StradleyRonon

Christopher S. Connell

Partner and Chair, Corporate, Mergers & Acquisitions, and Securities

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With an expansive practice spanning many industries, Christopher Connell is known for facilitating sophisticated transactions for public and private companies. With a dedication to deeply understanding his clients' businesses, Chris often serves as trusted outside general counsel to handle strategic growth, corporate, contracts and governance needs. Chris is chair of the firm's corporate, mergers and acquisitions, and securities practice.

Chris handles complex transactions including mergers and acquisitions, offerings of debt and equity securities (both public and private), initial public offerings (IPOs) and securities matters for public companies. Navigating increasing regulatory scrutiny and ever-changing economic factors, Chris works closely with regional, national and global banks, asset management firms, investment advisers and real estate developers to execute multimillion-dollar transactions.

Ensuring transactions are tailored to align with clients' business objectives, Chris uses a multidisciplinary approach to guide boards of directors and other corporate leadership through every step of the deal, including negotiation, structuring, due diligence, corporate governance matters, regulatory filings and compliance. He collaborates across the firm's practices to address any issues that may arise through and post-closing.

Featured Representative Matters

Investment Management M&A

- Represented Mutual Group Inc., a national platform serving independent financial advisers and registered investment advisers, in a transaction involving a strategic investment by Emigrant Partners to enable Mutual to expand its national footprint and position its business for growth.
- Represented TradePMR, a custodial and portfolio management platform for registered investment advisors, in an approximately $300 million acquisition by Robinhood Markets Inc.
- Represented Chatham Financial, a global leader in financial risk management advisory and technology, in its acquisition of EA Markets.
- Represented Columbia Pacific Advisors, an alternative asset management firm with approximately $3.5 billion in assets under management, in its sale of a minority

Services

- Investment Management Mergers & Acquisitions
- Common & Collective Trust Funds
- Corporate, Mergers & Acquisitions, and Securities
- Government Enforcement, Investigations & Litigation
- Financial Services
- Real Estate
- White Collar Criminal Defense
- Broker-Dealer
- Corporate

Education

- Villanova University School of Law (J.D.)
- Villanova University (B.S., *cum laude*)

Admissions

- Pennsylvania
- New Jersey

stake to CI Financial.

- Advised Great Valley Advisor Group, a technology-driven full-service registered investment adviser, in its acquisition of U.S. Financial Advisors, a registered investment adviser with over $725 million in assets under management.
- Advised Artivest Holdings in its sale of its advisory, mutual fund, commodity pool and broker-dealer businesses to Altegris Holdings.

Private Equity Investment

- Represented Oppenheimer & Co. in its acquisition of the preferred stock of Red Rover Moving & Storage, a provider of moving and storage solutions.

Banking and Financial Institutions

- Advised 1st Colonial Bancorp Inc. in a merger agreement with Mid Penn Bancorp Inc. in which Mid Penn acquired 1st Colonial in a cash and stock transaction valued at approximately $106.1 million.
- Represented Customers Bancorp, the holding company for Customers Bank, in connection with its $172.5 million underwritten public offering of common stock.
- Represented DNB Financial Corp., the holding company for community bank DNB First, in its $206 million acquisition by S&T Bancorp Inc. that will expand S&T's footprint into the Pennsylvania counties of Chester, Delaware and Philadelphia.
- Represented Bryn Mawr Bank Corp. in its definitive agreement and plan of merger to acquire Continental Bank Holdings Inc. and related joint proxy statement/prospectus on Form S-4, in a transaction valued at $109 million.
- Represented Bryn Mawr Bank Corp. in its multimillion-dollar acquisition of the private wealth management group of Hershey Trust Co.
- Advised Bryn Mawr Bank Corp. in its agreement to acquire certain assets of First Bank of Delaware.
- Advised Bryn Mawr Bank Corp. in its multimillion-dollar acquisition of Davidson Trust Co.
- Represented Customers Bank in connection with its IPO of common stock.
- Represented Customers Bank in connection with its corporate holding company restructuring and acquisition of Berkshire Bancorp.
- Advised Valley Green Bank in connection with its sale to Univest Corp. of Pennsylvania.

Real Estate

- Represented Silvi Materials, a vertically integrated leader in construction materials, in its acquisition of Eagle Rock Concrete.
- Represented a major national merchant-builder real estate developer, several regional banks and a computer-hardware service company on acquisition and leasing issues.
- Advised a national commercial real estate developer with the acquisition of a property in suburban Philadelphia and negotiating for the developer on leases with national tenants.
- Advised several regional outdoor advertising companies on the sale of assets to a publicly held company and on purchasing assets from other regional companies.

Recognitions

- *The Legal 500* US Elite (Philadelphia: Corporate and M&A) (2025-26)
- Best of the Bar: Philadelphia's Top Lawyers, *Philadelphia Business Journal*, (2017)

Featured Speaking Engagements

- Panelist, Customers Bank's Virtual Town Hall
- Panelist, "The CARES Act and the PPP: What Catholic Parishes Need to Know," Ascension Press
- Panelist, "Banking in the 21st Century — Settling into the Digital Age," Association for Corporate Counsel's Banking & Financial Services Law CLE
- Moderator, Association for Corporate Growth's Annual M&A Dealmakers' Panel
- Presenter, "Executive Board Governance – Roles & Responsibilities … Do You Know What You Don't Know?" Pennsylvania Association of Community Bankers
- Presenter, "Interacting with Our Clients Through Technology in a World of Regulators and Scammers," Philadelphia Estate Planning Council

Publications

The SEC's Latest Plan to Make Going Public — and Staying Public — Easier
May 29, 2026

SEC Proposes Shift to Semiannual Reporting for Public Companies
May 7, 2026

Experience

Stradley Ronon Advises Mutual Group in Emigrant Partners Deal
Stradley Ronon represented Mutual Group Inc., a national platform serving independent financial advisers and registered investment advisers, in a transaction involving a strategic investment by Emigrant Partners, a leading minority investor in the wealth and asset management industry.

The deal, announced April 9, enables Mutual Group to expand its national footprint, deepen adviser engagement, accelerate key platform enhancements and position its business for the next phase of growth.

Read the announcement.

Stradley Ronon Represents 1st Colonial Bancorp in Acquisition by Mid Penn Bancorp
Stradley Ronon advised 1st Colonial Bancorp Inc., the parent company of Mount Laurel, New Jersey-based 1st Colonial Community Bank, in a merger agreement with Harrisburg, Pennsylvania-based Mid Penn Bancorp Inc. in which Mid Penn acquired 1st Colonial in a cash and stock transaction valued at approximately $106.1 million. In connection with the holding company merger, 1st Colonial Community Bank was merged with and into Mid Penn's subsidiary bank, Mid Penn Bank.

The transaction, which was completed on February 27, further expands Mid Penn's presence in the Greater Philadelphia area and southern New Jersey.

Stradley Ronon Represents Oak Hill Wealth Advisors in Merger with Cerity Partners

Stradley Ronon advised Oak Hill Wealth Advisors, a wealth management firm based in Lansdowne, Virginia, in its merger with Cerity Partners, a full-service wealth management firm serving high- and ultra-high-net-worth individuals and their families, businesses and their leadership teams, and nonprofit organizations. The transaction closed on September 30; the value was undisclosed.

Oak Hill will operate under the Cerity Partners name. The partnership will expand Cerity Partners' footprint in the Washington, D.C., market and is expected to enhance offerings to high-net-worth families, including generational wealth planning, financial and retirement planning, and investment management services.

Stradley Ronon Advises Customers Bank in $172.5M Common Stock Offering

Stradley Ronon represented Customers Bancorp, a bank holding company that operates through its wholly owned banking subsidiary, Customers Bank, in its $172.5 million underwritten public offering of common stock. Customers intends to use the net proceeds from the offering to fund organic growth and for other general corporate purposes.

Pennsylvania-based Customers is one of the top-performing banking companies in the United States with more than $22 billion in assets.

Stradley Ronon Advises Silvi Materials in Acquisition of Eagle Rock Concrete

Stradley Ronon represented Pennsylvania-based Silvi Materials, a vertically integrated leader in construction materials, in its acquisition of Eagle Rock Concrete, a premier ready-mix concrete producer based in North Carolina. The transaction closed September 2.

The combined company will operate as Eagle Rock Concrete, a Silvi Materials Company. This acquisition represents Silvi's expansion into the Southeast U.S. construction market, bringing nine high-production ready-mix plants in the Raleigh-Durham area.

Stradley Ronon Represents Cook Wealth in Merger with Cerity Partners

Stradley Ronon represented Cook Wealth, a Raleigh-based wealth management firm, in a merger with Cerity Partners, a financial and wealth advisory firm serving high-net-worth individuals and their families and nonprofit organizations and foundations throughout the United States.

The merger expands Cerity Partners' integrated wealth advisory services, including financial planning, investment management, and tax planning and preparation, into North Carolina.

For more information, visit Cerity Partners' website.

Stradley Ronon Represented TradePMR in Acquisition by Robinhood

Stradley Ronon represented TradePMR, a custodial and portfolio management platform for Registered Investment Advisors (RIAs), in an approximately $300 million acquisition by Robinhood Markets, Inc., which closed on February 26, 2025. TradePMR has over 25 years in the industry, and the acquisition will accelerate Robinhood's delivery of investment advisory capabilities to customers by bringing in a scaled RIA custodial platform with approximately 350 firms and more than $40B in assets under administration.

Read more about the acquisition.

Stradley Ronon Represents XPYRIA in Merger with Cerity Partners
Stradley Ronon represented XPYRIA Investment Advisors, a Pittsburgh-based independent investment adviser, in a merger with Cerity Partners, a financial and wealth advisory firm serving high-net-worth individuals and their families and nonprofit organizations and foundations throughout the United States. The transaction will allow the firms to better serve their Pittsburgh-based clients with a full spectrum of wealth management and financial planning services.

Stradley Ronon Advises Wealth Legacy Institute in Merger with Cerity Partners
Stradley Ronon represented Denver-based Wealth Legacy Institute, a financial planning and investment management firm, in its merger with Cerity Partners, a financial and wealth advisory firm serving high-net-worth individuals and their families and nonprofit organizations and foundations throughout the United States.

Stradley Ronon Advises Chatham Financial in EA Markets Acquisition
Our firm represented Chatham Financial, a global leader in financial risk management advisory and technology, in its acquisition of EA Markets, an independent financial advisory firm focused on the capital markets. The acquisition will reinforce Chatham's position as a leader in derivatives, further its position in capital markets advisory and expand its capabilities in raising capital for its corporate and financial sponsor clients.

Lumina Completes Merger with Cerity Partners
Stradley Ronon represented Lumina Financial Consultants, a financial planning and wealth management services provider specifically focused on women and their families, in a merger with Cerity Partners. The firm will operate under the Cerity Partners name, and the partnership will allow the firm to expand its service offerings in the San Francisco Bay Area and develop a footprint in the Richmond, Virginia, metropolitan market.

Dotcom Distribution Acquired by Ryder System, Inc.
Stradley Ronon represented Dotcom Distribution, the premier third-party logistics (3PL) provider and strategic growth partner for eCommerce brands in its acquisition by Ryder System, Inc., a leader in supply chain, dedicated transportation and fleet management solutions. The acquisition allows Ryder to expand its e-fulfillment portfolio with new industry offerings.

Stradley Ronon Advises Customers in Closing of $100M Public Offering
Stradley Ronon advised Customers Bancorp, Inc. (Customers) the parent company of Customers Bank, a full-service bank with $19.6 billion in assets, in the closing of its underwritten public offering of $100 million aggregate principal amount of its 2.875% Fixed-to-Floating Rate Senior Notes due 2031. Customers expects to receive net proceeds of $98,650,000 from the offering, after deducting underwriting discounts and commissions and estimated offering expenses. Customers intends to use the net proceeds to fund the redemption of all of its outstanding Fixed-to-Floating Rate Non-Cumulative Perpetual Preferred Stock, Series C and Fixed-to-Floating Rate Non-Cumulative Perpetual Preferred Stock, Series D. The Company intends to use any remaining proceeds for general corporate purposes, which may include working capital, repaying indebtedness and providing capital to Customers Bank.

Great Valley Advisor Group Acquires U.S. Financial Advisors with $725 Million

in Assets

Stradley Ronon represented Great Valley Advisor Group (GVA), a technology-driven full-service registered investment adviser, in its acquisition of U.S. Financial Advisors (USFA). USFA is a full-service registered investment adviser that provides comprehensive and customized investment, insurance and wealth management services. The acquisition expands GVA's presence in Greater Boston, Massachusetts, and will increase its assets under management by over $725 million.

Customers Bank Sells Subsidiary BankMobile Technologies Inc.

Stradley Ronon served as counsel to Customers Bank, in the sale of its subsidiary BankMobile Technologies Inc., a digital banking platform, and in its agreement to merge BankMobile with special purpose acquisition company Megalith Financial Acquisition Corp. The deal values the combined business at $140 million.

Stradley Ronon Successfully Advises Meridian in $40 Million Private Placement

Stradley Ronon Partners Christopher S. Connell and Thomas L. Hanley served as counsel to Malvern-based Meridian Corporation, holding company for Meridian Bank, in the completion of its offering of $40 million in fixed-to-floating rate subordinated notes due 2029 to certain qualified institutional buyers and institutional accredited investors in a private placement transaction.

The capital raised will be used for general corporate purposes, including organic growth and the repayment of a portion of the Bank's existing indebtedness.

DNB Financial Corp. Merges with S&T Bancorp, Inc.

Stradley represented Downingtown-based DNB Financial Corp. (NASDAQ: DNBF), the holding company for community bank DNB First, in its agreement to be acquired by S&T Bancorp, Inc. The $206 million stock transaction will expand S&T's footprint by gaining a new presence in Chester, Delaware and Philadelphia counties.

Boenning & Scattergood Serves as Placement Agent

Stradley Ronon represented Boenning & Scattergood, who served as the sole placement agent for Orrstown Financial Services' offering of $32.5 million in aggregate principal amount of fixed-to-floating rate subordinated notes to certain qualified institutional buyers and institutional accredited investors.

Customers Bancorp Sells BankMobile for $175M

Stradley Ronon represented Customers Bancorp Inc. in the sale of BankMobile, its no-fee digital banking unit, to Florida-based Flagship Community Bank for $175 million. Launched in 2015 as a division of Customers, BankMobile provides deposit products to retail customers via smart phone technology. Its revenues are derived primarily from interchange fees paid by merchants when customers use their debit cards. Flagship Community Bank will take over all of BankMobile's assets and technology, including 1.7 million student checking accounts and around $500 million in deposits. After accounting for all expenses, this transaction is expected to create approximately $100 million of pre-tax gain for Customers. The sale is pending shareholder and regulatory approval and expected to close in the third quarter.

Spring Garden Lending Group on Solid Soil with Investment

Stradley Ronon's corporate team assisted a group of former Valley Green Bank executives, led by former CEO Jay Goldstein, in the formation of Spring Garden Lending Group. The company specializes in short-term loans to help acquire, rehabilitate, construct and refinance investment real estate properties in Greater

Philadelphia.

DNB Financial Group Agrees to Acquire East River Bank
Stradley represented DNB Financial Corp. in its agreement to acquire East River Bank, a startup founded in East Falls by third-generation Philadelphia bankers.

The $49 million stock and cash transaction will take Downingtown-based DNB (NASDAQ: DNBF), the parent company to 156-year-old DNB First Bank, outside of the western suburbs for the first time and into the faster-growing confines of Philadelphia.

Customers Bank Reaches New Heights with $42M Acquisition
Stradley Ronon represented Customers Bancorp and Customers Bank in connection with its $42 million agreement to acquire the higher education disbursement business of Higher One Holdings. The disbursement business includes a service that streamlines the financial aid refund-disbursement process for more than 800 college and university campuses.

Stradley Advises Florida-Based Holding Co. in $48M Public Offering
Stradley's financial institutions and public company team advised Atlantic Coast Financial Corporation, a Jacksonville, Florida-based holding company for Atlantic Coast Bank, in its $48.3 million underwritten public offering of common stock.

Valley Green Bank Sold to Univest Corporation of Pennsylvania
Stradley's financial institutions and public company team advised Valley Green Bank, a Pennsylvania-chartered commercial bank that had $422 million in assets, $384 million in deposits and $367 million in loans, to Univest Corporation of Pennsylvania, a financial conglomerate with more than $2 billion in assets and $3 billion in assets under management.

$103 Million IPO to Help Customers Bank Grow
Stradley Ronon represented Customers Bancorp (Nasdaq: CUBI), the holding company for Customers Bank, in its $103.5 million underwritten public offering of voting common stock. Customers intends to use the net proceeds from the offering to fund organic growth, and for working capital and other general corporate purposes.

Bryn Mawr Purchases Continental for $109 Million
Stradley Ronon acted as legal counsel in Bryn Mawr Bank Corp's $109 million acquisition of Continental Bank Holdings Inc. The acquisition dramatically expands the Corporation's distribution network in attractive Montgomery, Chester and Philadelphia counties by adding 10 branches. Bryn Mawr Trust Company will now have 29 full service branches.