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Reed Brodsky Discusses Meghan Messenger Trial Victory With Law360

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Law360

A federal jury in Washington, D.C. recently unanimously acquitted Meghan Messenger, co-chief executive of Next Jump, and her co-defendant Charlie Kim of charges alleging they had bribed Robert P. Burke, the highest-ranking four-star admiral in the United States Navy, to obtain a federal contract. Gibson Dunn partner Reed Brodsky and associate Francesca Broggini represented Messenger, and Reed spoke to Law360 [PDF] about the unique challenges of the case and why it was an important verdict.

A previous case against the pair had ended in a mistrial, creating a difficult situation for the defense team on retrial, Reed explained.

“Not only is it rare for the government to lose these cases, but to lose a retrial in such a case is almost unheard of,” said Reed. “The government often wins retrials, because they adapt to the defenses that they didn't anticipate, then try to improve their cases.”

After Reed confronted a senior civilian executive director for the Navy during cross-examination with inconsistent statements from the first trial, “with tears in her eyes, she eventually admitted that the Navy had mistreated and misled Meghan Messenger and Charlie Kim, which was a devastating admission that must have resonated with the jury," Reed said. "It was quite a moment."

Reed opted to call Messenger to the stand during the retrial, and Messenger delivered "powerful testimony".

Overall, Reed said the case was won “with a combination of relentless determination, razor-sharp cross-examination, a simple and compelling story, and the powerful testimony of our client.”

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