

Craig Wasserman/Wachtell, Lipton Corporate Law Center Breakfast

Good morning. It gives me great pleasure to welcome you all to the inaugural Craig Wasserman/Wachtell, Lipton, Rosen & Katz Corporate Law Alumni Breakfast. Today we have leaders of the academy, bench, and bar on hand to discuss the future of American capital markets. Our distinguished panel includes Leo E. Strine, Jr., Chancellor of the Delaware Chancery Court, Steve Rosenblum '82, a partner at Wachtell, Lipton, and Roberta Romano '80, Sterling Professor of Law at YLS and Director of Yale's Corporate Law Center. But before we begin, I want to say a few words about how this breakfast came to be.

First, I want to thank Steve and his partners at Wachtell for sponsoring our program. Wachtell and YLS have had a long and rich relationship, in no small part because Wachtell is a firm that produces great lawyers. I am privileged to be sitting next to one today. And this morning provides a fitting opportunity to remember another.

Craig Wasserman—whose name this breakfast bears—was a great lawyer and a great friend of Yale. The school gave him three degrees—a BA, a JD, and an MA in economics—and he gave back accordingly.

After receiving his law degree in 1986, Craig clerked for Wilfred Feinberg on the Second Circuit before beginning a career at Wachtell that would span three decades. During his years at the firm, Craig became one of the most skilled and respected deal lawyers in the nation. In practice, as in school, he was an intellectual omnivore, whose economic acumen and insatiable curiosity made him a creative and effective advocate. Before his formidable career was tragically cut short, Craig helped to broker some of the most complex and significant transactions in the history of American finance, including JP Morgan Chase's \$58 billion acquisition of Bank One in 2004, and Bank of America's \$50 billion acquisition of Merrill Lynch at the height of the 2008 financial crisis.

Throughout all of this, Craig remained deeply committed to the Law School. It is particularly fitting to remember Craig at a Corporate Law Center Breakfast because Craig was an integral part of the Center from its inception. In 1999, he became the youngest—and also one of the most innovative and enthusiastic—members of the Center's founding advisory board. He took the lead in planning events that brought practitioners, academics, and alums together, just like this one, and helped shape the Center into the vibrant, dynamic force that it is today. Craig also created the Bert W. Wasserman Workshop in Law in Finance, a series of lectures named

in honor of Craig's father that brings cutting-edge scholarship to Yale and will welcome its twenty-ninth guest to the school next week.

When endowing the Workshop, Craig wrote that his father was “a distinguished leader” who exemplified his “field’s highest professional and ethical standards.” I am reminded of these words now because the same could be said for Craig. He was not only a masterfully skilled lawyer, but also a principled and reflective one, who never gave up his habit of asking questions about how his practice related to the world around it. He believed deeply that practitioners and academics both had something to learn from one another. In that spirit, I hope to learn something today—and given our panelists I am sure I will.

Thank you once again to Wachtell, to Craig's wife Marla, to our panelists, and to all of you for being here and making this possible.