

# Alumni News

SPRING 2023

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## In Memoriam: Richard Marlin

We mourn the loss of our former partner, counsel, colleague and friend **Richard Marlin**, who passed away on Feb. 27. He was 89.

A graduate of Yale Law School, Richard joined Kramer Levin as a Corporate partner in 1979, arriving at the firm with Ezra G. Levin. He became counsel in 2009 and retired in 2011. Richard was a valued source and counsel for many lawyers at the firm over the years. He is remembered not only for his legal acumen but also for his kindness and thoughtfulness.

Richard is survived by his wife of over 40 years, Caroline (Hirsch Magnus); his son, John; his daughter, Elizabeth Morrill; his stepsons, Arthur and Steven Magnus; and six adoring grandchildren. We the partners of Kramer Levin and our colleagues extend our heartfelt sympathies and condolences to Richard's family.



## Alumni Moves

Congratulations to Kramer Levin alum **Pamela Swidler** on her **elevation to Chief Legal Officer of WeWork!**



## Keep Us Updated!

We track moves to in-house positions, government and nonprofits. If you have moved or would like to be included in a future Alumni Moves announcement, please email us at [alumni@kramerlevin.com](mailto:alumni@kramerlevin.com).

## Kramer Levin Welcomes New Partners

We are pleased to have welcomed several new partners to the firm recently. Click on their photos below to learn more about them!



Jordan Estes

White Collar Defense and  
Government Investigations



Zachary Jacobs

Private Equity



Yasho Lahiri

Investment Management



Terry D. Novetsky

Securitization



Robert B. Weiss

Investment Management



Scott Welkis

Banking and Finance  
and Special Situations



Alexander Woolverton

Bankruptcy and Restructuring

## Kramer Levin Elevates Natan Hamerman to Partner

We are pleased to announce **Natan Hamerman** has been elected partner in the firm. Read more [here](#).



## Elise Wagner Named Co-Chair of Land Use Practice

Congratulations to **Elise Wagner**, recently named co-chair of our Land Use practice! Read more [here](#).

**Kramer Levin Taps Elise Wagner as Co-Chair of Land Use Practice**

Elise Wagner, who has been on the legal front lines of New York City's zoning approvals for nearly two decades, has been promoted to co-chair of law firm Kramer Levin's land use practice, Commercial Observer has learned.

Wagner, a partner at Kramer Levin since 2005, will lead the practice — which encompasses partners who have worked together for more than 35 years — alongside long-time co-chair Paul D. Selver, the law firm announced Jan. 17. She succeeds Gary Tarnoff, who held the co-chair position since 2019.

"To be able to be the co-chair of a department of people I really not only like but respect very highly as lawyers is a real honor," Wagner told CO. "I am someone who actually enjoys managerial-type work, which not everyone does, and I'm a very organized person who enjoys making sure things get done and focusing people on the decision at hand and what needs to be done."

Since joining Kramer Levin 18 years ago, Wagner has advised real estate owners, developers and nonprofits on land use issues. She has also coordinated the public approval process for public-private development projects and provided consultation about cost-effective strategies for obtaining necessary approvals, such as the transfer of development rights.

Wagner's Kramer Levin tenure has involved many high-profile commercial real estate projects.

The veteran attorney served as land use counsel for **Flaxall** in connection with the proposed rezoning of the company's property surrounding the Anable Basin in Long Island City, Queens, to create a new live-work district along the waterfront. Wagner also secured necessary approvals for **The Gotham Organization's** senior, affordable and market-rate housing development, along with the headquarters for the **Chinese-American Planning Council** on Manhattan's Lower East Side.

Additionally, Wagner advised **The Walt Disney Company** on zoning and historic preservation issues during the sale of its West 66th Street campus and West End Avenue facilities to **Silverstein Properties**. She also simultaneously worked in an advisory role on Disney's acquisition of 310 Hudson Street, which will be transformed into its New York headquarters.

While New York still faces many headwinds due to the pandemic's fallout and economic uncertainty, Wagner is confident the city will remain an active place development wise.

"It has been very challenging for a while and it still is challenging, but my sense is that people are ready to move forward with larger development projects," Wagner said. "I think the city is ready to buckle down and work with the private sector in helping to design projects that will create more affordable housing and create more jobs." —A.C.

STEPPING UP: Elise Wagner has been a partner at Kramer Levin since 2005.

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[Click the article to enlarge.](#)

## Congratulations to Our Newly Promoted Counsel and Special Counsel

We are pleased to announce the **promotions** of Douglas Buckley, Rita Celebrezze D'Souza, Shannon H. Hedvat, Jack A. Herman, Jeffrey H. Price, Meigan P. Serle and Daniel Stewart from associate to special counsel and of Ophélie Boulos and Maria Kondyli from associate to counsel. All the promotions were effective Jan. 1.



## Leadership Council on Legal Diversity Awards Three Kramer Levin Lawyers



LEADERSHIP  
COUNCIL  
ON LEGAL  
DIVERSITY

The Leadership Council on Legal Diversity has selected Corporate associate **Renee Yao** as a **2023 Fellow** and has named Litigation associate **Dayna M. Chikamoto** and Bankruptcy and Restructuring associate **Megan M. Wasson** as **2023 Pathfinders**.



Renee Yao  
Associate



Dayna M. Chikamoto  
Associate



Megan M. Wasson  
Associate

Don't miss out on learning about the firm's pro bono efforts! Read the latest issues of **Pro Bono News**.



## From Biglaw to the Big Screen

### An interview with Kramer Levin alum Karen Segall

Before reaching her current position as head of Legal and Business Affairs at A24 — and before this year's Academy Awards, where her company scooped up nine Oscars, including seven for the film *Everything Everywhere All at Once* — former Kramer Levin associate Karen Segall's career path included undergraduate internships at Viacom and CNN, a law school summer at AOL Time Warner, work at entertainment law firms Sloss Eckhouse and Franklin Weinrib, and a six-year stint at IAC Inc. Each step brought Karen closer to becoming the entertainment lawyer she is today.

We recently spoke with Karen about her career, her time at Kramer Levin and what she loves about her job.



#### **What led you to become a Corporate associate at Kramer Levin?**

The conventional wisdom at the time was to get training in biglaw and then make the move to entertainment law. Following that guidance, I wanted to find a biglaw firm with a general corporate practice that would provide a varied experience as opposed to going to a firm where I was limited to more narrow practice areas such as securities or M&A. I also wanted to be surrounded by people I actually enjoyed spending time with. Kramer Levin checked those boxes and then some.

#### **How did your time at Kramer Levin help prepare you for your current career?**

I learned how to function within the team dynamic. Kramer Levin does very sophisticated work at the highest level, but it maintains a collegial environment. That inspired how I wanted my teams to conduct themselves. Entertainment lawyers who come from biglaw are a different breed. They stand out because they have attention to detail. It sounds so trivial, but it's so important. I got that drilled into me from day one.

#### **What does a typical day look like for you?**

Our company is incredibly unique within the industry — that's what I love about the role. There are no bounds to what we as a company do, and no bounds to what I get to do. We always take a novel approach to structuring deals, looking at things in a different way from how other companies in the industry approach things.

#### **What are the biggest challenges you see in your position? What do you enjoy most about it?**

As my team grows, I see much of my value as being strategic and being able to see across each aspect of A24 and connect the dots — not just where A24 is currently but where we are trying to go. My challenge is how to do that while not getting too in the weeds, but still staying close enough to provide that strategic value.

#### **What was a memorable moment for you at the Oscars?**

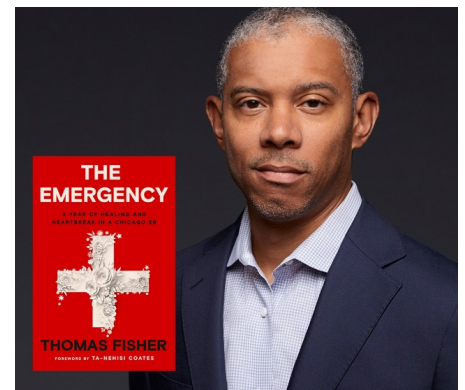
I mean, there's not one moment, right? We were so fortunate to be in such an incredible, historical moment where we were recognized again and again across several of our films. Just jumping up alongside my colleagues every time an A24 film was recognized was incredible.

## Black History Month

### Speaker: Dr. Thomas Fisher

In honor of Black History Month, Kramer Levin welcomed [Dr. Thomas Fisher](#), author of *The Emergency: A Year of Healing and Heartbreak in a Chicago ER*. His memoir recounts the terrifying beginnings of the COVID-19 pandemic and what they revealed about the social issues and racial and wealth disparities that affect quality and equity in our healthcare system.

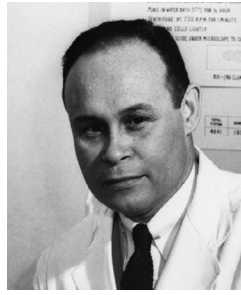
With Nada Llewellyn as moderator, Dr. Fisher spoke about how centuries of American policies have created environments that disproportionately expose people of color to violence. He shared what his patients have taught him about America, noting, "Our bodies reveal the truth about society and our place in it." He concluded that we must not just improve the system but rebuild it, creating a completely new system that is designed for equity.



## Black History Month (cont.)

### African American Trailblazers

In honor of Black History Month, we highlighted African Americans who have been trailblazers in fields beyond legal. Click on their photos to learn more about them!



Dr. Charles Richard Drew



Katherine Johnson



Dr. Rebecca Lee Crumpler

## 2023 March Madness Women's NCAA Bracket Challenge

Congratulations to Louisiana State University, the winner of the 2023 Women's NCAA Tournament, and to the winners of Kramer Levin's 2023 Women's NCAA Bracket Challenge! Donations will be made on behalf of the winners to the charities listed to the right, each of which are committed to increasing equity and diversity in sports and public health interventions.

Thanks to everyone who participated!

**Champion Women**

**Girls on the Run**

**Play It Forward Sport**

**Women's Sports Foundation**

## Recent Awards and Recognitions

For a complete look at all awards and recognitions, please visit our [website!](#)



Kramer Levin Named Nationwide **White Collar Crime/Investigations Firm of the Year** at the 2023 *Benchmark Litigation Awards*



*Chambers Global 2023* Recognizes Kramer Levin Lawyers and Practices



Kramer Levin Named a **Standout Firm in Two Categories** at the *Financial Times* Innovative Lawyers Awards



Kramer Levin's **Pro Bono Program** Lands in **Top 2 for Midsized Firms** by *Law360 Pulse* Annual Pro Bono Rankings



Kramer Levin is among 21 law firms to receive the **National Legal Aid & Defender Association's 2023 Beacon of Justice Award**

## Reminders

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### Alumni LinkedIn Group

It's the official **alumni network** for former Kramer Levin lawyers and staff to stay in touch with the firm, to connect with each other and to learn about professional development opportunities.