

2023 RISING STAR

Ty'Meka Reeves-Sobers



Kirkland & Ellis LLP partner Ty'Meka Reeves-Sobers has used her environmental, regulatory, corporate and securities background to advise clients on hundreds of transactions, including multibillion-dollar deals, earning her a spot among the environmental law practitioners under age 40 honored by Law360 as Rising Stars.

Her Biggest Deal:

Reeves-Sobers points to being part of a Kirkland team that advised LyondellBasell Industries NV on an agreement with Sasol Ltd. to form a joint venture and acquire 50% of various Sasol assets in Louisiana, including an ethane cracker, polyethylene plants and associated infrastructure, as her biggest deal.

It was a complex deal at a challenging time, Reeves-Sobers said, but an amazing opportunity that catapulted her career. It occurred during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic and as she learned she was expecting her second child. Two hurricanes also struck the area during the course of the \$2 billion deal, which closed in December 2020.

Reeves-Sobers joined the team as a senior associate and played a key role, drafting and negotiating agreements and schedules, identifying and evaluating potential issues, and negotiating on environmental insurance coverage.

"It was a huge team and definitely a Herculean effort," Reeves-Sobers said. The project saw her managing one of her largest environmental

diligence teams to date and was later recognized as a transaction of the year finalist at the Houston Corporate Counsel awards in 2021.

Her Other Notable Deals:

Reeves-Sobers helped represent Kohlberg Kravis Roberts & Co. LP infrastructure funds in their acquisition of Macquarie Infrastructure Corp.'s

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Atlantic Aviation business in 2021. She co-led environmental aspects of the \$4.47 billion transaction for the network of fixed-base operators providing aircraft ground support to nearly 70 airports.

She advised Navitas Midstream Partners Holdings LLC on environmental aspects of the sale of its interests in Navitas Midstream Partners LLC to an Enterprise Products Partners LP affiliate in a \$3.25 billion all-cash deal that closed in February 2022. She also led an environmental transactions team that advised Prince International Corp., an American Securities LLC portfolio company, on its acquisition of coatings manufacturer Ferro Corp. through a transaction valued at about \$2 billion that closed about two months later.

In her first major deal as partner, Reeves-Sobers was lead environmental counsel to private equity firm I Squared Capital in connection with its agreement to acquire VLS Environmental Solutions, a company that provides regulated industries with waste management, cleaning and repair services.

Reeves-Sobers said getting to learn more about that business and its industry was a major highlight of the deal, which closed in August 2022 with undisclosed terms.

“It was definitely scary but also exciting to not just lead a team on a major deal, but to be the lead decision maker,” she said.

What Motivates Her:

Reeves-Sobers said one motivator for her is being another example for lawyers who look like her or come from similar backgrounds.

She said she’s been fortunate to have many great mentors in her career, most of whom did not look like her, and is driven to pay those opportunities back to younger lawyers. She’s passionate about diversity initiatives, recruiting and creating a pipeline for students interested in working for large law firms or in environmental law.

“I’m happy to serve in that role for those coming after me,” Reeves-Sobers said. “That motivates me.”

Her Proudest Moment:

When Reeves-Sobers was just 5 or 6 years old, she wrote in rudimentary handwriting at school that she wanted to be a lawyer when she grew up, not knowing what that entailed. Becoming a lawyer and seeing the culmination of her career are what make her proudest today, she said.

One major highlight was being asked to speak at the Texas Environmental Superconference in 2019, an event put on each year by the Texas bar. Reeves-Sobers said she’s attended that conference each year since law school, and now helps plan it. “I feel like that experience has come full circle,” she said.

“Every day I learn something new, and those things are all evidence I’m a little better at mastering my craft,” she said. “Now I can look back and see how far I’ve come, and how I now serve as that more senior person.”

On The Future of Her Practice:

Reeves-Sobers said she sees herself as a deal lawyer at heart who happens to really enjoy environmental law. Her practice touches a bit of everything, she said, and will have to continue to keep pace with emerging issues and constantly shifting and evolving regulations.

“I always call myself an environmental athlete. You have to stay flexible and limber to really stay on top of everything and be prepared for change,” she said, “and adapt and be flexible as needed.”

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