



Wei Christianson

China Chief Executive

MORGAN STANLEY

CHINA DEAL maker Wei Christianson has proved her loyalty to Morgan Stanley's chief executive officer, John Mack. Now she has to prove her mettle to the Wall Street firm.

The Beijing native followed Mr. Mack from Morgan Stanley to Credit Suisse in 2002 and left days after Mr. Mack was pushed out of the Swiss bank in 2004. She rejoined her mentor at Morgan Stanley earlier this year, leaving Citigroup, where she had been head of investment banking in China.

Her move back to Morgan Stanley spurred the departure of several longtime China bankers at the company who weren't happy with her return. Still, Ms. Christianson— who has impressed fans and detractors alike with her toughness and tenacity in getting deals done—has been undeterred in her mission to build a long-term presence for Morgan Stanley in the world's fourth-largest economy across all the firm's products and services. It's a task she describes as "very challenging."

One hurdle Ms. Christianson faces: finding a way to access the domestic equities market. Although Morgan Stanley owns a 34% stake in domestic investment bank China International Capital Corp., it cannot underwrite or trade domestic stocks on its own. As the government pushes to develop local markets, Morgan

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Stanley, like other Wall Street firms, is pushing for greater access. The firm recently bought a bank license that will permit it to sell fixed-income and derivative products.

Ms. Christianson likes to break through barriers. In 1983, she was the first student from China to graduate from Amherst College, which then awarded her a full scholarship to attend Columbia University's law school.

After working for a law firm for two years in New York, she moved to Hong Kong to work for the city's securities watchdog. From there, she moved into banking.

—Kate Linebaugh