

Rising Star: Cahill Gordon's Kiersten A. Fletcher

By Jake Maher

Law360 (July 22, 2025, 4:00 PM EDT) -- Kiersten Fletcher of Cahill Gordon & Reindel LLP secured the conviction of a former congressional representative for insider trading as a prosecutor and in private practice defended a client accused of stealing bitcoins worth over \$10 billion, earning her a spot among the white collar law practitioners under age 40 honored by Law360 as Rising Stars.

Her proudest moment:

Fletcher said her proudest moment came early in her time as a defense attorney at Cahill Gordon when she secured a five-year sentence for a client accused of a \$10 billion cryptocurrency hack.

Ilya Lichtenstein faced up to 20 years in prison for hacking the crypto exchange Bitfinex in 2016 and attempting to launder the bitcoin he stole, which was worth about \$71 million at the time, through various transactions.

Lichtenstein negotiated an agreement with prosecutors to provide testimony in a separate cryptocurrency money laundering trial, among other investigations. Fletcher took on representation of Lichtenstein during the sentencing phase of his case, and prosecutors later credited him for his "early and fulsome cooperation."

Lichtenstein was sentenced in 2024 but received credit for two years he already spent in jail following his arrest in 2022, leaving him with two years in prison and three years of supervised release.

"He was able to get a sentence of only five years for a crime that could have potentially exposed him to much, much longer, so I was very proud of that," Fletcher said.

Her biggest case:

Fletcher said her biggest case came when she was a prosecutor with

2025



Kiersten A. Fletcher
Cahill Gordon & Reindel

Age: 39

Home base: New York

Position: Partner

Law school: University of Chicago Law School

First job after law school: Associate at Morrison Foerster

the Southern District of New York, overseeing the prosecution — and ultimately landed the conviction in 2023 — of Rep. Stephen Buyer, R-Ind., on insider trading charges.

"We had to be very aggressive, very persistent and very creative both to bring the case and ultimately to win the case," she said.

Buyer, an 18-year member of the House of Representatives, was convicted of four counts of securities fraud, with a jury finding that in two instances he used inside information to buy shares of companies before their sales, netting himself over \$350,000.

Fletcher said the case originated as a single possible insider trading charge until she and her team spent months investigating to build the case. At one point, she said the team took a significant risk by obtaining search warrants and approaching Buyer's former chief of staff to be a potential witness. The former chief of staff supplied critical information and ultimately testified at Buyer's trial, Fletcher said.

Fletcher stressed the determination she and her team showed in pushing the case forward to a successful result.

"One of the reasons it's one of the biggest cases I've worked on is that it required a lot of persistence and the team to be very dogged to get to the right result," she said.

The Second Circuit affirmed Buyer's conviction in March.

Why she's a white collar attorney:

Fletcher said she realized early on in her first year of law school that she wanted to practice white collar law.

A key experience for her was practicing at the University of Chicago Law School's Edwin F. Mandel Legal Aid Clinic for two years during law school. Based on that work, Fletcher said she knew "almost immediately" that she would spend her legal career moving between serving as a prosecutor and a defense attorney.

"Ultimately, that love came from wanting to help people, including the people who work at companies, solve really big government-facing problems," she said.

Other notable cases she's worked on:

Fletcher said she is currently representing Credit Suisse in the bank's bid to secure a restitution judgment for the \$5 billion it lost when hedge fund Archegos Capital Management, run by Bill Hwang, collapsed in 2021. Hwang was convicted of various fraud charges and sentenced in November to 18 years in prison in New York federal court.

Credit Suisse is among several banks seeking \$9 billion. The federal court for the Southern District of New York has indicated it will award Credit Suisse the \$5 billion when litigation over the restitution concludes in the summer of 2025 as a result of Fletcher's work, according to Cahill Gordon.

Fletcher said she has enjoyed the chance to work on litigation related to massive financial fraud. The case has also allowed her to interact with former colleagues who are prosecutors at SDNY in a case where their goals are aligned with one another.

"That's been a nice matter to work on, having just left government," Fletcher said.

She said another of her best-known cases was her work as a prosecutor bringing fraud charges against Jen Shah, a former star on "The Real Housewives of Salt Lake City."

Shah pled guilty to wire fraud and was sentenced to 6½ years in prison in 2023 for her role in running a nationwide telemarketing scheme targeting elderly victims. Fraudsters under her leadership sold worthless tax preparation products, business plans and marketing services, prosecutors said.

"From my perspective, she was a very senior orchestrator of a very serious fraud scheme that targeted the elderly," Fletcher said. "Putting aside what other jobs she may have had, I'm always proud of that case because I think it was a very serious crime, and obviously we achieved the right result in that."

--As told to Jake Maher. Editing by Drashti Mehta.

Law360's Rising Stars are attorneys under 40 whose legal accomplishments belie their age. A team of Law360 editors selected the 2025 Rising Stars winners after reviewing more than 1,100 submissions. Attorneys had to be under 40 as of April 30, 2025, to be eligible for this year's award.