

Vanessa Singh Johannes

Partner

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Miami

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Vanessa Singh Johannes is a seasoned trial attorney who counsels individuals and corporations on a wide array of civil, criminal, and compliance matters. She offers clients nearly two decades of experience, both as a former federal prosecutor and complex litigator.

For a decade, Vanessa honorably served as an assistant U.S. attorney for the Southern District of Florida, where she tried dozens of jury trials, handled hundreds of criminal and civil investigations, and argued appellate matters before the Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals. She investigated, indicted, and tried cases involving serious crimes that affected everyday people in the Miami community, large companies, and U.S. taxpayers, including fraud, money laundering, espionage, civil rights, arms trafficking, human trafficking, and murder.

Vanessa's vast experience as an assistant U.S. attorney lends her unique insight into all phases of government investigations — such as grand jury inquiries, complex search warrants, and mutual legal assistance treaty requests — and reliable knowledge of federal practice in the district. During her tenure, she also developed a close working relationship with federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies, including the U.S. Secret Service, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives, Drug Enforcement Agency, Homeland Security Investigations, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

In private practice across two major law firms, Vanessa has developed a successful track record handling complex “bet-the-company” cases. She represents companies in an array of civil matters, complex litigation, and crises and assists clients in responding to federal agency inquiries, conducting internal investigations, board presentations, training on relevant laws, and crafting compliance programs to meet legal regulatory and criminal requirements. Armed with her experience as a federal prosecutor, Vanessa also handles complex criminal matters, including those involving the False Claims Act, the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act, wire fraud, and money laundering.

Prior to joining Foley, Vanessa was the co-managing shareholder of a national law firm's Miami office.

Representative Experience

Trial Experience

Vanessa has tried dozens of criminal cases before a federal jury as a federal prosecutor and defense attorney in the Southern District of Florida. Examples of her trial work include:

- Defense of a health care facility CEO charged with 28 counts, including health care fraud, wire fraud, and money laundering.*
- Prosecution of an aerospace executive for orchestrating a murder-for-hire plot against his business partner.
- Prosecution of a former military contractor for espionage, fraud, and trafficking.
- Prosecution of a gang leader for assaulting and sexually trafficking women.
- Prosecution of a truck driver and suspected serial killer for kidnapping and assault.
- Prosecution of a Miami firefighter for distribution of child pornography.
- Prosecution of a high school teacher for enticing a minor student to engage in sexual relations.

Representative Civil Matters

- Represented a Fortune 500 financial institution in billion-dollar antitrust litigation in federal court.*
- Represented a nonprofit foundation in a lawsuit against a purported hedge fund manager who ran a million-dollar Ponzi scheme in New York.*
- Represented a Fortune 100 telecommunications company in an environmental toxic tort litigation in federal court.*
- Represented a large utility and energy company conducting an internal investigation into potential corruption actions committed by company managers and executives.*
- Represented the CEO and founder of a telecommunications company facing a federal criminal wire fraud and money laundering investigation.*
- Represented various corporations' litigation interests in bankruptcy court.*

**Matters handled prior to joining Foley.*

Awards and Recognition

- Recognized by Chambers USA: America's Leading Lawyers in the practice area of Litigation: White-Collar Crime & Government Investigations (2025)
- United States Attorney General's Award for Distinguished Service
- Managing Shareholder of the Year, Florida Association of Women Lawyers (2025)
- Legal Elite: Notable Women Leaders in Law, *Florida Trend* (2024)
- 2024 Most Influential Lawyers, *Savoy Magazine* (2024)
- Public School Alumni Achievement Award, the Education Fund (2024)

Affiliations

- Board of Directors, Miami-Dade Beacon Council
- Board of Directors, Federal Bar Association South Florida Chapter
- American Bar Association, White-Collar Crime Institute Committee
- South Asian Bar Association
- Caribbean Bar Association
- Gwen S. Cherry Black Women Lawyers Bar Association
- Wilkie D. Ferguson Jr. Bar Association
- Fellow, Leadership Council on Legal Diversity (2022)
- Miami Beach Bar Association

Vanessa is a frequent speaker at conferences hosted by these and other organizations, including the ABA Criminal Justice Section's Annual White Collar Crime Institute.

Community Involvement

Throughout her career, Vanessa has committed herself to giving back to her community through her engagement with civic, nonprofit, and community organizations.

As an assistant U.S. attorney, Vanessa's passion for representing vulnerable victims led her to serve as the district's Project Safe Childhood coordinator. In that capacity, she assisted federal, state, and local law enforcement officers, task forces, and special prosecutors with training and case preparedness, while intaking all child exploitation cases.

She also serves as a writing coach for the Posse Foundation, a nonprofit organization that partners with colleges in the United States to offer student scholarships and leadership training.

Presentations and Publications

- "AI for Defense and Intelligence," eMerge Americas, Miami, FL (April 18, 2024)
- "Educational Policy: Public Schools and the U.S. Supreme Court," Florida Law Con (March 31, 2023)
- "Redistricting: The Legal Parameters of Redistricting ... Where Does It End?," Miami Law Con (April 22, 2022)
- "The Future of Sentencing: A Look at the Federal Sentencing Guidelines," American Constitution Society, Florida Chapter (June 28, 2021)

Practice Areas

- [Government Enforcement Defense & Investigations](#)
- [Labor & Employment](#)
- [Litigation](#)

Education

- Duke University School of Law (J.D., 2006)
- University of Florida (B.S., 2003)

Admissions

- U.S. District Court, Eastern District of New York
- U.S. District Court, Southern District of New York
- U.S. District Court, Northern District of Illinois
- U.S. District Court, Southern District of Florida
- U.S. District Court, District of Arizona
- U.S. Court of Appeals, Eleventh Circuit
- Florida
- New York