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TRAILBLAZERS

LITIGATION



DANI JAMES

KRAMER LEVIN NAFTALIS & FRANKEL LLP

PIONEER SPIRIT Dani James started her career in general commercial litigation. "Once, I was writing a memo at 4 a.m. and realized that while the work was interesting, I wasn't emotionally connecting to it. I had been taken by some investigations work I had done, so I transitioned to becoming a prosecutor at the U.S. attorney's office and ended up teaching at Cardozo School of Law. But I missed solving problems for real people in real time, so I came to Kramer Levin on the defense side."

TRAILS BLAZED James' clients include New York mayor Bill de Blasio. "I represented him in connection with state and federal probes of his fundraising.

That was a high-profile investigation involving some very interesting, cutting-edge legal issues." Last year, James also represented a hedge fund analyst involved in health care securities who was accused of insider trading. "The government also filed for theft of government property, wire fraud and other crimes. He was acquitted of the core insider trading charges but convicted on some of the others. Now, we're appealing because we claim the government can't prosecute the same crime under different statutes. This is a new area of the law."

FUTURE EXPLORATIONS The nature of James' cases changes with each new wave of enforcement. "We are still waiting to see what will happen since the Justice Department disbanded the Financial Fraud Enforcement Task Force and created the Task Force on Market Integrity and Consumer Fraud. We aren't sure how that, along with the Justice Department's new policy of 'not piling on,' will play out. But we are still seeing attempted prosecution of individuals for corporate crimes." Regardless of the enforcement focus, she represents senior executives. "They are usually the people in the center of the storm, and we are tenacious advocates."