

ALEXANDRA D. KORRY

1959-2020

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Alexandra Korry, 61, Dies; Pushed to End Solitary for Juveniles

A corporate lawyer who gave time for public service in New York, she also criticized police stop-and-frisk tactics and school funding that harmed Black and Hispanic people.



Alexandra Korry, who was among the first female partners at Sullivan & Cromwell's mergers and acquisitions group, headed New York's advisory committee to the United States Commission on Civil Rights. Dick Duane, via Sullivan & Cromwell LLP



By Sam Roberts

Oct. 22, 2020, 2:16 p.m. ET

Alexandra Korry, a trailblazing Wall Street lawyer whose potent legal and moral rebuke as head of a civil rights panel helped spur the abolition of solitary confinement for juvenile inmates in New York City, died on Sept. 29 at her home in Westport, Conn. She was 61.

The cause was ovarian cancer, her husband, Robin Panovka, said.

Ms. Korry, one of the first women to be elected a partner in the mergers and acquisitions department of the prominent law firm Sullivan & Cromwell, coupled her corporate law work with nearly a decade of public service as head of the [New York State Advisory Committee](#) to the United States Commission on Civil Rights.

Under her stewardship, the committee issued reports that criticized the New York City Police Department's [stop-and-frisk](#) strategy, intended to reduce the proliferation of guns, arguing that it was disproportionately directed at Black and Hispanic people.

And it [concluded this year](#) that disparities in state and local funding of education should be considered a civil rights issue because they denied equal opportunity to students in poorer, Black and Hispanic school districts.

Her committee had perhaps its greatest impact when, in December 2014, it issued a 68-page report finding that isolating inmates under 18 years old and even below 25 was not only ineffective but also harmful, and that the policy appeared to be applied disproportionately against Black, Hispanic and mentally ill inmates.

The findings, which followed articles in The New York Times about dysfunction at the jail on Rikers Island, helped galvanize the movement to eliminate solitary confinement in New York, which had been contested by inmate rights groups and the Obama administration's Justice Department.

Momentum to end the policy was accelerated by the case of Kalief Browder, a Bronx youth who was arrested when he was 16 for stealing a backpack, placed in solitary confinement on Rikers Island for two years while awaiting trial, and released in 2013 after the charges were dropped.

Publicity about the Browder became a catalyst behind the city's decision in 2014 [to ban solitary confinement](#) for 16- and 17-year-olds, and [later for detainees under 22](#). (Months later, Mr. Browder [committed suicide](#) at his Bronx home.)

Bryanne Hamill, a retired Family Court judge who succeeded Ms. Korry as chairwoman of the advisory committee, said in an email: "Her testimony before the New York Board of Correction, on which I served at the time, and the committee's in-depth report substantially contributed to the abolishment of solitary confinement for youth under 22 years of age in New York City jails." The city is now required to provide young inmates with educational and developmental services.

Ms. Korry saw the issue as a moral one.

"Consigning children and young adults to the degradation of solitary confinement is inconsistent with any standard of decency," she said when the committee's report was released. "Subjecting Blacks and Latinos disproportionately to such terror is unconscionable."

But her objections to the practice were even more far-reaching.

"My own view is that nobody should be subjected to solitary confinement," she said in an interview last year with [Duke Law](#) magazine, published by her law school alma mater. "It is, to me, cruel and unusual punishment."



A solitary confinement cell at Rikers Island. Ms. Korry helped persuade New York City to end the practice of isolating juvenile inmates, some as young as 16. Bebeto Matthews/Associated Press

Alexandra Davern Korry was born on March 11, 1959, in London to Edward and Patricia (McCarthy) Korry. [Her father](#) was a journalist who was later the United States ambassador to Ethiopia and Chile, countries in which Alexandra grew up until she was 12. Her mother was a granddaughter of [Gov. Nathan L. Miller](#) of New York, who held office from 1921 to 1923, and a descendant of Benjamin Franklin.

Ms. Korry earned a bachelor's degree in 1979 at Harvard, where she was the managing editor of the student newspaper *The Crimson* and one of its first female editors. She received a master's in international relations at the London School of Economics in 1980. After brief stints as a reporter for *The Washington Post* and *Newsweek*, she graduated in 1986 from the Duke University School of Law, where she met Mr. Panovka.

In addition to her husband, a partner at Wachtell, Lipton, Rosen & Katz, she is survived by two daughters, Rebecca and Sarah Panovka; her brother, Edward; and her sister, Colette Korry.

After law school, Ms. Korry worked for the consumer advocate Ralph Nader and Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan, Democrat of New York. She initially joined Sullivan & Cromwell to pay off her law school debt, she said, but became absorbed in the give-and-take of corporate practice. She was elected partner in the mergers and acquisitions group in 1993.

Ms. Korry advised Adelphia Communications on its sale to Time Warner and Comcast in 2006 and worked with InBev on its acquisition of Anheuser-Busch in 2008. Within Sullivan & Cromwell, she was credited with helping to make the firm more hospitable to employees who sought to balance work and family obligations.

Ms. Korry traced her commitment to civil rights to growing up abroad and becoming cognizant of “the huge advantages of being American.”

“In Ethiopia, we were living extremely well relative to the vast majority of the people,” she told the website [lawdragon](#) last year. “You’d see lepers in the streets. It was extreme poverty.

“I came to very much appreciate all the choices that many of us, not all of us, have in the U.S., relative to many people around the world,” she added. “I currently feel like there’s tremendous injustice in this society. There is ridiculous inequality between the rich and everybody else. And we all have an obligation to do something about it.”

ALEXANDRA KORRY



The lawyers and staff at Sullivan & Cromwell LLP mourn the tragic loss of our partner and friend Alexandra Korry at age 61. Alexandra died on September 29th following a fearless three-and-a-half year battle with cancer. Alexandra's loving husband, Robin Panovka, and her two adoring daughters, Rebecca and Sarah, were by her side when she passed.

Alexandra joined Sullivan & Cromwell after graduating from Duke Law School in 1986, and in 1993 was among the first women elected partner in the Firm's M&A Group. She quickly rose to become one of the leading M&A lawyers in the United States, widely acclaimed for her strategic thinking and negotiating skill and highly respected as a gifted and trusted adviser. One of her clients once quipped that Alexandra was "sharp as a whip and twice as lethal." She was a powerhouse. World renowned companies, such as Microsoft, Philips Electronics, UBS, China Investment Corporation, Boyu Capital, Kodak, CITIC Capital, Fifth Third Bank and Wells Fargo turned to her for transactions that made headlines and reshaped industries. She advised Adelphia Communications on its 363 sale to Time Warner and Comcast in 2006, as well as InBev on its 2008 acquisition of Anheuser Busch.

In addition to her remarkable professional accomplishments, Alexandra was dedicated to philanthropy and education. "I think everybody who is privileged enough to be in Big Law has an obligation to give back," she said in a Lawdragon profile of the top 500 lawyers in the United States. She served as chair of the New York State Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights and was a member of the Dean's Advisory Council at the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study at Harvard. Over the course of her exceptional career, she also served as a member of the Board of Visitors at Duke Law School, chair of the New York City Bar Association's Committee on Mergers, Acquisitions and Corporate Control Contests, and chair of the Harlem Educational Activities Fund. She was an adjunct professor at Columbia Law School, teaching even as she was fighting cancer.

In a tribute to Alexandra, the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights noted her outsized impact in advancing civil rights. Under her leadership, the Commission's New York

Advisory Committee published a 2014 report that helped end solitary confinement of youth in New York. More recently, her Committee published influential reports on police accountability and educational equity.

Born in London, Alexandra spent her childhood in Ethiopia and Chile, where her father was the U.S. Ambassador. She attended Harvard and then the London School of Economics for a masters in international relations. Prior to law school, she did a brief stint as a journalist, working at Newsweek and the Washington Post.

Alexandra was a trailblazer even before her legal career began - starting in her undergraduate years when she was the second woman elected Managing Editor of the Harvard Crimson, and continuing through her time at Sullivan & Cromwell. She was a mentor to a generation of younger lawyers, teaching not only legal skills but also how to excel professionally while raising children. Alexandra never stopped working to create opportunities and a supportive culture for women at the Firm and in the legal profession.

More than a brilliant lawyer and trusted colleague, she was an empathetic and generous friend, a brave and tenacious leader, and a role model both personally and professionally. She had an unquenchable commitment to her family, partners, colleagues and clients, as well as the law and the world around her. Alexandra will forever live on in the minds of all who were lucky enough to experience her intense intelligence, her unceasing dedication to what is right and just, and her incomparable loyalty and friendship. In her relatively short time, she left an extraordinary mark. We were deeply privileged to have known her and worked with her. She will be long remembered and greatly missed.

LAWDRAGON

ALEXANDRA KORRY 1959-2020



Alexandra D. Korry, 61, passed away from ovarian cancer on Sept. 29.

She was one of a kind, a tough dealmaker who became a top Sullivan & Cromwell partner leading global deals for Goldman Sachs, Ruckus Wireless, Colony Capital, Microsoft Corp. and many, many others.

In a 2019 interview, she was asked which of her deals she took most pride in. “I don’t really think of my deals as what I’m proud of. I’m proud of my children,” she said. She also disclosed that she was undergoing chemotherapy for ovarian cancer. It was important to her that she remain strong – as she always was – and also that her hard work in M&A and many pro bono efforts not be undermined by her private battle.

“I don’t want it to define me,” she said at the time. “But it’s another place where I feel really strongly that women need to be unbelievably watchful.” While she became a patient of a wonderful doctor at Mount Sinai, she had gone to a number of doctors with symptoms and not one of them diagnosed the ovarian cancer.

Korry started her career in journalism, as a managing editor of the Harvard Crimson in 1979 and later working at Newsweek and the Washington Post with Bob Woodward. However, she decided being an observer in life was not really her style and enrolled in Duke Law School.

At Sullivan & Cromwell she became one of the first handful of women partners – and a trailblazer in parenting while dealmaking. She was outspoken, and completely ok with that. “You lean in, but you can get your head chopped off too,” she said. “I was born with chutzpah, maybe sometimes to my detriment. I have never failed to stand up when I think I need to.”

She chaired the New York State Advisory Committee of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, which helped end solitary confinement of juvenile inmates at Rikers Island jail and has since fought for police reform and educational equity.

She is survived by her husband Robin Panovka and daughters Sarah and Rebecca.

Sullivan & Cromwell M&A Partner Korry Dies of Cancer at 61

Alexandra Korry joined Sullivan & Cromwell in 1986 and was one of the first women elected partner in the firm's M&A group.

By Dan Packel | October 14, 2020



**Alexandra Korry
of Sullivan & Cromwell.**

Alexandra Korry, one of the first women to be elected partner in Sullivan & Cromwell's mergers and acquisitions practice, has died after a three-and-a-half-year battle with cancer.

Korry, 61, died Sept. 29. Her husband, Robin Panovka, an M&A partner at Wachtell, Lipton, Rosen & Katz, and her daughters Rebecca and Sarah were by her side. Sullivan & Cromwell announced the news last week.

Korry joined the firm in 1986, following her graduation from Duke University Law School. She was elected partner seven years later, and rose to become one of the most respected M&A lawyers in the U.S., according to an obituary posted by the firm.

"Alexandra was a force of nature," said Frank Aquila, the global head of Sullivan & Cromwell's M&A practice. "She was someone who, even as a relatively junior associate, became well known in the M&A world, and this was a time that there weren't many women M&A lawyers and almost no women bankers. Being a woman in that dealmaking environment was challenging."

In a [2019 interview](#) with the publication Lawdragon, Korry said she decided the firm would likely be a good fit when she found one of the male partners interviewing her had a pony tail and novels stacked all over his office.

"I said, 'If this place is tolerating him, they're going to tolerate me.' It's supposed to be white-shoe. But I wasn't white-shoe, and I didn't want to be white-shoe," she reminisced.

Korry's clients included Microsoft, Philips Electronics, UBS and Wells Fargo. She advised on landmark deals including Adelphia Communications' 2006 sale to Time Warner and Comcast, and InBev's 2008 unsolicited acquisition of Anheuser Busch.

"She was really incredibly smart but also had an enormously practical side," Aquila said.

One example was her recommendation, during the InBev deal, that the company should make a solicitation to Anheuser Busch's shareholders to replace that company's board.

"She took that over as her work stream and basically, when we went public with that and filed with the SEC, we were able to get an agreed deal with Anheuser Busch within a few days," Aquila said. "It became a very effective tool to bring the other side to the table and bring a resolution to what could have been a long and acrimonious acquisition battle."

In addition to her work at Sullivan & Cromwell, Korry was a lecturer at Columbia Law School, where she co-taught a course on deals starting in 2012. She also served as chair of the New York State Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights. Under her leadership, the group published a 2014 report on solitary confinement of youth in the state, which ultimately prompted the abolition of the practice.

“Alexandra has had an outsized impact in advancing civil rights,” committee vice chair Bryanne Hamill said upon her passing. “As a member of the committee, she never ceased to amaze me with her intellect, energy, passion, determination and extraordinary efforts to improve the lives of others by documenting the need for government to account for, and remedy, its civil rights violations.”

Korry was also a member of the Dean’s Advisory Council at the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study at Harvard. As an undergraduate at Harvard, she was the second woman elected managing editor of the Harvard Crimson.

She earned a master’s degree in international relations at the London School of Economics and then worked as a journalist for both Newsweek and the Washington Post before turning to a legal career.

Korry was born in London and grew up in Ethiopia and Chile, where her father served as the U.S. ambassador.

In her own family, Korry spent substantial time working with her daughters on projects on behalf of nonprofit organizations, with work on behalf of first responders following the 9/11 attacks serving as one example.

“Although they were a small family, they were all committed to each other and were very, very close,” Aquila said. “Whether these were things they were doing on weekends, or upon picking them up from school, that was a constant theme with her.”

Movers & Shakers: Sullivan & Cromwell's Alexandra Korry Dies at 61

Korry maintained a demanding M&A practice while being a role model in balancing work and parenthood.

By [David Marcus](#)

October 21, 2020



Alexandra Korry

Alexandra Korry, an M&A partner at **Sullivan & Cromwell LLP**, died on Sept. 29 of ovarian cancer. She was 61. Korry joined Sullivan after graduating from Duke Law School in 1986 and spent her entire career at the firm, making partner in 1993.

She helped advise [InBev NV](#) on its \$52 billion hostile acquisition of Anheuser-Busch Cos. in 2008 and [Adelphia Communications Corp.](#) on its 2006 sale to [Time Warner Inc.](#) and [Comcast Corp.](#) (CMCSA) and did work for [Eastman Kodak Co.](#) (KODK), [Microsoft Corp.](#) (MSFT) and [UBS](#).

Korry was “fiercely intelligent and always questioning. She was very, very hardworking and a real role model; she became a partner on a flex-time basis for a period when her two daughters were young,” said [Joseph Shenker](#), Sullivan’s chair.

When Korry and her husband, [Robin Panovka](#), a partner at [Wachtell](#), Lipton, Rosen & Katz, had their first child, Korry asked Sullivan for the latitude to balance parenthood and work. She told the firm, “Listen, I don’t know what I’m capable of, but there’s no way I can do what I did before and do what I want to do as a mother,” she said to Duke Law Magazine in a 2019 article. “If you want me to resign I will, but otherwise we’re just going to have to figure out something that will work for both of us.”

Korry often worked from home years before it became so common. That often required a different way of interacting with younger lawyers, as described by Ken Myers, a partner at [Fenwick & West LLP](#) in New York who worked with Korry when he was an associate at Sullivan.

“I’d work on a document and send it to her, and she would call me as soon as it hit her inbox, and then we would just hash it out together in real time — for like six hours straight. We would talk through concepts, strategy, mechanics and detail — all of it. There was an intensity and immediacy in the experience that you didn’t get with anyone else, like being tutored, tested and coached all at once. I learned so much from her,” said Myers, who remained close to Korry.

Korry was demanding, said [Igor Kirman](#), a Wachtell partner who worked with her closely when he was an associate at Sullivan, but “in a good way, and she was unbelievably fair. She was extraordinarily precise as a draftsman, and we shared this love of drafting and paying attention to the details. She was also way before her time — a pioneer,

really — as a working mom,” Kirman said, noting that Korry tended to hold meetings in Sullivan’s Midtown office because it was closer to her home than the firm’s Wall Street headquarters. “You have to have self-confidence to do that, and she had it, and I’m still learning that from her. She never spent one minute on things that didn’t matter.”

Korry was also forthright with her own clients. “She was one of those advisers who didn’t tell people what they wanted to hear but what she thought was the right thing to do,” said Larry Grafstein, the deputy chairman of global investment banking at [RBC Capital Markets](#).

In addition to her work as a corporate lawyer, Korry chaired the New York State Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, which published a 2014 report that helped end solitary confinement of youth in New York and later issued reports on police accountability and educational equity.

“I saw Alexandra as someone who was brilliant and highly analytical and yet was able to translate complex concepts and findings into a language that everyday people can understand,” said Bryanne Hamill, who served as the committee’s vice chair with Korry and is now its acting chair.

Born in London in 1959, Korry graduated in 1980 from [Harvard University](#), where she was the second woman to be the managing editor of The Crimson, the school’s student newspaper. Grafstein, who worked with her there as well, said she “showed the same intellectual and leadership talent that characterized her professional life.”

Korry “was intense and serious, but with a swagger,” said Nell Scovell, who worked with her at The Crimson and went on to co-author the book “Lean In” with [Facebook Inc.](#) (FB) executive [Sheryl Sandberg](#). “She was fun, tough, and unapologetically competitive. Too often women are indoctrinated that it’s unseemly to be competitive, but Alexandra ignored the memo.”

For reprints of this story, please contact Jonathan McReynolds: jmcreynolds@thedeal.com



The New York Advisory Committee to the United States Commission on Civil Rights Celebrates the Accomplishments and Mourns the Death of Chair Alexandra Korry

September 30, 2020

We are profoundly saddened by and mourn the death of our outstanding Chair, Alexandra D. Korry, who led the New York Advisory Committee to the United States Commission on Civil Rights for nearly a decade, where she persistently advanced the civil rights of New Yorkers.

Under her steadfast leadership, the Committee investigated and published several significant reports documenting civil rights violations in New York State, each culminating in a set of findings and recommendations to the United States Commission on Civil Rights. Alexandra believed deeply in the dignity and promise of every individual and was committed to creating a fair and just society where equity prevails. She was particularly committed to protecting the civil rights of children and youth as among our most vulnerable.

In 2014, the Committee, led by Alexandra, published [*The Solitary Confinement of Youth in New York: A Civil Rights Violation*](#), which examined the disparate impact and serious and far-reaching harm inflicted on adolescent inmates, primarily youth of color, who were subjected to prolonged harmful isolation in solitary confinement in New York's Rikers Island RNDJ jail as well as New York's state prisons. The Committee's investigation, findings, and recommendations highlighted by Alexandra's testimony before the New York Board of Correction influenced the Board of Correction and the City of New York to abolish solitary confinement for incarcerated youth less than 22 years of age in 2015. And, in part due to NYSAC's recommendations, the Board now requires the City to provide these incarcerated youth with age-appropriate rehabilitative educational, physical and mental health, developmental, and social services, instead of harsh punishment, to improve their chances of success upon release.

In 2018, the Committee investigated the City of New York's policing of communities of color and released [*The Civil Rights Implications of "Broken Windows" Policing in New York City and General NYPD Accountability to the Public*](#), which addressed the disproportionate and negative impact of 'broken windows' policing on communities and youth of color in the City of New York, including in its schools, and the significant

problems inherent in the New York Police Department's approach to accountability, transparency, and oversight. Many of our recommendations have since been adopted.

Most recently, in Spring 2020, the Committee published [*Education Equity in New York: A Forgotten Dream*](#), which documented its significant findings and recommendations regarding the persistent and harmful inequity in K-12 education funding. We found that New York students of color are being deprived of the right to participate in civil society as a result of a lack of access to a fundamental quality education, simply based on their poverty or their color. Alexandra had stated in our recent press release: "It is shameful that in an era in which we build skyscraping apartments that sell for mega-millions we cannot dream big enough to provide a quality education to our most underserved students. New York's failure to provide a decent education to its poorest students, many of whom are students of color, violates the very precepts of a civil and just society and deprives our children of even the possibility of participation in society."

While Alexandra earned a reputation for brilliance and tenacity as a top corporate lawyer at Sullivan & Cromwell, the Committee observed her deploy her formidable talents in the service of racial justice and civil rights. "Alexandra has had an outsized impact in advancing civil rights," Vice-Chair Bryanne Hamill said. "As a member of the Committee, she never ceased to amaze me with her intellect, energy, passion, determination, and extraordinary efforts to improve the lives of others by documenting the need for government to account for, and remedy, its civil rights violations." Long serving Committee member Iris Chen said, "I will always treasure the opportunity I had to serve under Alexandra's leadership. Her commitment, integrity, and resolve were on full display as she battled to protect and safeguard the rights of our most disenfranchised. She embodied what it means to live life fully and to deploy one's gifts in service of others."

This June, Alexandra welcomed a newly appointed advisory committee at the start of her third term as Chair and subsequently led us through vigorous discussions of New York's most pressing civil rights issues. In light of Alexandra's passing, Vice-Chair Hamill said, "We will honor Alexandra's memory and legacy by continuing her tradition of conducting exhaustive investigations, holding balanced briefings, and issuing comprehensive reports documenting our findings and recommendations. She has set the bar high."

Commission Chair Catherine E. Lhamon said, "Civil rights advance through tenacious commitment; as we mourn Alexandra's death and celebrate her legacy I so appreciate this Committee's pledge to advance the important work to which she was so fiercely dedicated and from which New York and the country deeply benefit."

The Committee members extend their deepest sympathies to Alexandra's family, friends and colleagues. We will miss her and will always be grateful for, and inspired by, her leadership and invaluable contributions to advancing the civil rights of all.

About the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights and the New York State Advisory Committee

The Civil Rights Act of 1957 created the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights. Since then, Congress has reauthorized or extended the legislation creating the Commission several times; the last reauthorization was in 1994 by the Civil Rights Commission Amendments Act of 1994. Established as an independent, bipartisan, fact-finding federal agency, our mission is to inform the development of national civil rights policy and enhance enforcement of federal civil rights laws. We pursue this mission by studying alleged deprivations of voting rights and alleged discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, age, disability, or national origin, or in the administration of justice. We play a vital role in advancing civil rights through objective and comprehensive investigation, research, and analysis on issues of fundamental concern to the federal government and the public.

The Commission maintains 51 State Advisory Committees (SACs), one for each state and the District of Columbia. Each is composed of citizen volunteers familiar with local and state civil rights issues. The members assist the Commission with its fact-finding, investigative, and information dissemination functions. The Commission seeks to ensure that advisory committees are broadly diverse and represent a variety of backgrounds, skills, experiences and perspectives. This diversity promotes vigorous debate and full exploration of the issues. All appointments are made in a non-discriminatory manner.



**HARLEM EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES FUND
WHERE COLLEGE IS THE RULE**

ALEXANDRA KORRY SCHOLARSHIP

The *Alexandra Korry Scholarship*, established in 2020, will be awarded annually to a promising student who shows interest in pursuing a career in law, social justice, public service or a related field. The scholarship will include a stipend towards college expenses and, if applicable, law school or graduate school, as well as mentorship by the Korry Scholarship Committee comprised of prominent lawyers and judges.

The Scholarship was established by HEAF to honor the extraordinary legacy of Alexandra Davern Korry, a trailblazing lawyer, educator and civil rights champion, who chaired HEAF's Board of Directors during a number of its formative years. Alexandra left an indelible mark on HEAF, helping to energize the organization, sharpen its programs and vision, and broaden its reach. For many years, Alexandra also taught an introductory law class to HEAF students, and led our legal mentorship efforts, among her many other philanthropic and educational endeavors. Alexandra was a top partner at the law firm of Sullivan & Cromwell for many years, and one of the leading M&A lawyers in the United States. She was among the first women senior partners of a major Wall Street firm, and worked tirelessly to break barriers and create opportunities for women and other under-represented groups. In a tribute to Alexandra, the United States Commission on Civil Rights, whose New York Advisory Committee she chaired, noted her outsized impact in advancing civil rights, including helping to end solitary confinement of youth in New York and working on police accountability and educational equity.

The Scholarship will be administered by the Korry Scholarship Committee, which will select one or more recipients each year and determine their awards. The goal of the Scholarship is to build on Alexandra's legacy of excellence and public service, and to inspire the next generation of leaders with her passion for social justice and education.



Public Interest Funding

Duke Law School proudly offers *guaranteed* funding for summer internships with public interest or government entities. Funding is also available on a competitive basis for students committed to careers in government or public interest.

Duke Law Public Interest Law Foundation (PILF) Grants

PILF grants are guaranteed* summer funding to students who secure a qualifying public service position for the summer, including: local, state, or federal government; not-for-profit organizations or NGOs (including international); and summer judicial internships (2Ls only). To qualify for a full grant, 1Ls must commit to at least 8 weeks (at 40 hours per week) and 2Ls to at least 10 weeks; funding may be pro-rated for lesser commitments or split summers. Grant amounts for 2Ls are higher than for 1Ls.

PILF Grants are heavily supported by the [Public Interest Law Foundation \(PILF\)](#), a student-run fundraising organization whose mission is to help the law school raise money to award summer fellowships to 1L and 2L students who accept unpaid summer public interest internships and to provide bar grants to graduating students entering public interest positions. PILF's largest annual fundraiser is its Celebration & Auction in the spring semester; other fundraisers, including Duke Law merchandise sales, take place throughout the year.

**Students must complete at least 20 hours of "public service work" during the school year to receive funding. Public service work for purposes of PILF include approved pro bono work and working with PILF on its fundraising initiatives. In 2020-2021, in response to the pandemic, the hours have been reduced from 20 hours to 9 hours. Pro bono hours must be through a Duke Law pro bono project or with a pro bono project that is approved by the Office of Public Interest and Pro Bono. Clinic and externship hours in excess of what is required for academic credit count as pro bono hours for funding purposes.*

Duke Law Endowed Public Interest Fellowships

These competitive summer fellowships are made possible through endowments to Duke Law School from generous alumni donors. To qualify for these fellowships, applicants must secure a summer position with a non-profit, NGO, or government organization in the U.S. or abroad. Open to 1Ls and 2Ls; full summer (8 or 10 weeks at 40 hours per week) and split summer arrangements are eligible. Successful applicants will have a demonstrated

commitment to developing a career in the public interest; other factors which will be considered are involvement in public interest and pro bono activities at Duke Law and prior public interest and volunteer work. These are competitive fellowships, with a preference for 2Ls. Students awarded these fellowships typically receive more funding than they would through solely a PILF Grant.

The endowment funds that support these fellowships include: Carroll & Simon; Steckley Weitzel; Burdman; Everett Fellowship; Mansfield Fellowship; and the Zipp Family Fellowship.

Duke Law Alexandra D. Korry L'86 Civil Rights Fellowships

These competitive fellowships are awarded to students doing a wide range of domestic civil rights related summer work, including internships in: civil rights and criminal justice reform organizations; civil legal aid; juvenile and public defense offices; and organizations supporting immigration, environmental justice, gender equality and the arts. Both 1L and 2L students are eligible for the fellowships; it is anticipated that up to ten awards will be given annually, with two thirds of the awards going to 2Ls. Award amounts will be equivalent to or higher than Endowed Fellowship amounts. The fellowship was established in honor of Duke Law Alumna Alexandra D. Korry L'86 for her outstanding pro bono civil rights work and her contribution to ending juvenile solitary confinement. (For more information, see these articles in [Duke Law Magazine](#) and [The New York Times](#))

Duke University Stanback Environmental Fellowships

The Stanback Fellowship Program is a program exclusive to Duke undergraduate, graduate, and professional students that offers placements with environmental advocacy organizations nationwide. [The program is administered by the Nicholas School of the Environment](#) through the generous support of Mr. & Mrs. Fred Stanback. Several legal organizations post for 1Ls and 2Ls; past employers include the Duke Environmental Law and Policy Clinic, Earthjustice, Environmental Working Group, Natural Resources Defense Counsel, Sierra Club, Southern Environmental Law Center, and the North Carolina Conservation Network.

For Endowed Public Interest Summer Fellowships and Dean's Summer Service Grants, students may seek additional funding outside the Law School or Duke University, including from their employer or through external sources, up to a total of \$7000 without a reduction in their grant amount.





Alexandra Korry Luncheon
New York City Bar Association M&A Committee

The New York City Bar association's M&A Committee has named its annual lunch with a
Chancellor from the Delaware Chancery Court in honor of Alexandra Korry.

The inaugural Alexandra Korry Luncheon with Chancellor Bouchard will take place on Friday,
December 4 and will include an opportunity to remember and honor Alexandra.

Alexandra D. Korry: A Lasting Legacy



The late S&C partner Alexandra Korry, who passed away in 2020 at the age of 61, was best known in the legal community for her groundbreaking legal career. She was one of the first women elected Managing Editor of the Harvard Crimson in 1979 and she was among the first women elected partner in S&C's M&A Group in 1993. She became one of the leading M&A lawyers in the United States, serving as the trusted advisor to high-profile companies around the world—including Microsoft, Philips Electronics, UBS, Kodak and Wells Fargo—who relied on her guidance in headline-dominating deals that reshaped industries. She was also a dedicated criminal justice advocate, heading the New York State Advisory Committee to the United States Commission on Civil Rights, and helping spur the abolition of solitary confinement for juvenile inmates in New York City.

To honor Alexandra's legacy, the Women's Initiative Committee has created the Alexandra

D. Korry Award for outstanding leadership and commitment to the advancement of women at S&C and in the legal profession.

"Even as a relatively junior associate, Alexandra became well known in the M&A world, and this was at a time that there weren't many women M&A lawyers and almost no women bankers," recalls Frank Aquila, the global head of S&C's M&A practice and a member of its Management Committee. "Being a woman in that deal making environment was challenging,"

Within S&C, Alexandra is best remembered for her unique brand of mentorship, defined by her relentless pursuit of excellence. Alexandra's mentees recall her pushing them to go further than they thought they were capable, and the profound growth that they experienced as a result. Her network of her mentees includes law firm partners at and beyond S&C, senior in-house counsel at major international companies, as well as lawyers who founded their own companies.

“

We have some incredible role models and I'm honored to continue the tradition of excellence and mentoring other associates to be courageous and inclusive leaders.”

—Lauren S. Boehmke,
the inaugural recipient of the
Alexandra D. Korry Award



She encouraged the women she trained to dare to be confident. During a negotiation, she told the junior women on the S&C team they should claim seats at the center of the table, saying, “You won’t score points from the end of the table.” She taught a generation of younger lawyers not only legal skills but also how to excel professionally while raising her two daughters.

Lauren S. Boehmke, the inaugural recipient of the Alexandra D. Korry Award, is inspired by Alexandra’s legacy and is a champion for the junior women associates in the M&A group. “I feel I have an obligation to make sure that women at the Firm in general and especially in the M&A group feel like there are opportunities for women to advance and be successful,” says Lauren, who joined the Firm in 2013. “We have some incredible role models and I’m honored to continue the tradition of excellence and mentoring other associates to be courageous and inclusive leaders.”

An active member in the Women’s Initiative Committee, Lauren hosts get-togethers for new associates to help them integrate into the Firm and also participates in virtual and on-campus panels and recruiting events. Lauren is also active in the Firm’s Associate Advisor Program, sharing ideas on how to enhance the program to benefit associates. Her practice focuses on public and private M&A, corporate governance, activism and takeover defense, and other public company advisory matters for such clients as AT&T, MSG Networks and AMC Networks.

For Lauren, it’s been humbling to be selected to carry on Alexandra’s tradition of excellence and mentorship. “I have received such immense support throughout my career at S&C,” she says, “and one of my top priorities is giving that back.”



S&C Honors the Trailblazing Legacy of Our Late Partner

AUGUST 18, 2021



To honor the legacy of the late Sullivan & Cromwell partner Alexandra D. Korry, who passed away in 2020 at the age of 61, our Women’s Initiative Committee has created the Alexandra D. Korry Award for outstanding leadership and commitment to the advancement of women at Sullivan & Cromwell and in the legal profession.

Lauren S. Boehmke, the inaugural recipient, is inspired by Alexandra’s legacy. Like Alexandra, she strives to make a difference for the junior women associates in the Firm’s M&A Group. “I feel I have an obligation to make sure that women at the Firm in general, and especially in the M&A group, feel there are opportunities for women to advance and be successful,” says the eighth-year associate.

Alexandra was among the first women elected partner in S&C’s M&A Group in 1993. She quickly became one of the leading M&A lawyers in the United States, serving as the trusted advisor to high-profile companies around the world. She was also a dedicated criminal justice advocate, heading the New York State Advisory Committee to the United States Commission on Civil Rights, and helping spur the abolition of solitary confinement for juvenile inmates in New York City. And she was a loving wife to Robin Panovka and mother to Rebecca and Sarah Panovka.

Within S&C, Alexandra is remembered for her unique brand of mentorship, defined by her relentless pursuit of excellence. Alexandra’s mentees recall her pushing them to go further than they thought they were capable, and the growth that they experienced as a result.

“I feel I have an obligation to make sure that women at the Firm in general, and especially in the M&A group, feel there are opportunities for women to advance and be successful.”

— Lauren S. Boehmke

Lauren leads in her own way. Her practice focuses on public and private M&A, corporate governance, activism and takeover defense, and other public company advisory matters. An active member of the Women’s Initiative Committee, she hosts get-togethers for new associates to help them integrate into the Firm and also participates in virtual and on-campus panels and recruiting events. Lauren is also active in the Firm’s Associate Advisor Program, sharing ideas on how to enhance the program to benefit associates.

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Alexandra D. Korry



ANNOUNCING THE 2021 INDUCTEES TO THE LAWDRAGON 500 HALL OF FAME

By Katrina Dewey | January 27, 2021 | Guides, News & Features

We are thrilled to introduce the new members of the Lawdragon Hall of Fame. These lawyers are among the most acclaimed of their generation, having led America's signature law firms to unprecedented heights, achieved civil rights advances and changed our world for the better.

The 37 lawyers selected include dealmakers such as Sullivan & Cromwell's Joe Shenker; Wachtell's Edward Herlihy; and Kirkland's David Fox. All-star litigators include Mary Alexander; McKool Smith's Doug Cawley; Paul Weiss' Jay Cohen; and Lieff Cabraser's Elizabeth Cabraser. Also inducted this year is the remarkable former Delaware Vice Chancellor and Paul Weiss of counsel Stephen Lamb.



Recognized here are three remarkable female lawyers we lost last year: Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Sullivan partner Alexandra Korry and Robins Kaplan partner Hollis Salzman. The magnitude of their loss mirrors the breadth of their achievements and impact on those they touched.

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Where Westport meets the world

Norwalk Art Space: Alexandra Korry's Lasting Legacy

Posted on [August 16, 2021](#) | [3 Comments](#)

When Alexandra Korry died at her Westport home last September of ovarian cancer, the *New York Times* honored her life with a [long obituary](#).



Alexandra Korry (Photo by Dick Duane, for Sullivan & Cromwell LLP)

The 61-year-old was “a trailblazing Wall Street lawyer whose potent legal and moral rebuke as head of a civil rights panel helped spur the abolition of solitary confinement for juvenile inmates in New York City.”

She was one of the first women elected partner in Sullivan & Cromwell’s mergers and acquisitions department — and one of the first women editors at the *Harvard Crimson*.

Korry spent nearly a decade as head of the [New York State Advisory Committee](#) to the US Commission on Civil Rights.

The great-granddaughter of former New York governor Nathan Miller, and a descendant of Ben Franklin, she worked for consumer advocate Ralph Nader and Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan.

But the *Times* never mentioned one of her greatest accomplishments: chair of the Harlem Educational Activities Fund. The non-profit serves 300 people a year, changing lives from middle school through college and beyond, with academic enrichment, social and cultural exposure, and individual attention.

Korry was a constant presence there, even teaching classes.

That commitment sparked another project: the [Norwalk Art Space](#). She envisioned it before her diagnosis, and shepherded it along while sick.

Alexandra Korry died before the space opened, in June. But her vision and guidance can be seen and felt throughout the magical space, a converted church on West Avenue, just off I-95 exit 15.



The Norwalk Art Space (Photo/Patrick Sikes)

Korry found the property — near the old Loehmann's plaza — and realized it was perfect for an art gallery, studios and classrooms. Three museums — Stepping Stones, the Center for Contemporary Printmaking and Lockwood-Mathews Mansion — are nearby. All embrace their new neighbor.

Working with Westport architect [Rick Hoag](#), she planned several complementary uses for the Norwalk Art Space.

The upstairs includes an airy gallery, where local artists exhibit for free. In exchange, they teach art to children — for free. Upcoming classes include acrylic painting, mixed media and collage, drawing and sculpture.

A dynamic café — run by Bill Taibe of The Whelk, Kawa Ni and Don Memo fame — looks out over the gallery.



Bill Taibe's cafe, adjacent to the gallery space.

Downstairs are 4 studios — free to artists — along with well-appointed classrooms, and a student lounge.



One of several well-equipped classrooms.

A sculpture garden helps link the Norwalk Art Space to the neighborhood, and nearby museums.

“Alexandra was all about closing gaps,” says her husband, Robin Panovka. Since her death, he’s taken up her torch.

“She kept hearing women artists, and people of color, complain about how hard it is to get into galleries.” Now, a great gallery welcomes them.

And, in the spirit of giving back, student artists — who otherwise would not have a chance to develop their talents — are being mentored by 4 resident artists, in their 20s. They, in turn, will be mentored by 5 older “fellows” in the Art Space.

And, Panovka says, even more established artists are mentoring the fellows.



Norwalk students flock to the Art Space.

Alexandra Korry died before the Norwalk Art Space was completed.

She never saw the first show, or knew that her classrooms were full this summer.

But her husband smiles as he describes the enthusiasm the community has shown, since the doors opened in June.

The spirit of the Norwalk Art Space — Korry's spirit — is very much alive.

(To learn more about the Norwalk Art Space, [click here](#).)

The Norwalk Art Space



The Norwalk Art Space will be an exciting new venue for local artists to show their work and local students to take free art classes.

Our Founder

The Norwalk Art Space

Alexandra Davern Korry

In loving memory

The Norwalk Art Space was lovingly conceived and designed by Alexandra Davern Korry (1959-2020), a trailblazing lawyer, educator, civil rights champion, and philanthropist. Alexandra wanted to create a space that would both promote local artists and enhance opportunities for underserved students. Sadly, she passed away before construction was completed. Our building, ADK House, is named in her honor.

LAWYER LIMELIGHT: ALEXANDRA D. KORRY

By Katrina Dewey

| April 23, 2019

| Lawyer Limelights , News & Features



The leaves were not all that was changing in the crisp Autumn air at Harvard in the fall of 1979.

The Harvard Crimson was in the midst of a takeover, and **Alexandra Korry** was becoming its second female managing editor. Alongside her were two other women, Celia Dugger and Susan Chira, comprising a new day feminists were ushering in.

It was a thrilling time, and one that portended open skies for women to achieve all their dreams.

Korry's outspoken ways and ideals came to her naturally. Her father had been a journalist covering international affairs and then an Ambassador to Ethiopia and Chile. Born in London, she remembers well her privileged childhood and the shocking disparity in wealth in the countries where her family lived. After Harvard, she went to work at the Washington Post for its fabled reporter Bob Woodward, who had brought down a presidency less than a decade before. She continued her reporting for Newsweek in London, while pursuing a masters at the London School of Economics.

At some point, however, she decided she wanted to be an actor in her own life, rather than an observer of others and went to Duke Law School. Women were making inroads throughout society, and it seemed more than time for women to have a bigger

voice in the legal profession. She joined **Sullivan & Cromwell**, where she gravitated to M&A and became one of the first handful of women partners – and a trailblazer in parenting while dealmaking.

She is the first to say she can be outspoken, but there's something more than refreshing about that. "You lean in, but you can get your head chopped off too," she says. She's led global deals across dozens of countries, and watched the "problematic progress" of women in law.

"I was born with chutzpah, maybe sometimes to my detriment," Korry says. "I have never failed to stand up when I think I need to. And as we well know, and 2016 proved true (and maybe 2020 will too), strong women are not necessarily liked. Period." Her philosophy extends to chairing the New York State Advisory Committee of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, which helped end solitary confinement of juvenile inmates at Rikers Island jail and is now pursuing educational equity.

That's the point, and what she's sought to teach her daughters and the women she's mentored. To be a top dealmaker – and to contribute as a person – you need to speak up, take risks and never look back.

Lawdragon: It seems to me you've been breaking barriers throughout your career, even going back to your journalism.

Alexandra D. Korry: I have sought to break barriers, however concrete they might be. In the law, at any rate, I think it's relatively easier today than it was when I started out, because there are more women. It's still a horribly low number in terms of equity partners, but when I started, almost every meeting I went to was entirely male except for me. Now that is no longer the case.

LD: What was it like when you were interviewing?

ADK: Well, my job interview at Sullivan & Cromwell included four or five people. Like any institution you may interview at, you don't meet everybody, and you sort of have to make a snap judgment based on what you see. You may have gotten the 5 percent of the firm that's cool or the 5 percent that's not cool. One of the partners I met was a man with long hair and a ponytail. He had novels all over his office, stacked everywhere. And I said, "If this place is tolerating him, they're going to tolerate me." It's supposed to be white-shoe. But I wasn't white-shoe, and I didn't want to be white-shoe. I figured if the place could let this guy exist and celebrate him, then I was going to be OK.

LD: That's really insightful. It sounds like you had gotten comfortable taking initiative and saying what you thought by the time you got to Sullivan & Cromwell. What kind of advice would you offer to other women who want to become accomplished dealmakers and attorneys? What are some of the key steps?

ADK: Well, there are a few things. I say this to young associates and to students in the class I teach at Columbia Law. You've got to choose what you want to do because you've got to enjoy what you're doing. It's the number one thing. If you're not enjoying what you're doing, then there's no point in doing it. It's your life. You've got to take the initiative to figure out how you want to structure it. You're not a victim here. You are more in control of your future than you realize. The practice of law is symbiotic; enthusiasm and creativity from young people are a necessary component to the success of the enterprise.

For women, unfortunately still in 2019, I think there is additional advice – I think you have to figure out how to be assertive without being overly assertive. I can't say I've found that line, but I think it's something that everybody looks for. As a male, you can sit there quietly and then make one

pronouncement and everybody goes, “Wow.” But I think as a woman, you can’t just do that. It’s just not possible to sit there quietly and then make that one pronouncement, because nobody will listen to you. So you need to figure out a way for people to say, “OK, she gets it. I can put my trust in that person.”

Another piece of advice I give is that you have to dare to be an adviser. Many people think, “Oh, the client said this, we’ve got to do it.” And I always say, “Well, wait. Maybe the client’s wrong or hasn’t understood all the factors. Maybe you have to explain to the client why their approach may be problematic. Or why that’s not in their best interest.” I think you have to be creative, and you need to speak up. Not scream, but speak up. There are a lot of smart women who just do not want to say something for fear that they’re going to be knocked down. And I think you just have to be willing to be knocked down if you are going to succeed.

LD: Right. And you have to get knocked down a few times to learn to get up.

ADK: Exactly. It’s a lesson that really applies to all of your life.

It’s still extremely hard in our society to be a strong woman. From my early days, if I saw something that was wrong I’d stand up. I had a very innate sense of right and wrong and injustice, and, as I said, often to my detriment, I would stand up and say something. There are things that I just will not tolerate or I will just say no to, when I probably should have said yes, if I were looking at it from a what’s-best-for-me perspective. Or I should have stayed silent. But it’s just not me. I’m just sort of a rebel within any institution

LD: And yet you’ve done extremely well at Sullivan & Cromwell.

ADK: That’s a compliment, in effect, to Sullivan & Cromwell.

LD: You wouldn’t be you if you didn’t speak up.

ADK: True. I’ve never been afraid to say pretty much what I think. At some point after the collapse of energy giant Enron, a client’s accountants wanted to do a transaction involving a number of special purpose entities. And I thought the transaction was dubious at best. And the accountants were really pushing it, and I told the client, “We cannot do this transaction for you.”

LD: What did the client say?

ADK: The client went elsewhere but I don’t think they ended up doing the transaction. And I felt very good about it.

LD: And were there repercussions in the firm? Did they ask what you were thinking? Or did they accept that you made a judgment call?

ADK: No, they understood and were behind me 100%. This is a firm that allows and expects its partners to do that. I’ve never felt like I’ve done anything uncomfortable. This firm cares about integrity. I’m always very straight with a client about what I think they should do. I think the world has a view that corporate America is this bastion of bad people. But, in fact, there are a lot of good people throughout the business world who actually do care about their employees and other societally important values besides just being profitable.

LD: Do you have one or two deals of which you're particularly proud?

ADK: Pride is a weird thing. I mean, I'm proud of my children. I feel like I have made substantial contributions to many deals and have accomplished a lot for my clients so I'm proud of the work that I have done. But I don't feel like I'm particularly proud of a deal. I understand that a deal is a transaction. And I don't really get my self-worth from transactions per se, whether the size of the transaction or the notoriety of the transaction. I've always tried to just do a really good job and try to add value and to be a net positive influence.

I like solving complexity and was involved for nearly three years with Adelphia's bankruptcy when the new team came in and ended up selling everything to TimeWarner and Comcast. That transaction was really interesting on a whole bunch of levels. It introduced me to the inefficiencies of our bankruptcy system, where there are often insufficient incentives for reorganizations to be done in a short time period. And, it also was a very fun, interactive process, with daily meetings for a couple of years. I also like deals that expose me to new businesses or new cultures. I worked on a transaction a few years ago involving a company in Germany that was collecting cow dung, to convert the methane into usable energy in the German energy pipeline. It was a sustainable energy deal and it was interesting to learn how that process worked and how the German system prioritized sustainability.

I've also enjoyed working on a number of Chinese deals. For example, I represented three different clients when they took a piece of Alibaba, including China Investment Corporation. It's interesting to participate in transactions that involve a number of different cultures, whether nation-based or just corporate-based. I also represented UBS in a number of worldwide deals that involved multiple locations and many jurisdictional issues.

I also have enjoyed working in the tech sector, like the sale of Ruckus Wireless to Brocade a few years ago, in which the S&C team was entirely women and the Company's CEO was also a woman. It was a first for me and we all had a good time doing it.

LD: Any idea where you got your sense of justice from?

ADK: I was raised by a British nanny, Emily Stanbury, and so it may have been from her. She was always my champion and she set the bar high for me. I didn't spend very much time with my parents, although they raised us to be completely unprejudiced, and I've always thanked them for that. My dad was a journalist who started his career with United Press and was sent to Yugoslavia when President Josip Tito broke with Soviet premier Josef Stalin in the late 1940s. He worked for UPI in Berlin for many years and then in Paris, and then became European editor of "Look" magazine. He did a whole series of articles in 1959 on the liberation movements in Africa. And John F. Kennedy's transition team asked him if he wanted to be an ambassador.

It was a political appointment, but he'd never given any money to any party. He didn't have the money to give. Kennedy's successor, Lyndon Johnson, kept him on. We were there four-and-a-half years, which is where all my first memories are, basically, because I was 4 when we went there.

LD: Through your father's work I imagine you saw a lot of justice and injustice.

ADK: Especially the huge advantages of being American, the tremendous wealth differences. In Ethiopia, we were living extremely well relative to the vast majority of the people. You'd see lepers in the streets. It was extreme poverty. I came to very much appreciate all the choices that many of us, not all of us, have in the U.S., relative to many people around the world. I currently feel like there's tremendous

injustice in this society. There is ridiculous inequality between the rich and everybody else. And we all have an obligation to do something about it. If you're a middle-class person today, you pretty much have to have a two-income family if you want to live the way somebody lived in the '50s with a one-income family.

LD: Right. And at the same time, people are working harder and harder to put food on the table. And then we see these super-rich people and billionaires.

ADK: In corporate dealmaking, synergies are an important driver. There are cost synergies and revenue synergies, and one of the cost synergies is getting rid of people. I have thought for some time that maybe part of the cost synergies shouldn't be such an easy cost synergy. Maybe, as a society, we need to figure out how to shift the cost of retooling employees back to the acquiror who is evaluating cost synergies.

LD: Cool idea. Can we also talk about your civil rights work, and other things that you've been involved in? Your role with ending solitary confinement of juveniles is huge.

ADK: I'm definitely proud of that. We weren't the only people who were involved in this effort, but I think we contributed to ending solitary confinement for juveniles in New York City. Solitary confinement is abhorrent. I think it's cruel and unusual punishment and it's unconstitutional, period. And solitary confinement of children who have not yet been convicted of a crime is just absurd. There's still a lot of work to be done. Since they're closing Rikers, the kids are going to get shipped upstate to another facility where they aren't protected from solitary confinement. Many of these kids are basically picked up for pick-pocketing or stealing something, and they can't make cash bail, and they end up at Rikers. And then they're angry, because they're 16-, 17-year-old kids, and they end up in solitary. It's a horrible process. The end of cash bail requirements for nonviolent crimes and misdemeanors will go a long way to alleviating the problem.

Our next project, what we're doing this year, is tackling educational funding inequity as a civil rights issue.

LD: Can you tell me a little bit about that?

ADK: In my view, our society sort of pretends that we have equality of opportunity. And we've built a whole bunch of structures around this notion of equality of opportunity, when in fact we really don't have equality of opportunity. Because what opportunities you get, in very large part, are determined by your ZIP code. And a lot of that has to do with the educational system that you go through, and how many dollars are spent on it. Unfortunately, the federal government only funds 5 percent of the educational budget in New York state. The rest comes from New York state and local communities. We're still in the early days on this, but this is going to be one of the things that we talk about, how the lack of funding obviously affects poorer districts, and those poorer districts are comprised of a high percentage of people of color. It's hard to see how you have equality of opportunity when some districts get \$40,000 per pupil and some exist on \$11,000 per pupil.

Alexandra Korry '86



Alexandra Korry's early career aspirations centered on journalism and politics. During college she served as managing editor of the *Harvard Crimson*, worked for Ralph Nader's Pension Rights Center and U.S. Sen. Daniel Patrick Moynihan, and then spent a summer at *The Washington Post* followed by a year in London studying international relations and working for *Newsweek* on the side.

Her main interest in Big Law, Korry says, was as a means to pay off her student loans. So no one was more surprised than she to get hooked on mergers and

acquisitions on her very first deal as a 2L summer associate at Sullivan & Cromwell in New York.

“I vividly remember sitting in a room with a bunch of senior people on this deal and one of them turned to me and said, ‘What do you think, Alexandra?’” she recalls. “I was floored that I would be asked for my view. I realized it was very collaborative, it was very strategic and fast-paced, and I’m a bit of an adrenaline junkie. It was for me.”

Korry, who returned to Sullivan & Cromwell after her Duke Law graduation, was running her own deals by her third year at the firm. A partner since 1993, she has risen to become a leading M&A lawyer and one of a handful of senior women practitioners in the field, advising on a diverse range of deals in a host of industries, from technology, media and financial services to energy, retail and commodities. She also teaches a course on public takeovers at Columbia Law School and recently stepped down from chairing the New York City Bar Committee on M&A. “I have found my practice and outside activities really fun and engaging and I’ve never been bored,” she says.

Throughout her career, Korry has worked to build a supportive culture for women at her firm. She’s also maintained her commitment to social justice through an active pro bono practice and leadership posts with such organizations as the New York State Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights and the Harlem Educational Activities Fund.

“I try to do good for society on the outside and I think everybody who is privileged enough to be in Big Law has an obligation to give back,” says Korry, a former member of the Duke Law Board of Visitors. “The outside activities I’m involved in are a means to give back, and I believe that with time and talent and energy you can really effect change.”

Crafting a practice for a curious mind

Korry has deliberately stayed a generalist in M&A, finding that a varied practice has allowed her to feed her curiosity about the world through exposure to different businesses. Her transactions have included: advising Fifth Third Bank in the formation of Vantiv as a joint venture and in the Vantiv/Worldpay merger; Microsoft in its investment in the then fledgling Roadrunner portal and its attempted acquisition of Yahoo!; Adelphia Communications in its bankruptcy sale to Time Warner and Comcast; and UBS in a range of private principal transactions as well as in its capacity as financial advisor to public companies.

“It’s interesting to me how they convert cow dung into energy on German farms, and it’s interesting to see how wireless access points work,” she says, referring to some of the deals she has brokered. “I like a varied practice so that I not only face new legal issues but I also meet different people and learn about how they approach issues, and how their companies run.”

M&A, adds Korry, involves a lot of problem solving. “You’re really half business person and half lawyer. So I like my practice to involve as many skillsets as possible because it makes my advice better and makes it more interesting for me.”

Korry entered her field and arrived at her firm at a time when both were male dominated; in her early years she often was the only woman on a deal team. And when, as a freshly minted partner, she had her first child with husband Robin Panovka ’86 — whom she met at Duke Law — S&C lacked the well-developed maternal-leave policy it now has in place. So Korry laid out her boundaries to her principals.

“I said, ‘Listen, I don’t know what I’m capable of but there’s no way I can do what I did before and do what I want to do as a mother,’ she says. “‘If you want me to resign I will, but otherwise we’re just going to have to figure out something that will work for both of us.’ I was very forward about it and to its credit, the firm was very flexible in return.”

Partly because of her advocacy, the firm now has well-institutionalized policies dealing with personal leave and flexibility for employees reintegrating back into work life.

“I say this to young associates all the time: ‘You have to design a career that works for you. You have a lot more power than you understand,’” says Korry, whose two daughters, Rebecca and Sarah, are now young adults.

Working to right the wrongs

Korry expanded her volunteer work and pro bono practice as she rose in seniority at S&C and her children became more independent. Her deeply engrained sense of justice originates, she says, in a childhood spent primarily overseas, while her father served as U.S. ambassador to Ethiopia and Chile during the Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon administrations. Korry’s “very enlightened” parents made sure she and her siblings engaged with the local cultures; in Ethiopia, for example, they refused to let their children attend the American school when they arrived because of its refusal to enroll Ethiopians. By the time the family returned

to the U.S. when she was 12, Korry says she viewed the country as a different, even foreign, culture.

“It really made me appreciate all the opportunities that exist here — how fortunate we are, and how unfortunate certain segments of our community are,” she says. “This is not a society in which we have equality of opportunity, and I feel very strongly about doing my piece to try to correct that.”

Deeply committed to education and civil rights, she is a board member and former chair of the Harlem Educational Activities Fund, which helps underprivileged but high-potential youths enter New York City’s most competitive high schools and prepares them to attend four-year colleges. Korry leads a legal program that guides students through mock negotiations and a case they “argue” before a judge of the Second Circuit Court of Appeals.

“There’s a huge gap between kids who are in some of these schools and the opportunities my kids have,” Korry says. “We have to do something really big globally to correct the inequity but I’m trying to do it on a small scale too.”

As chair of the New York State Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, Korry has worked to spotlight issues involving criminal justice and civil rights. In March 2018, the committee presented a report on the disproportionate effects of “broken windows” policing on minorities in New York City. And in 2014, the group released an investigation of juveniles subjected to solitary confinement in New York City jails, including the notorious Rikers Island complex.

During a visit to Rikers, Korry says she was horrified to see a row of inmates under age 21 serving up to six months in solitary confinement. It’s something she believes more Americans should witness.

“Most New Yorkers have no idea what happens on the inside,” she says. “As a society, we aren’t exposed to that on a day-to-day basis, where it would actually hurt us to see that. It’s too easy to become immune or inoculated against any of these things. But we should be more aware of how other people are living.” The committee’s work helped convince New York City officials to ban solitary confinement for inmates under age 22.

“My own view is that nobody should be subjected to solitary confinement,” Korry says. “It is, to me, cruel and unusual punishment. We were part of the process that

helped get New York City to raise the age. That, I think, was a pretty significant step.”

Building opportunities for women

Along with other female partners, Korry continues to build opportunities for women at her firm and in her field by providing advice, accommodating scheduling needs and helping them to build their own practices.

She is gratified, she says, to now see at least one other woman at the table on most deals, and by the “huge” progress women have made in law overall since her early days in practice. “It has been somewhat transformative for women over my career, and I like to think that I helped to pave the way for that, but we’re not anywhere near where we should be,” she says. “We’re nowhere near parity.”

Large firms still do poorly at retaining women, who represent less than 20 percent of equity partners at the top 200 U.S. private law firms and make up just five percent of Fortune 500 CEOs, according to recent surveys. Faced with difficult choices regarding work-life balance, Korry says, some women opt out. But in her experience, it’s simply more difficult being a woman in a man’s world.

“There was and is today still a presumption that women are not as smart, not as capable, not going to be able to lead us through the transformation of our company,” she says. “It is a rebuttable presumption, but it is still a presumption and you have to work really, really hard at rebutting it.”

That’s easiest to do when one’s work feels like play, she says. “I never set my sights on becoming a partner. It happened because I was enjoying what I was doing.”

Korry advises all law students and associates to gravitate towards their areas of genuine interest — and to “learn to pivot” because some jobs will gradually disappear due to advances in technology. “But I always tell associates, ‘It’s your choice to shape your own career. Live your life the way you want to and not the way others think you should. Choose what you want to do based on the fact that you enjoy it. And if you’re not enjoying it, leave.’” — *Jeannie Naujeck*

The Flag of the United States of America

*This is to certify that the accompanying flag was flown over the United States Capitol
at the request of Senator Kirsten Gillibrand.*

This flag was flown for

Alexandra Korry

in memory of her life and service.

Kirsten Gillibrand

Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator

KIRSTEN GILLIBRAND
NEW YORK



UNITED STATES SENATOR

October 8, 2020

Mr. Robin Panovka
262 Central Park West
Apartment 3A
New York, NY 10024-3512

Dear Mr. Panovka, *Robin*

I was very sorry to learn of your beloved wife, Alexandra's passing. Although there are no words to ease your sorrow, I hope that you will take comfort in the positive and meaningful influence she made on the lives of all those who knew her. She was an enormous help to me over the last decade and please know that I am keeping you all in my thoughts and prayers.

Please accept my deepest and most heartfelt condolences. *I am keeping you and your family in my prayers. Alexandra*
Sincerely,
Much love, Kirsten
Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator

was such a bright light and made a difference in all she did. Her brilliant legal mind was such a gift to all she devoted her time and efforts to impact. I feel blessed to have known her and to have benefitted so often from her wise and generous counsel. Her voice and advocacy will be missed. Please let me know how I can help.

December 1, 2020

Dear Mr. Panovka:

I was deeply saddened to hear of your wife's passing and wanted to share my heartfelt condolences with you.

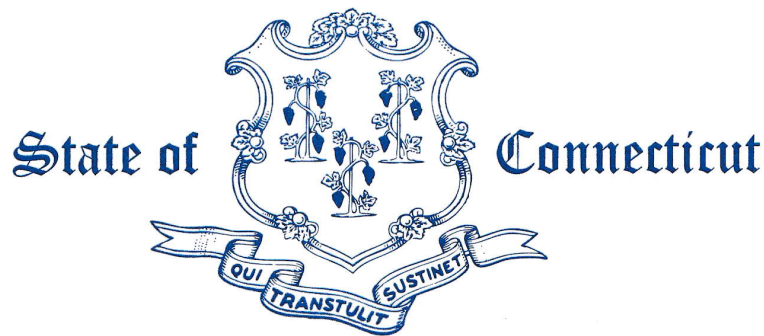
Alexandra was a fierce advocate of civil rights, and her tireless efforts to reduce racial disparities in the criminal justice system and end juvenile solitary confinement have left an indelible mark on our city. Her years on the New York State Advisory Committee to the United States Commission on Civil Rights are a testament to her devotion to public service and her commitment to fighting for the underprivileged. I know that she will be dearly missed by her friends, family, and all those who had the pleasure of knowing her, and I hope that celebrating her inspiring life and accomplishments bring you and your loved ones some measure of comfort and peace at this difficult time.

On behalf of 8.6 million New Yorkers, Chirlane and I offer you our deepest sympathies.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bill de Blasio", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Bill de Blasio
Mayor



By Her Excellency Susan Bysiewicz, Lieutenant Governor

Official Statement

I offer my deepest condolences to the family and friends of

Alexandra Korry

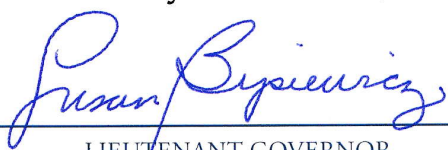
who was a beloved mother, wife, attorney, professor, mentor and advocate for many. She was a trailblazer for women in the legal profession as the first elected woman partner of her firm's M&A group, and later a leading M&A lawyer in the country. She served honorably as the Chair of the New York Advisory Committee to the United States Commission on Civil Rights, and with her leadership helped to end youth solitary confinement in New York. Teaching at Columbia Law School while fighting cancer, she exemplified resilience and strength for working mothers. Her legacy is not only one of compassion and excellence, but also of nurturance and cultivation of legal minds for future generations.

She will be missed by not only her family and friends, but by all who had the honor and pleasure of knowing her.

Please accept my heartfelt sympathies on your loss.



Signed this 29th Day of October, 2020


LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR