

Susman Godfrey Named Nation's #1 Litigation Boutique in Vault Survey

07.01.2014 | 10 | 48AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS, NEWS

HOUSTON (July 1, 2014) — Texas law firm Susman Godfrey has once again been named the nation's number-one litigation boutique in Vault's annual Practice Area Rankings. Nearly 17,000 law firm associates were surveyed for the annual rankings, which rank "the most prestigious law firms based on the perceptions of currently practicing lawyers at peer firms," according to Vault, the leading career resource for law, finance, accounting and consulting professions.

Fifteen firms were ranked in Vault's litigation boutique category this year, with Susman Godfrey receiving a whopping 45.9 percent of votes. Known for its high-caliber associates (the firm only hires law grads with federal clerkships) and the unprecedented level of responsibility and independence it provides upon them, Susman Godfrey was characterized by respondents as a firm that provides "substantive and meaningful work."

According to Vault, "Partner-level responsibility for young associates, sky-high compensation and a supportive culture makes the firm hard to beat."

"We've found that giving new associates substantive responsibility, plus a greater voice in firm operations, have enabled us to recruit and retain better lawyers," said founder and managing partner Steve Susman.

Susman Godfrey's "one lawyer, one vote" policy gives the firm's newest associate an equal voice—and an equal vote—to the most senior partner. The firm's attorneys vote on a range of issues, including which cases to take and alternative fee arrangements.

"One of the best parts of working at Susman Godfrey is having a voice in key decisions, whether selecting a case or strategizing on how to manage effectively a difficult issue for a client," said Frances S. Lewis, an associate at the firm. "Instead of receiving directives from above, I am able to learn firsthand how experienced attorneys analyze and debate tough questions and also offer my own ideas to reach innovative solutions for our clients. The level of collaboration between partners and associates still astonishes me."

In addition, new associates are given meaningful work from day one. "Because the firm expects that every associate hired will become a partner, associates are never treated as if they are disposable or replaceable, and instead are given real work immediately," said Susman Godfrey associate Megan O'Hara Easley. "The firm believes clients benefit when cases are staffed leanly and efficiently, and it makes good use of associates to achieve this goal. When I first started out, while I worked on cases with veteran attorneys, I also conducted numerous depositions on my own and was encouraged to be proactive and take ownership of all of my cases."

Considered a "go-to" resource for law school students, associates, partners and law firm recruiters, Vault's annual rankings are determined by thousands of associates nationwide. While survey respondents may vote for up to three firms in each practice area, they are not permitted to vote for their own firm.

