



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.

Voices of Kobre & Kim: Jessica Fender

June 30, 2026



Jessica Fender, a principal in Kobre & Kim's New York office, discusses her transition from the U.S. Department of Justice, her work on complex cross-border disputes, and the opportunities for early ownership, collaboration, and leadership that are central to building a career at Kobre & Kim.

What led you to join Kobre & Kim, and how did your career path evolve to focus on disputes and investigations?

After over a decade at the Department of Justice in various roles, I knew I wanted to continue doing high-stakes, impactful work. As I began searching for the right fit in transitioning back to private practice, I found that there were very few firms that embodied the creative thinking, flexibility, and cutting-edge

approach to legal work that I relish. Kobre & Kim immediately stood out—those attributes are the lifeblood of the firm. The thoughtful approach taken by the founding partners, Steve and Michael, is structurally baked into so many aspects of the firm.

For instance, I was struck by the firm's choice to forgo traditional "practice groups." From the start, I was able to work across a wide range of disputes and investigations, collaborating with lawyers in different offices and with very different backgrounds from my own. That cross-pollination is central to my continued development, and ultimately helped shape my focus on complex litigation and investigations. Kobre & Kim is a place where you're both trusted and challenged, leading to far better (and more creative!) outcomes for our clients. I love that.

Why did you choose to specialize in litigation and investigations over other legal paths?

Litigation and investigations place the human element front and center. Every matter involves real people, real stakes, and incredibly complex personal or business dynamics—often, both. I find that work deeply engaging.

At Kobre & Kim, that human element comes packaged with some of the most challenging legal problems in the world, which requires creativity and strategic thinking, whether you're untangling a cross-border, white-collar investigation involving multiple sovereigns, or litigating an IP dispute with significant reputational implications. The work pushes you to think critically, adapt quickly, and collaborate closely with your teammates, which is exactly the environment I was looking for.

Can you share a moment or case that had a meaningful impact on your development as a lawyer?

One of the most formative aspects of my experience at Kobre & Kim has been working in what I'd describe as a truly flat organization. Every person, no matter how junior, is actively encouraged to contribute ideas, take ownership, and work directly with senior lawyers and clients. That level of trust accelerates each team member's growth in a way that is hard to replicate elsewhere.

The firm's emphasis on collaboration, through initiatives like idea lab generation sessions and our continued commitment to our affinity groups, has also had a meaningful impact on me. Bringing together a diverse but cohesive group of amazing lawyers from different practices, offices, and perspectives to tackle problems leads to better outcomes for clients and a stronger sense of community internally. It reinforces that great ideas can come from anywhere, regardless of title or tenure.

KOBRE & KIM

How do you manage matters across Kobre & Kim's global offices, and what advantages does the firm's geographic footprint offer?

Many firms have offices in more than one country, but Kobre & Kim's particular footprint is unique and intentional, and it's one of the firm's greatest strengths. We are located where our clients need us—our offshore locations, the unshakable commitment to our Chinese offices, our presence in the Middle East—which allows us to be nimble, responsive, and effective, often in places where others simply aren't on the ground.

Because the firm isn't siloed by office or region, managing matters across jurisdictions feels seamless. You're working with colleagues around the world who are deeply collaborative. For younger lawyers, that means exposure to truly international work early in their careers and the opportunity to develop a global perspective that is increasingly essential in complex disputes and investigations.

What does client development look like in a conflict-free firm, and how has Kobre & Kim supported your efforts?

Being at a conflict-free firm fundamentally changes how we approach client and industry relationships. It's a wonderful thing to be able to honestly tell colleagues and friends that they can bring you into a matter without concern about competition. That openness builds trust and leads to stronger, more collaborative working relationships, where we can jump in and leave things better than we found them.

Kobre & Kim supports lawyers at all levels in fostering those relationships and, fortunately, they're some of the easiest relationships to build and maintain. There's a real emphasis on teamwork rather than internal competition, and that creates an environment where you're encouraged to build your own practice in an authentic way.

What's a piece of advice you've received from a mentor at Kobre & Kim, and how do you pass that on to junior lawyers?

Early on in my career at Kobre & Kim, I was told that the people who thrive here are those that are "comfortable being uncomfortable"—meaning, we do really hard things, we push ourselves to bring the very best and most creative solutions for our clients, and there simply is no laurel-resting; we don't run on autopilot just because a particular approach resulted in success in a prior matter.

This saying really stuck with me, and I now actively encourage others to seek out those opportunities to be uncomfortable, and to realize that it can be a sign of very positive developments to come.

What makes Kobre & Kim a distinctive place for principals working on international disputes?

Kobre & Kim offers opportunities that are hard to find elsewhere, particularly for younger lawyers. From early responsibility on meaningful work to real leadership opportunities, the firm invests in its people and trusts them to rise to the occasion.

Equally important to me is the firm's culture. I'm the chair of our LGBTQ+ affinity group, Pride@KK, as well as a member of our Women@K&K affinity group, and I've seen firsthand how committed Kobre & Kim is to being a welcoming place for everyone. The firm values diverse perspectives—it's encoded in the DNA of this place. That combination of challenging, high-impact work in an inclusive environment makes Kobre & Kim such a special place to build one's career.