Jerry Justice—and their teams, our clients and our own team, myself included, received ongoing guidance and support to power through the year's hardest times.

As a firm, we are stronger than ever: stronger in our bench of talent, adding 31 lateral attorneys across the firm in 2020; stronger in our practices, with over half of these new additions in our litigation group and several enhancing our energy

law team; and stronger in our Midwest presence, with more than half of our new attorneys joining our Chicago office.

Underlying it all, we are stronger in our culture. As our Benesch team hunkered down to care for their families and their clients, they also cared for one another, demonstrating in so many ways the trust and genuine close-knit friendship that is a hallmark of Benesch. It's what makes people want to stay here. Our retention rate for attorneys across the firm is among the highest in the country. This continuity directly benefits our clients, who can be assured of a team who knows them well and understands their business needs on a deep level.

Our core practice areas—Litigation, Healthcare+, Real Estate, Labor & Employment, Corporate & Securities, Private Equity, and Intellectual Property—remained steadily busy in 2020. They managed a wide variety of matters for our clients, ranging from triaging COVID-19 issues when the pandemic first hit to handling complex business matters.

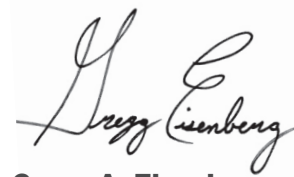
Our firm and attorneys continue to be recognized among the leaders in our profession. Twenty-eight Benesch attorneys and eight practices were ranked in *Chambers USA 2020*. The firm received first-tier rankings in 21 national and metropolitan categories in the 2020 U.S. News/Best Lawyers® "Best Law Firms" rankings. Our Transportation, Healthcare+, and Construction Litigation practices received national first-tier rankings. Five Benesch attorneys were also recognized as Best Lawyers 2021 "Lawyer of the Year," a distinction given annually to a single

outstanding lawyer in each practice area and designated metropolitan area. We currently rank 168 on the AmLaw 200 and expect to move much higher in the ranking.

Some of the largest companies in the world, including more than a dozen of the Fortune 100, relied on us for advice in 2020. We've built tremendous teams around them and are guiding them for growth. It's an exciting time to be at Benesch, and we are channeling that excitement, as well as the lessons learned from the past year, on our clients' behalf.

One of the biggest takeaways of 2020 is the lasting impact our pandemic-driven use of technology can have on our service efficiency. We are able to work differently now, more closely than ever despite being apart.

There is nothing more gratifying than being able to serve others and make a difference for our clients. We are, each of us, forever changed by the events of 2020, and we are forever grateful for the trust you placed in us to see you through it. Now, finally on to a new year, we are bullish about what lies ahead. Our clients are active; they want to grow their businesses, and we have the people, the resources, and the unwavering commitment to help them thrive.



Gregg A. Eisenberg
Managing Partner