

Archer Expands Higher Education Team With Wilkes U. GC

By **James Boyle**

Law360 (January 15, 2026, 3:52 PM EST) -- The general counsel for Wilkes University in northeastern Pennsylvania has left the college for an opportunity to help multiple schools with their legal matters and Title IX issues as part of Archer & Greiner PC's Philadelphia office.

Elizabeth C. Leo was welcomed to Archer this week as a partner in the higher education practice in the Philadelphia office, the firm announced Wednesday. Leo told Law360 Pulse in an interview Thursday that she was presented with a chance to help smaller colleges with her expertise and could not pass it up.

"A lot of small schools can't afford a full-time general counsel," Leo said. "They can save on costs by having an external general counsel without having to pay for a full-time employee. It is a terrific business model that should appeal to institutions of higher education. They get in one person the subject matter expertise of a dozen other attorneys. If you have a question about labor, you can go to one person on our team, or if it is related to intellectual property, there is another resource."

Leo was not familiar with the attorneys at Archer until she started exploring a move to the firm. As she met with leadership, Leo quickly found it would be a great fit for her practice.

"Their resources are deep and robust," Leo said. "I certainly saw the collegiality of the attorneys when I met them. Each person has their own expertise which complements each other."

Mark Oberstaedt, head of Archer's higher education practice, said in a statement that Leo's experience has given her a deep perspective of learning institutions and their legal, operational and strategic realities.

"Elizabeth understands higher education from the inside, and when combined with her extensive knowledge of Title IX and her labor and employment background, that perspective makes her an exceptional addition to Archer and an invaluable resource for our higher education clients," Oberstaedt said.

After earning her law degree from St. John's University in 1994, Leo started her legal career as a clerk for then-U.S. District Judge Kevin T. Duffy in the Southern District of New York. She moved into private practice as an associate at Morgan Lewis & Bockius in January 1995, focused on commercial litigation.

Leo shifted into labor and employment law when she moved to Rosenn Jenkins & Greenwald LLP in January 1998. She then went in-house as vice president of human resources for Mercy Health



Elizabeth C. Leo

Partners in 2004 and returned to private practice with Selingo Guagliardo in 2010.

She went back in-house as chief human resources officer at Moses Taylor Hospital in January 2012, then joined Wilkes University as general counsel and Title IX coordinator in November 2021.

"I came to higher education about four years ago and really enjoyed it," Leo said. "It's never the same thing, and every day is different. You could have a plan for the whole day, and none of the things on your list would get done. I also enjoyed helping students at that stage of their lives, where they are learning who they will become as an adult, both personally and professionally."

--Editing by Rich Mills.