

CLO Push Adds to Wilmington Roster

Wilmington Trust continues to add staff as part of an expansion of its collateralized loan obligation trustee and loan-administration services.

The growth effort, now 18 months in the making, has seen Wilmington install personnel specializing in sales, operations and technology. Overseeing the business line are vice presidents **Richard Britt** and **Josh Stowell**, with Britt as product leader and Stowell in as client-development officer.

Most recently, Wilmington hired **Elisa Hennekam** and **Samuel Pagano**. Hennekam, who starts May 17, had been a senior business analyst at financial-technology company **FIS** since 2016. Her previous employers also include **PM Realty** and **Wells Fargo**. Pagano, who joined this month, had been a senior analyst at **BNY Mellon** since April 2020. He previously was an operations and planning associate at **Breed's Hill Capital** and earlier spent time at **U.S. Bank** and **Brookline Bancorp**.

Wilmington plans to add at least one more member to the team in June.

The additions follow a pickup in Wilmington's involvement in bilateral secured credit facilities, with the assignments coming from large managers of private-credit funds. In those cases, Wilmington acts as a collateral agent, custodian and securities intermediary with responsibility for daily cash and position tracking, loan settlements, reporting preparation and borrowing-base and waterfall calculations.

Fund operators and other direct corporate lenders use bilateral facilities — essentially, non-syndicated financing — to add leverage to their positions at attractive interest rates. In some cases, their assignments have foreign-currency elements that reflect the origination of loans across the U.S., Canada and Europe.

Wilmington also is winning mandates to serve as trustee for privately rated CLOs that originators of mid-size corporate loans use to help finance assets held on their balance sheets. Those deals require the same services as CLOs with public ratings.

Like their higher-profile cousins, the privately-rated CLOs



also feature multiple classes of bonds with varying levels of credit support. But they aren't meant for open-market sales, and instead are distributed internally to subsidiaries of their sponsors — often insurance companies.

The efforts, which come at a time when Wilmington also has been seeking business as a trustee for traditional CLOs, reflect Wilmington's identification of bilateral financing and private CLOs as niche markets with the potential for strong growth.

The company's broader structured-finance team is also looking for at least two new staff members. ❖