

Associates Give Radiant Reviews to Sterne Kessler in *Vault's* Annual Rankings

Washington D.C. (July 25, 2019) – Sterne, Kessler, Goldstein & Fox received overwhelmingly positive reviews from the firm's associates in *Vault's* annual survey. As a result, the firm has been named among the country's "Top 150 Under 150" list of law firms favored by associates for the fourth consecutive year and ranked in multiple "Best Midsize Law Firms to Work For" categories.

Specific to *Vault's* ranking categories, Sterne Kessler ranked:

- #5 "Best Midsize Law Firm for Diversity" list
- #8 "Best Midsize Law Firm for Pro Bono" list
- #11 "Best Midsize Law Firm for Compensation" list
- #14 "Best Midsize Law Firm for Quality of Work" list
- #13 "Best Midsize Law Firm for Overall Ranking" list
- #15 "Best Midsize Law Firm for Technology & Innovation" list
- #19 "Best Midsize Law Firm for Satisfaction" list
- #20 "Best Midsize Law Firm for Career Outlook" list

As noted by the *Vault's* editors, the "Top 150 Under 150" list was created to recognize outstanding law firms with fewer attorneys, but no less expertise, than the global mega firms. The *Vault* guide arrives at their rankings based on feedback from associates on their day-to-day work experience, and the firm profile in the *Vault* guide includes direct quotes from associates that were given in anonymous surveys. Following are a few highlights of what Sterne Kessler associates had to say about various aspects of life at the firm:

Satisfaction

- "I love my job and the people I work with."
- "I am very satisfied. I am tasked with a lot of challenging work and have been able to do things many of my law school peers as a second year have not, such as take a deposition or draft expert reports from scratch."
- "I've been able to take on an increasing amount of responsibility right since the start of joining the firm."

Firm Culture

- "Sterne Kessler has a very collegial atmosphere."
- "The firm makes a concerted effort to put on social events so that we are not stuck in the office all the time. They provide free food/drinks and provide a good opportunity to just hang out and relax. People's politics are not readily apparent; people are generally respectful of everyone's views."
- "The culture is very collaborative and everyone is willing to help mentor younger associates."

Associate and Partner Relations

- “I think there is a great relationship between partners and associates, in part because the partners are transparent regarding firm productivity and possible changes in firm procedures. There are also associate liaisons that field feedback and concerns from the associates to communicate to the managing director.”
- “Associates and partners have great working relationships at the firm. I feel respected and challenged to become a better attorney when working with the partners. Regarding transparency, the firm is very transparent regarding performance and finances. Each quarter, the directors present on the current state of the firm and how the firm has performed. Regarding performance reviews, reviews are conducted once per year and are also transparent with regards to comments provided by directors.”
- “I have always felt that the partners at the firm fully support me, treat me with respect, and value the contributions I make. We have annual reviews, in addition to informal feedback at any time, where we discuss progress I have made and make goals together for the upcoming year.”

Hours

- “The hours are long, but not out of line for BigLaw. The firm has a coordinator to make sure everyone has enough work and not too much work.”
- “Associates can choose a 1,900- or 2,000-hour billable goal. Only work that is billable to clients counts, not business development, training, etc. Some pro bono hours can be pre-approved to count towards your goal.”

Compensation

- “The firm offers a great package. Dollar amounts work out to top market when bonuses and other compensation [are] factored in.”

Quality of Work

- “My work is diverse and appropriate for my level [and] I am trusted to manage projects and more junior associates. I am able to build the mix of work that I desire—about a 50/50 split between prosecution and *inter partes* reviews.”
- “I've had the opportunity to manage global patent portfolios for some of the largest corporations in the world, defend key patents in post-grant proceedings with parallel litigation, play key roles in patent diligence for several deals and potential deals totaling over \$100M, and [have] been exposed to some great pro bono opportunities. I do not feel underutilized.”
- “I have been tasked with nothing but substantive work. At first, I started with simpler tasks, but as I've grown into my role as a 2nd year, I've been given much more challenging work and sometimes work that usually older associates would complete.”

Career Outlook

- “Promotion to partner is very realistic for those who are qualified and would like to make partner. The firm is also very supportive of transitioning to Of Counsel roles. The firm is definitely not an ‘up-or-out’ culture.”

- “I have no concerns about moving up in the firm. The litigation hiring committee has done a good job of hiring and retaining the right number of attorneys so that everyone can make partner in their eighth year if you hit all your annual billable requirements.”

Diversity Efforts

- “After discussing with my law school peers, I have learned that Sterne Kessler is very diverse regarding gender, race, orientation, and people with disabilities. The hiring directors are very open to diverse candidates.”
- “The firm seems to have plenty of diversity. Gender mix looks about even, minority mix is better than previous firms, a number of LGBT individuals, etc. I’m not privy to efforts in that area, but the composition of the office is pretty diverse.”

According to the publication’s editors, they determine *Vault*’s Top 150 from a developed list of the best-known and most sought-after U.S. firms with fewer than 150 attorneys. Editorial and research teams analyzed *Vault* survey data, news stories, trade journals and other legal publications; spoke with lawyers in the field and reviewed other published rankings. *Vault* editors also assessed each firm for prestige, quality of life and professional growth opportunities, and then narrowed down the results to come up with the list of 150 law firms known for providing top-notch service and delivering big results. Associates were asked to rate their firm on a 1-to-10 scale for each of several quality of life categories.

Sterne Kessler’s full *Vault* profile is available [here](#). Talented individuals that are interested in learning more about career opportunities at Sterne Kessler are encouraged to visit the firm’s website [here](#).

About Sterne Kessler

Based in Washington, D.C. and renowned for more than four decades for dedication to the protection, transfer, and enforcement of intellectual property rights, Sterne Kessler is one of the most highly regarded intellectual property specialty law firms in the world. Its team of attorneys, registered patent agents, students, and technical specialists include some of the country’s most respected practitioners of IP law tackling innovations across a broad spectrum of industries. The firm’s practitioners hold over 50 masters and over 50 doctorate degrees in science or engineering and represent Fortune 500 companies, entrepreneurs, start-ups, inventors, venture capital firms, and universities in a client service driven environment that is welcoming, inclusive, and intellectually stimulating. Visit the firm online at sternekessler.com.

Media Contact

Kathryn Holmes Johnson
Director of Marketing and Communications
+1 202.772.8925
kholmesjohnson@sternekessler.com