



**Jamila Justine Willis**

**Partner**

**CO-CHAIR, CONSUMER GOODS AND RETAIL SUBSECTOR  
CHAIR, NEW YORK OFFICE RESTRUCTURING GROUP**

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Jamila Justine Willis focuses her practice in the area of financial and corporate restructuring and has extensive experience in complex restructurings across industries.

Jamila represents debtors, distressed investors, sponsors, purchasers of distress assets and other interested parties in a wide range of restructuring and insolvency matters, including cases under chapters 11 and 15 of the US Bankruptcy Code and cross-border insolvency proceedings.

In addition, Jamila represents debtors, secured creditors, acquirers and distressed investors in distressed asset sales and acquisitions, including Uniform Commercial Code Article 9 foreclosure sales and Bankruptcy Code Section 363 sales.

Jamila also advises firm clients in liquidations, corporate wind-downs, bankruptcy litigation and other bankruptcy-related matters.

Internally, Jamila holds a leadership role as Co-Chair of the Consumer Goods and Retail sector, in addition to being a member of DLA Piper's Policy Committee and serving as Chair of the New York Office Diversity & Inclusion Committee.

- Finance
- Restructuring
  
- Consumer Goods, Food and Retail

Jamila's recent in-court engagements include:

*Debtor Representations*

- Counsel to debtors **Abengoa, S.A.**, **Abengoa Bioenergy US Holding, LLC** and **Abeinsa Holding Inc.** and certain of their affiliates in connection with their multijurisdictional restructuring, focusing specifically on the US-based chapter 11 and chapter 15 cases before the United States Bankruptcy Court for the District of Delaware and the sale of certain US assets through a chapter 11 case before the United States Bankruptcy Court for the Eastern District of Missouri
- Counsel to debtors **Appvion, Inc.** and its certain of its affiliates in connection with their chapter 11 cases *In re Appvion, Inc., et. al.* in the United States Bankruptcy Court for the District of Delaware
- Counsel to Daniel Francis Butters and Ian Colin Wormleighton, as joint foreign representatives (the "Foreign Representatives") of **Arcadia Global (USA) Limited** (in administration), the London-based operator of TopShop/TopMan retail stores, in connection with

the chapter 15 case *In re Arcadia Global (USA) Limited* in before United States Bankruptcy Court for the Southern District of New York

- Counsel to debtors **Celadon Group, Inc.** and certain of its subsidiaries in connection with their chapter 11 cases *In re Celadon Group, Inc., et al.* in the United States Bankruptcy Court for the District of Delaware
- Counsel to debtor **Comcar Industries, Inc.** and certain of its subsidiaries in connection with their chapter 11 cases *In re Comcar Industries, Inc., et al.* in the United States Bankruptcy Court for the District of Delaware
- Counsel to debtor **L.K. Bennett U.S.A, Inc.**, the New York-based U.S. retail arm of British clothing retailer L.K. Bennett, Ltd., in connection with its chapter 11 case *In re L.K. Bennett U.S.A, Inc.* in the United States Bankruptcy Court for the District of Delaware.
- Counsel to debtor **REVA Medical, Inc.** in connection with its “pre-packaged” chapter 11 case *In re REVA Medical, Inc.* in the United States Bankruptcy Court for the District of Delaware
- Counsel to debtors **Xtera Communications, Inc.** and its subsidiaries in connection with their chapter 11 cases *In re Xtera Communications, Inc. et al.* in the United States Bankruptcy Court for the District of Delaware

#### *Distressed M&A and Sell-Side Representations*

- Counsel to stalking horse purchaser, **ABG-Barneys, LLC**, affiliate of Authentic Brands Group, LLC, in connection with its acquisition of all intellectual property of luxury retailer, Barney’s New York and its debtor affiliates in *In re Barneys New York, Inc. et al.*
- Co-counsel to stalking horse purchaser **General Wireless, Inc.**, affiliate of Standard General L.P., in connection with its acquisition of certain of the assets of RadioShack Corporation and its affiliated debtors, including more than 1700 stores and substantially all of the intellectual property, in *In re RadioShack Corporation et al.*
- Counsel to stalking horse purchaser, **Otsuka America Pharmaceutical, Inc.**, in connection with its acquisition of substantially all assets of Proteus Digital Health, Inc. in *In re Proteus Digital Health, Inc.*
- Counsel to stalking horse purchaser, **Pfizer, Inc.**, in connection with its acquisition of substantially all assets of BIND Therapeutics, Inc. in *In re BIND Therapeutics, Inc. et al.*
- Counsel to stalking horse purchaser, **RBS Salon Holdings, Inc.**, affiliate of Tacit Capital LLC, in connection with its bid to acquire of substantially all assets of Rudy’s Barbershop Holdings, LLC and its affiliated debtors in *In re Rudy’s Barbershop Holdings, LLC, et al.*
- Counsel to stalking horse purchaser, **HC Salon Holdings, Inc.**, affiliate of Tacit Capital LLC, in connection with its acquisition of substantially all assets of Creative Hairdressers, Inc. and Ratner Companies, L.C. in *In re Creative Hairdressers, Inc., et al.*
- Counsel to real estate investment firm in connection with the potential acquisition of a portfolio of thirty-five hotels and resorts
- Counsel to brand development and entertainment company in connection with the potential acquisition of a portfolio of thirty-four retail stores
- Counsel to private equity firm in connection with the potential acquisition of a fast casual restaurant chain and franchisor

#### *Other In-Court Representations*

- Counsel to debtor **ALCO Stores, Inc.** in connection with the adversary proceeding *Blackhawk Network, Inc. and Blackhawk Network California, Inc. v. ALCO Stores, Inc.*
- Counsel to creditor **Leucadia National Corp.** and its subsidiaries in connection with the adversary proceeding *The Official Committee of Unsecured Creditors of Vivaro Corporation v. Leucadia National Corporation et al.*

Jamila’s recent out-of-court matters include:

- Represented a global alternative asset manager in connection with the foreclosure sale of an electrochemical technology company
- Represented a debt capital firm in connection with the foreclosure sale of a cyber and intelligence technology company
- Represented an international financial services group in connection with the out-of-court restructuring of bonds of an independent living facility.
- Advised a global alternative asset manager with respect to the sale of its interest in distressed assets
- Advised a Madrid-based international bank with respect to the sale of its interest in distressed US-based assets
- Advised a Puerto Rico-based international bank in connection with a potential foreclosure sale of a grocery store chain
- Advised an investment firm in connection with a potential foreclosure sale of a wireless communications design and development company

## CREDENTIALS

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### Admissions

- Connecticut
- New York

### Recognitions

- Recipient of *Bloomberg Law's* "They've Got Next: The 40 Under 40" Award (2021)
- Named to *Crain's New York Business* 2020 Notable Women in Law list (2019)
- Recipient of *M&A Advisor's* Emerging Leaders Award (2019)
- *New York Law Journal*, New York Rising Star (2019)
- Named to *M&A Advisor*, 10th annual list of Emerging Leaders (2019)
- Recipient of the *National Conference of Bankruptcy Judges* Honorable Cornelius Blackshear Presidential Fellowship (2017)

### Education

- J.D., University of Virginia School of Law
- B.A., Communications, Economics, University of Pennsylvania

### Courts

- United States District Court for the Eastern District of New York
- United States District Court for the Southern District of New York

## INSIGHTS

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### Publications

#### ***Black In House Counsel* 2022 Annual Report**

March 2022

Six DLA Piper lawyers were featured in *Black In House Counsel's* 2022 Annual Report.

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#### **Common Ground, Uncommon Purpose**

16 February 2021

The firm's forefront commitment to equality is all-encompassing.

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- "Lessons Learned from the 'Retail Apocalypse': Where Fashion Goes from Here," *New York Law Journal*, August 28, 2020

### Events

### Previous

## A fireside chat with Holly Etlin, Managing Director at AlixPartners: The current state of the retail industry

27 April 2022

Consumer Goods and Retail speaker series

Webinar

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## A fireside chat with Nicole Gates, Senior Corporate Counsel at Dr. Seuss Enterprises: Coming trends in consumer goods and retail

16 December 2021

Consumer Goods and Retail speaker series

Webinar

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## Negotiating Sourcing Arrangements Following COVID-19

1 July 2020

Webinar

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- National Bar Association Corporate Law Section 34th Annual Corporate Counsel Conference, "Corporate Restructuring Trends and M&A Issues in the Era of COVID-19," *National Bar Association*, February 23, 2021
- "Recent Developments in Distressed Debt, Restructurings and Workouts 2021," *Practising Law Institute*, January 28, 2021
- M&A Advisor Distressed Investing Virtual Symposium, "The Ongoing Impact of COVID on M&A Activities – Understanding and Finding Opportunities during a Global Pandemic," *M&A Advisor*, December 2, 2020
- 2020 San Francisco Economic Outlook and Bankruptcy Law, "How Has COVID-19 Impacted Bankruptcy and Business Law and Practice," *UC Hastings and UCLA Anderson Forecast*, November 10, 2020
- NAWL General Counsel Institute, "Restructuring in the Time of COVID-19," *National Association of Women Lawyers*, November 12, 2020
- MBBA LEAP Career Forum, "Bankruptcy Law," *Metropolitan Black Bar Association*, November 11, 2020
- "Shop Till You Drop: A Look at Bankruptcy Issues in Retail & Fashion," *National Association of Women Lawyers Women in Fashion Law + Women in Bankruptcy & Restructuring*, October 27, 2020
- CCWC 16th Annual Career Strategies Conference "General Counsel Fireside Chats," *Corporate Counsel Women of Color*, September 28-29, 2020
- #MBBALearns Webinar "Transactional Lawyering in the Age of COVID-19," *Metropolitan Black Bar Association*, May 6, 2020
- "Trends in Restructuring and Debt Markets," *Women in Funds*, April 9, 2020

## NEWS

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### DLA Piper partner Jamila Justine Willis named to *Bloomberg Law's* They've Got Next: 40 Under 40 list

15 July 2021

DLA Piper is pleased to announce that Jamila Justine Willis was named to *Bloomberg Law's* inaugural They've Got Next: 40 Under 40

list highlighting up-and-coming attorneys across various practices.

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### DLA Piper names lawyers to Leadership Council on Legal Diversity 2021 Fellows and Pathfinders programs

31 March 2021

DLA Piper is pleased to announce that the firm has selected partner Jamila Willis to participate in the Leadership Council on Legal Diversity's (LCLD) 2021 Fellows Program and has selected associates Mary Hagedorn and Sarah Thompson Schick to participate in the LCLD 2021 Pathfinders Program.

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### DLA Piper announces new sector leadership

10 March 2021

DLA Piper is pleased to announce several recent changes to the firm's sector leadership.

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### DLA Piper advises Otsuka America Pharmaceutical in its purchase of the assets of Proteus Digital Health

26 August 2020

DLA Piper represented Otsuka America Pharmaceutical, Inc. in connection with its stalking horse bid to purchase substantially all of the assets of Proteus Digital Health, Inc., including its ingestible and wearable sensor technology.

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## MEDIA MENTIONS

- "Trends in Restructuring and Debt Markets," *DLA Piper*, April 9, 2020
- "Medical Device Co.'s Ch. 11 Plan OK'd After Resolving Issues," *Law 360*, February 18, 2020
- "Barneys \$271M Chapter 11 Sale Approved in New York," *Law 360*, October 31, 2019

## PRO BONO

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Before starting her career as a restructuring attorney, Jamila worked as a human rights attorney at an organization dedicated to ending criminal investigatory torture by building legal aid systems in developing nations. Jamila now focuses much of her pro bono work on human rights and the development of legal systems throughout the world.

Recent matters demonstrating Jamila's commitment to pro bono include:

- Drafted a criminal law defense manual and criminal litigation training materials for **International Bridges to Justice's** Rwanda country program.
- Drafted portions of a memorandum on post-conflict restorative justice mechanisms for a **UNICEF** sponsored transitional justice program in the Gambia.
- Conducted research regarding international judicial ethics principles and relevant ethical rules and jurisprudence for **International Association of Women Jurists**.
- Represented **Sunrise Cooperative Inc.**, a cooperative of mechanics displaced from their workplaces following the approval of a city redevelopment plan, as pro bono counsel in connection with their chapter 11 bankruptcy cases and multi-party negotiations to restructure their debt.