

THE DEAL AWARDS MIDDLE MARKET: WINNERS REVEALED

George Feldenkreis' bid to take Perry Ellis private, Newell's sale of Rawlings to MLB and Seidler Equity and more are among this year's winners of The Deal Awards Middle Market.

BY MICHAEL D. BROWN

The Deal on Tuesday, March 26, presented its inaugural The Deal Awards Middle Market, where we recognized leaders and innovators in the world of dealmaking.

The awards cover deals involving at least one U.S. party that clocked in at under \$500 million. Over the past several months, The Deal received hundreds of nominations, across dozens of categories and sectors, individuals and firms.

"The rubber really met the road in the middle market, where private equity and strategics remained active and multiples – for the most part – remained frothy," said Steve Gelsi, host of the event and The Deal's senior private equity reporter.

Our winners, who were honored at a breakfast Tuesday at the Skydeck Chicago at the Willis Tower, span banks, law firms and other advisory shops of all sizes and specialties.

"For 20 years, The Deal has covered the most important changes in corporate control – mergers and acquisitions, of course, but also restructuring, activists' campaigns and private equity investments," said Cameron Ireland, president of The Deal and BoardEx, The Deal's relationship mapping service. "The Deal is the go-to source for M&A news and analysis, covering the deals and dealmakers that set the trends."

Check out the winners below:

DEAL OF THE YEAR:

George Feldenkreis takes Perry Ellis private

Target: Perry Ellis International Inc.

Investment Adviser: PJ Solomon LP

Counsel to Investment Bank: Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP

Outside Counsel: Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison LLP;



Stearns Weaver Miller Weissler Alhadeff & Sitterson PA; Akerman LLP

Proxy Solicitor: Innisfree M&A Inc.

PR Firm: Joele Frank, Wilkinson Brimmer Katcher

Acquirer: George Feldenkreis

Investment Adviser: Scope Advisors LLC

Counsel to I-bank: Latham & Watkins LLP

Outside Counsel: Proskauer Rose LLP, Olshan Frome Wolosky LLP

Proxy Solicitors: MacKenzie Partners Inc., Innisfree M&A Inc.

DEALMAKER OF THE YEAR:

David Dixon, Kirkland & Ellis LLP

MOST INNOVATIVE DEAL OF THE YEAR:

Seidler Equity and Major League Baseball acquire Rawlings Sporting Goods from Newell

Target/Seller: Rawlings Sporting Goods Co./Newell Brands Inc.

Investment Adviser: Morgan Stanley

Outside Counsel: Jones Day, White & Case LLP

PR Firm: Joele Frank, Wilkinson Brimmer Katcher

Acquirers: Seidler Equity Partners LP/Major League Baseball

Investment Adviser: Bank of America Merrill Lynch

Outside Counsel: O'Melveny & Myers LLP; Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison LLP

PR FIRM OF THE YEAR:

Chris Tofalli Public Relations LLC

ACTIVIST CAMPAIGN OF THE YEAR:

George Feldenkreis takes Perry Ellis private

Target: Perry Ellis International Inc.

Investment Adviser: PJ Solomon LP

Counsel to I-bank: Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP

Outside Counsel: Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison LLP; Stearns Weaver Miller Weissler Alhadeff & Sitterson PA; Akerman LLP

Proxy Solicitor: Innisfree M&A Inc.

PR Firm: Joele Frank, Wilkinson Brimmer Katcher

Acquirer: George Feldenkreis

Investment Adviser: Scope Advisors LLC

Counsel to I-bank: Latham & Watkins LLP

Outside Counsel: Proskauer Rose LLP, Olshan Frome Wolosky LLP

Proxy Solicitors: MacKenzie Partners Inc., Innisfree M&A Inc.

PE DEAL OF THE YEAR:

Harvest Partners acquires a stake in Dwyer Group from Riverside

Target/Seller: Dwyer Group Inc. (aka Neighborly)/Riverside Co.

Investment Advisers: Harris Williams & Co., William Blair & Co. LLC

Outside Counsel: Jones Day

Acquirer: Harvest Partners LP

Investment Advisers: Jefferies LLC, Moelis & Co. LLC

Outside Counsel: White & Case LLP

PR Firm: Owen Blinksilver Public Relations Inc.

PE DEALMAKER OF THE YEAR:

Angelo Bonvino, Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison LLP

RESTRUCTURING DEAL OF THE YEAR:

Brookstone Holdings sells assets

Debtor: Brookstone Holdings Corp.

Legal Counsel: Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher LLP; Young Conaway Stargatt & Taylor LLP

Restructuring Adviser: Berkeley Research Group LLC

Investment Bank: GLC Advisors & Co.

SECTOR AWARDS

CONSUMER DEAL OF THE YEAR:

Castanea Partners sells First Aid Beauty to Procter & Gamble

Target/Seller: First Aid Beauty Ltd./Castanea Partners Inc.

Investment Adviser: Financo LLC

Outside Counsel: Latham & Watkins LLP

Acquirer: Procter & Gamble Co.

Outside Counsel: Squire Patton Boggs LLP

Consumer/Retail Dealmaker of the year:

Bill Cooling, Jefferies LLC

ENERGY, POWER & UTILITIES DEAL OF THE YEAR:

EagleClaw Midstream acquires Pinnacle Midstream from I Squared Capital

Target/Seller: Pinnacle Midstream LLC/I Squared Capital

Investment Advisers: Greenhill & Co.; Goldman, Sachs & Co.

Outside Counsel: Sidley Austin LLP

Acquirers: EagleClaw Midstream Services LLC/Blackstone Group LP

Investment Adviser: Jefferies LLC

Outside Counsel: Vinson & Elkins LLP

ENERGY, POWER & UTILITIES DEALMAKER OF THE YEAR:

Kimberly Hicks, Kirkland & Ellis LLP

ENTERTAINMENT/MEDIA DEAL OF THE YEAR:

Gray and Raycom Media sell nine TV stations to E.W. Scripps, Lockwood Broadcast, Marquee Broadcasting and Tegna

Sellers: Gray Television Inc. and Raycom Media Inc.

Investment Adviser: Wells Fargo Securities LLC

Outside Counsel: Cooley LLP

Acquirers: E.W. Scripps Co., Lockwood Broadcast Group, Marquee Broadcasting Inc. and Tegna Inc.

Outside Counsel: Brooks, Pierce, McLendon, Humphrey & Leonard LLP; Fletcher, Heald & Hildreth; Nixon Peabody LLP

ENTERTAINMENT/MEDIA DEALMAKER OF THE YEAR:

Kevin Mills, Cooley LLP

FINANCIAL SERVICES DEAL OF THE YEAR:

Silicon Valley Bank acquires Leerink Holdings

Target: Leerink Holdings LLC

Investment Adviser: Sandler O'Neill & Partners LP

Outside Counsel: Clifford Chance LLP; Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP

PR Firm: Weber Shandwick

Acquirer(s): SVB Financial Group
Investment Adviser: Keefe, Bruyette & Woods Inc.
Counsel to I-bank: Manatt, Phelps & Phillips LLP
Outside Counsel: Sullivan & Cromwell LLP

FINANCIAL SERVICES DEALMAKER OF THE YEAR:

Jody Spencer, Rogers & Hardin LLP

FOOD/BEVERAGE DEAL OF THE YEAR:

Craft Brew Alliance acquires Appalachian Mountain Brewery, Cisco Brewers and Wynwood Brewing

Targets: Appalachian Mountain Brewery LLC, Cisco Brewers Inc. and Wynwood Brewing Co.

Investment Adviser: Cascadia Capital LLC (CBI)

Outside Counsel: Akerman LLP (AMB), Moffatt & Moffatt PLLC (AMB), Holland & Knight LLP (WBC), McDermott Will & Emery LLP (CBI)

Acquirer: Craft Brew Alliance Inc.

Investment Adviser: Paragon Beverages Advisors LLC

Outside Counsel: Davis Wright Tremaine LLP

FOOD/BEVERAGE DEALMAKER OF THE YEAR:

Sarah Tune, Davis Wright Tremaine LLP

HEALTHCARE & PHARMA DEAL OF THE YEAR:

Bain Capital and Pfizer team up to form Cerevel Therapeutics

Target/Seller: Pfizer Inc. -- Three clinical-stage compounds

Investment Adviser: Centerview Partners LLC

Outside Counsel: Arnold & Porter Kaye Scholer LLP

Acquirer: Bain Capital LP

Investment Adviser: Goldman, Sachs & Co.

Outside Counsel: Ropes & Gray LLP

HEALTHCARE & PHARMA DEALMAKER OF THE YEAR:

Marc Rubenstein, Ropes & Gray LLP

INDUSTRIALS DEAL OF THE YEAR:

Syncora Guarantee sells American Roads to DIF Management

Target/Seller: American Roads LLC/Syncora Guarantee Inc.

Investment Adviser: Evercore Partners Inc.

Outside Counsel: Kirkland & Ellis LLP

Acquirer: DIF Management BV

Investment Adviser: Agentis Capital

Outside Counsel: Allen & Overy LLP

INDUSTRIALS DEALMAKER OF THE YEAR:

Dean Sattler, Milbank LLP

TECHNOLOGY/TELECOM DEAL OF THE YEAR:

Trimble acquires e-Builder

Target: e-Builder Inc.

Investment Adviser: William Blair & Co. LLC

Outside Counsel: Fenwick & West LLP

Acquirer: Trimble Inc.

Investment Adviser: Houlihan Lokey Inc.

Outside Counsel: Perkins Coie LLP

TECHNOLOGY/TELECOM DEALMAKER OF THE YEAR:

Ken Myers, Fenwick & West LLP