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TRAILBLAZERS

MIDWEST

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What was the genesis of the idea/path that has made you a trailblazer?

I have a finance degree and worked for a major corporation before attending law school. All contributed to my interest in litigation focusing on financial markets, services, and transactions. It was fortuitous that, as I was starting my legal career, a flood of litigation related to financial markets and transactions began due to the 2008 financial crisis. I was in the right place, with the right resume, at the right time. I seized the opportunity to work on commodity litigation cases involving novel legal theories that have shaped the law in the area of commodities enforcement and class action litigation, and I used that experience to develop Jenner & Block's commodities enforcement and litigation sub practice, gaining new clients along the way. I now also co-chair the Financial Services Litigation Practice.

What sort of change has resulted from the concept?

The rise in commodities litigation is changing the way companies do business. Companies of all types face an increased risk of litigation that often involves putative class claims seeking hundreds of millions of dollars in damages. These claims are not subject to the same procedural safeguards Congress has enacted for public companies facing federal securities suits, which means companies often need to defend against claims that might not otherwise be sustained. It is critical for any company facing such claims to have a skilled litigation team with deep knowledge in this area of the law.

What bearing will this have on the future?

The future of litigation related to financial markets, services, and transactions is more litigation. Given the extreme market volatility resulting from the coronavirus pandemic, and the new administration's stated focus on regulation and enforcement, I expect this type of litigation to increase.