

MVP: Sidley Austin's Timothy J. Treanor

By Rachel Scharf

Law360 (October 4, 2022, 2:07 PM EDT) -- Timothy J. Treanor of Sidley Austin LLP helped steer \$201 million worth of victim payouts to global soccer organizations in the FIFA corruption probe and negotiated a \$90 million foreign bribery settlement for waste management company Stericycle, earning him a spot among Law360's 2022 White Collar MVPs.

HIS PROUDEST MOMENT THIS YEAR:

Treanor, the co-chair of Sidley's white collar criminal defense and investigations practice group, said he's proudest this year of securing an "off-the-charts" forfeiture award for the Confederation of North, Central America and Caribbean Association Football, or CONCACAF.

CONCACAF hired Sidley in 2013 when the U.S. Department of Justice began probing widespread bribery in international soccer. The firm then embarked on what Treanor called an "eight-year odyssey" to investigate corruption in CONCACAF's top ranks.

Treanor's team convinced prosecutors that CONCACAF was a victim, rather than a co-conspirator, of the multiple organization leaders who were indicted on bribery charges. He said the DOJ was skeptical at first that CONCACAF could reform itself and protect against future abuses of power.

But the government came around and agreed last summer to distribute \$201 million worth of forfeiture funds to FIFA, CONCACAF and other worldwide governing bodies to invest in soccer development.

"A lot of that is going to be money that goes toward children in underserved countries," Treanor told Law360. "It's incredibly rewarding to be able to be part of achieving a result like that."

HIS BIGGEST CHALLENGE THIS YEAR:

Treanor led the Sidley team that inked a \$90 million settlement for Stericycle Inc. this spring, ending a six-year bribery investigation by the DOJ, U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission and Brazilian authorities.



Stericycle admitted in a deferred prosecution agreement to paying off government officials in Brazil, Mexico and Argentina. Treanor said it was a challenge to negotiate with the DOJ just as President Joe Biden's new administration began a campaign of increased Foreign Corrupt Practices Act enforcement.

"We were right on the front lines of contending with folks who were intending to be more forceful than prosecutors in the past," Treanor said. "We had a lot of tough issues to contend with, and we had a lot of discussion and debate with the DOJ in particular."

He told Law360 it wasn't easy to agree with the government on a resolution, but that his team ultimately reached a deal they believed to be fair.

"We were happy with the result, but the process was a tough one," he said.

WHAT MOTIVATES HIM:

A former federal prosecutor, Treanor said he's motivated to achieve results he can be proud of and that make his clients happy. That includes working in a cost-effective manner and considering potential collateral consequences, he explained.

"Getting to a place where you have a client that appreciates your services is really rewarding," he told Law360.

Treanor said he is also motivated by his family and loves that his work allows him to "provide opportunities and experiences for my family that not everybody gets."

HIS ADVICE FOR JUNIOR ATTORNEYS:

Treanor regularly tells young attorneys to figure out what area of the law they like best and to pursue that passion.

"Be in touch with yourself and try to know what it is that makes you want to get to work early and energizes you because that's what you're going to be the best at," he said.

Treanor also recommended "taking ownership" over one's work by being involved as directly as possible in decision-making and strategy execution.

"That is a huge difference-maker, if you decide that you have a vested interest in a matter and its outcome," Treanor said.

— *As told to Rachel Scharf.*

Law360's MVPs of the Year are attorneys who have distinguished themselves from their peers over the past year through high-stakes litigation, record-breaking deals, and complex global matters. A team of Law360 editors selected the 2022 MVP winners after reviewing more than 900 submissions.