

Kelley Cornish, Leading Bankruptcy Lawyer, Joins Selendy Gay

02/26/24



Kelley Cornish, whose practice features many of the nation's largest and most sophisticated restructurings, has joined Selendy Gay as a partner. Her move to the firm expands its complex commercial litigation capabilities in high-stakes restructuring and insolvency disputes, bankruptcy-related investigations, and litigation involving breaches of fiduciary duty, fraudulent transfers, preferences, and equitable subordination. She also has extensive experience in matters where litigation intersects with mergers & acquisitions and liability management transactions.

Kelley joins Selendy Gay after more than 20 years as a leader of the bankruptcy practice at Paul, Weiss, Riffkind, Wharton & Garrison LLP, where she was a member of firm management.

"I began my career as a litigator, and in recent years, litigation has become commonplace in out-of-court restructurings and Chapter 11 cases as corporate and capital structures are increasingly complex and stakeholders are more adversarial," said Kelley. "Selendy Gay offers a platform that is perfectly suited for handling these kinds of disputes – a premier and highly active trial practice, sophisticated strategic and analytical skills, experience on both sides of the "v.", expertise in financial services and with esoteric financial products, and a track record of maximizing speed and efficiency."

Selendy Gay represents private equity funds, hedge funds, trustees, nonprofit organizations, and other stakeholders in a wide range of insolvency-related proceedings. The firm brings its clients deep trial and appellate experience – regularly trying multiple cases each year – and broad proficiency in bankruptcy and insolvency issues.

"As a rigorously focused, disputes-only firm, we approach bankruptcy from the perspective of dedicated courtroom advocates experienced in successfully resolving the most complex and distressed scenarios for our clients," said Faith Gay, who leads the corporate defense and investigations practices at Selendy Gay. "This makes Kelley a natural fit for our firm – in addition to her renowned bankruptcy prowess, she is an experienced courtroom lawyer whose skill set overlaps perfectly with that of our own battle-tested trial lawyers."

Over the course of her career, Kelley has represented all participants in bankruptcy cases and corporate restructurings: debtors, secured and unsecured creditors, official and unofficial committees, and acquirers of distressed assets. Her notable representations include Sears, Diamond Sports Group, Checkers Drive-In Restaurants, Ryze Renewables, Westmoreland Mining, Bumble Bee Foods, Alorica, Jack Cooper Ventures, Triangle Petroleum, The Bon-Ton Stores, Performance Sports Group, AbitibiBowater (now known as Resolute Forest Products), and the acquirers of Brooks Brothers and Lucky Apparel.

“Restructuring transactions are frequently encumbered with multi-faceted, high-speed litigation – for example, ‘lender-on-lender’ disputes,” said Jennifer Selendy, who leads the firm’s commercial practice in bankruptcy-adjacent litigation, including liability management disputes. She led the firm’s successful representation of excluded lenders against TriMark and its participating lenders and currently represents similar groups challenging the Mitel and Robertshaw liability management transactions. “Clients come to us with exceptionally bespoke, intractable disputes that require innovative strategy and litigators of the highest caliber. Kelley fits that description perfectly.”

Kelley is consistently recognized by *Chambers*, *The Legal 500*, *International Financial Law Review*, *Best Lawyers in America*, and other publications. Her representation of the restructuring subcommittee for the board of directors in Sears’ chapter 11 case was named *International Financial Law Review*’s “Deal of the Year.” Her work for Performance Sports Group was recognized as the most significant restructuring of the year by *M&A Advisor* and the Turnaround Management Association.

Kelley was recently appointed Regent for the Second Circuit of the prestigious American College of Bankruptcy’s Board of Regents. She was recently inducted into the Turnaround Management Association’s Hall of Fame and is a member of the American Bankruptcy Institute. She is the chair of the board of Her Justice, which provides free legal services to women living in poverty, and a board member of Lambda Legal, an organization that focuses on LGBTQ+ causes. She is a member of the Executive Committee of the Law Board of the Northwestern Pritzker School of Law and of the Board of Trustees of the Trinity School in New York City.

Kelley has been widely recognized for advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion. *Crain’s New York Business* included her on its prestigious list of “Notable LGBTQ Leaders and Executives.” Both the International Women’s Insolvency and Restructuring Confederation and Her Justice have named Kelley their “Woman of the Year in Restructuring.” Kelley received *M&A Advisor*’s 2023 “Leadership Award” for her contributions to DEI, and she will be honored in the fall by Tina’s Wish with the “Tina Brozman Mentoring Award.”

“Since Selendy Gay opened its doors in 2018, we have set a new standard among law firms. Women hold more than 50% of the firm’s equity, and we have an inclusive and diverse community, with more than 20% of our lawyers identifying as LGBTQ+,” said Maria Ginzburg, Selendy Gay’s managing partner. “With Kelley’s arrival, we add yet another trailblazer to our partnership – we are thrilled she has decided to join us.”

Attorney

- Kelley Cornish