

Rising Star: Kasowitz Benson's Douglas B. Heitner

Law360, Los Angeles (July 28, 2017, 3:54 PM EDT) -- Kasowitz Benson Torres LLP's Douglas B. Heitner has grown the firm's New York real estate group from a handful of lawyers six years ago to more than 30 today, and thanks to that and his work on the largest-ever real estate matter in all of Queens, and a \$650 million loan for American Copper Buildings in Manhattan, Heitner has earned a spot as one of five real estate law practitioners under 40 honored by Law360 as Rising Stars.

THE BIGGEST DEAL OF HIS CAREER:

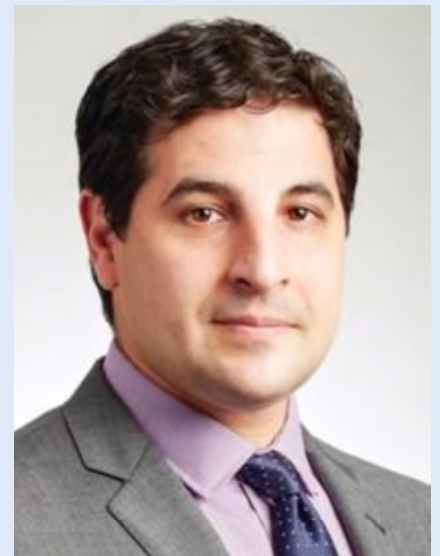
While Heitner has scored work on numerous high-profile matters in Manhattan, few if any have been as complex or challenging as the Steinway Tower, one of the tallest buildings under construction in New York.

"I was a part of that deal from its inception, from the acquisition through the equity structure, debt structuring, construction loan, and what's been particularly interesting about that project is that it has evolved and lived through different cycles and different opinions of cycles about the condo market."

OTHER NOTABLE TRANSACTIONS:

Heitner represented building owner Benider Co. on its whopping roughly \$1 billion deal to lease out 250,000 square feet on Roosevelt Avenue in Queens to Crown Acquisitions Inc., and he also helped JDS Development Group score \$650 million in financing for its American Copper Buildings luxury apartment property. That Queens deal, structured as a 99-year ground lease, was at the time called the largest-ever real estate deal in Flushing. And Heitner not only helped his client JDS score that major Manhattan loan but also worked with the company on earlier financing, including a prior loan from Massachusetts Mutual Life Insurance Co.

RISING
 ★★★★★★
STAR



**Douglas B.
 Heitner**
Kasowitz Benson

Age: 37

Home base: New York

Position: Partner

Law school: New York University School of Law

First job after law school: Associate at Skadden Arps Slate Meagher & Flom

HIS PROUDEST MOMENT AS AN ATTORNEY:

"That's easy. Every morning for the past two years riding to work on the subway thinking about the fact that my partners and I have grown a group from three people to now about 30 people in six years, and what that means for all of our associates and paralegals and their families."

WHAT MOTIVATES HIM:

Heitner's competitive drive and eagerness to grow the footprint of the New York real estate group at Kasowitz are part of what drives him to do what he does.

"I am an exceedingly competitive person. That's part of it. The internal drive and ambition, the fact that we have so many people who've signed on to our fun experiment here that we did in starting a practice group. I really take a great deal of enjoyment out of my job, being able to work on seven, eight, 10 different deals throughout the day."

HIS ADVICE FOR YOUNG ATTORNEYS:

While it may not be clear at the onset what is required regarding building a book of business and networking, Heitner urges young lawyers to work on both from the start.

"My advice is to understand that from the moment you're out of law school that no matter how big your first year class is or how big your firm is to understand that your career is in your hands. If you're not seeking out work and seeking out the people you want to work with, you are doing yourself a disservice. The dirty secret is our profession rewards entrepreneurial behavior. It's just never spoken about."

— *As told to Andrew McIntyre*

Law360's Rising Stars are attorneys under 40 whose legal accomplishments belie their age. A team of Law360 editors selected the 2017 Rising Stars winners after reviewing more than 1,200 submissions. This interview has been edited and condensed.