

News



Many of our engagements involve matters in which our clients face significant public attention. The following is a list of news stories about the firm, our clients, cases and the results we have achieved.

Kobre & Kim Honors Bryan Stevenson on Black History Month

February 28, 2022

In honor of Black History Month, Kobre & Kim is reflecting on the unique contributions made by African Americans both inside and outside the legal industry. Today, we celebrate **Bryan Stevenson**, a social justice activist and law professor at New York University School of Law and the founder and executive director of the Equal Justice Initiative based in Montgomery, Alabama. Through his work with the Equal Justice Initiative, Stevenson has devoted his career to challenging biases in the criminal justice system against minorities and poor populations. Stevenson's memoir *Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption* was turned into a world-renowned legal drama *Just Mercy* in 2019.

Stevenson obtained his undergraduate degree from Eastern University and his law degree and a master's in public policy from Harvard University. After graduating from Harvard in 1985, his career began at the Southern Center for Human Rights, where he ran the Alabama operation for death penalty defense work. When the United States Congress eliminated funding for the death penalty defense work, Stevenson turned the center into a non-profit founded as the Equal Justice Initiative (EJI). Through EJI, Stevenson works to provide legal assistance to wrongly convicted individuals on death row and has won reversals, relief or release from prison for over 135 wrongly condemned prisoners.

Stevenson has worked on numerous key civil rights cases, including *Miller v. Alabama* (2012) the landmark U.S. Supreme Court decision ruling that mandatory juvenile life-without-parole sentences were unconstitutional. This decision struck down mandatory sentencing statutes in 29 states and has had rippling effects across the country. Additionally, EJI has represented indigent defendants who cannot afford legal representation, overturned wrongful convictions and worked to alleviate racial and socioeconomic bias across the criminal justice system.

Stevenson and EJI have worked tirelessly to address the ramifications of slavery and structural racism in the United States. In 2018, EJI opened the National Memorial for Peace and Justice, which is the first memorial dedicated to the legacy of enslaved Black people and victims of racial terror and honors the memory of more than 4,000 Black Americans who were lynched across twelve southern states from 1877 to 1950. EJI also created The Legacy Museum: From Enslavement to Mass Incarceration, which provides a history of slavery and its lasting legacy in the United States through Reconstruction, the Jim Crow era and the modern era of mass incarceration.