

VISION2013: Law

Forchelli, Curto, Deegan, Schwartz, Mineo & Terrana, LLP –

Concentrating on Clients' Needs Keeps Firm Moving Forward

Forchelli, Curto, Deegan, Schwartz, Mineo & Terrana, LLP's growth has been a direct result of the unequivocal attention it devotes to its clients' needs. It is this concentrated effort that will transport the firm and those they serve well into the future.

"While you can't be all things to all people, you must try to be all things to your clients, which may mean expanding the services you provide," said Forchelli, Curto, Deegan, Schwartz, Mineo & Terrana Managing Partner and Founder Jeffrey D. Forchelli.

Founded in 1976, the firm has indeed expanded from a three-member office to nearly 50 attorneys who handle complex matters for a broad client base. Covering almost all areas of commercial practice, the firm is now one of Long Island's leading full service commercial law firms, with practice areas that include real estate, land use, tax certiorari, corporate, trusts and estates, labor and employment, municipal finance, banking, environmental and litigation.

Respected by state & local government officials on both sides of the political aisle, as well as the various professional organizations and civic associations, Forchelli, Curto, Deegan, Schwartz, Mineo & Terrana has shaped many major development projects on Long Island.

As the firm looks to the next 5 to 10 years, it plans to retain its current core practices while recruiting and developing junior attorneys. "It is likely, as well that the firm will expand its capabilities in areas such as technology and international law," Forchelli said. "Business is increasingly becoming more technology driven and even small businesses now can have international reach, and the firm plans to continue to adapt to these realities."

Keeping up with the times and having an insight to the future of law, Forchelli has introduced a number of strategies that have secured the firm's position as one of Long Island's most prestigious law firms.

"Growth has always been a part of the firm's vision," Forchelli said. "As the practice of law and our clients' needs get more complex, we have made business decisions to strengthen existing practice areas and add new ones to serve our clients better. Through collaboration, we continue to thrive and support the firm's commitment to providing exceptional representation."

The firm will continue to be on the cutting edge of law. "We want to be able to compete with New York City law firms in all areas besides our specialty areas," Forchelli noted.

Strengthening its position as a prominent firm, Forchelli said the firm is constantly looking for small groups of lawyers who they think are doing well and could do better in a bigger setting.

The firm's outstanding infrastructure will also carry it through to future generations. In 2009, Forchelli, Curto, Deegan, Schwartz, Mineo & Terrana relocated to the top floor of RXR Realty's The Omni in Uniondale, one of Long Island's premier buildings, and implemented the latest in design and conference technology. This included registering with the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) for LEED Certification. In 2010, the firm's office was awarded LEED® Silver certification, being the first law firm on Long Island to achieve this status. Focused and strong, last year the



Forchelli, Curto, Deegan, Schwartz, Mineo & Terrana, LLP partners stand inside the lobby of the firm's office, located at The Omni in Uniondale.

firm also added an additional 7,200-square-foot of space to its headquarters.

"We are in a premier space, which represents in a lot of respects where we believe we are as a firm and the image we want to project to the community and the industry," said Forchelli, Curto, Deegan, Schwartz, Mineo & Terrana Chief Operating Partner John V. Terrana.

In order to bring the firm into the future, its partners realize it must always remain current.

One of the firm's recent initiatives has been to be more involved in social media. The firm launched an environmental blog, <http://forchellienvironmentallaw.com>, and has an active presence on Facebook and Twitter.

"Understanding what the needs and trends are and keeping current keeps you relevant. You have to be current in what is going – that is a key to success," Forchelli said.

Additionally, the firm has always been a leader in the business community and a good corporate citizen. In 2009, the firm, recognizing a need in the business community, founded the Long Island General Counsel Network (LIGCN), an educational and networking program for Long Island and the New York City metro area general counsel and other in-house attorneys. The LIGCN currently has 150 members and maintains an active LinkedIn Group for its members to share and keep up to date with each other's contact information and communicate with the group via an open email forum.

A vibrant and cohesive work place comprised of expert attorneys and top-notch support staff, the firm has been described by its employees as having a strong sense of community and camaraderie. This culture starts at the top with its partners and works its way into every facet of the firm. The firm designed its new office with a communal cafeteria where most of its personnel – attorneys and staff – eat lunch together every day.

All of this contributes to an effective working environment, Forchelli noted. "This positivity translates into higher productivity," he said.

Additionally, the firm finds people work better with colleagues with whom they have developed inter-personal relationships. Also mixing experienced seasoned professionals with its younger talent has contributed to a cohesive approach.

"The firm has a unique and dynamic mix of young partners working alongside experi-

enced practice leaders that give the firm a positive energy and make it a great place to build a career," said firm Partner Dan Deegan.

While law school enrollment is declining due to the lack of jobs available for recent graduates, Forchelli assured that the firm plans to continue its growth and intends to hire more lawyers as it has done in past years.

"We are in a hiring state and haven't let anyone go for lack of work," Forchelli said. "We are about four lawyers larger than we were a year ago and we are likely to add more this year."

Forchelli noted that this recent growth has all been organic – at the junior attorney level – and has been the result of increased workflow in several practice areas.

The firm actively recruits qualified candidates with diverse backgrounds and perspectives to foster an inclusive workplace and to better serve its clients. As part of this commitment to diversity and attracting top candidates, the firm developed the Forchelli, Curto, Deegan, Schwartz, Mineo & Terrana, LLP Diversity Fellowship Program.

This program includes aggressively recruiting and hiring law school students, including members of racial, ethnic & other minority groups; promoting those attorneys to positions of responsibility throughout the firm; and maintaining a work environment that fosters mutual respect among all of our employees.

This program provides recipients with a paid full-time or part-time legal clerk posi-

tion with the firm and an academic scholarship to be applied toward law school tuition for the academic year. Through the program, the firm has employed law clerks from South America, the Caribbean, Southeast Asia and Korea.

"Our Diversity Fellowship Program has been hugely successful and is an effective method to bring diversity into our attorney ranks, while at the same time giving back to the legal community by fostering relationships with diverse communities and assisting students studying for a career in the legal profession," said Partner Brian R. Sahn, chair of the firm's Diversity Committee.

Forchelli, Curto, Deegan, Schwartz, Mineo & Terrana, LLP, has always had a culture of excellence in terms of legal talent. This has continued throughout its growth. Both the business and legal communities have recognized many of the firm's projects and attorneys.

In addition, many of the firm's partners have been AV-rated – the highest legal ability and ethics rating by Martindale-Hubbell Law Directory. The firm also has attorneys who have been chosen by peers as "New York Super Lawyers." The firm's partners have also received numerous "Legal Eagles" awards for excellence in real estate, banking & finance and tax certiorari. Most recently, the firm's head of the Labor & Employment practice group was the Nassau County Bar Association "Pro Bono Attorney of the Month."

The firm is also recognized at its junior attorney level. Its growing pool of talented and qualified young professionals have been recognized and awarded with several honors including Super Lawyers Rising Stars.

Headquartered in Uniondale, NY, the firm employs nearly 50 attorneys who provide high quality representation in real estate, land use and zoning, tax, trusts and estates, tax certiorari, corporate and commercial and litigation matters. The firm's areas of expertise have expanded to include banking, bankruptcy, employment and labor, municipal incentives/IDA, entertainment, and more. The firm handles complex matters for a broad client base including national, regional and local businesses, major real estate developers and organizations, banks, insurance companies, municipalities, educational institutions, and individuals. Throughout the firm's growth, one thing has remained constant – its focus on obtaining excellent results for clients.



The firm's boardroom is the latest in design and conference technology.