



Education: JD, University of California–Los Angeles School of Law; BA *magna cum laude*, Boston University

Company Name: Kasowitz Benson Torres LLP

Industry: Law

Company CEO: Marc E. Kasowitz, Managing Partner

Company Headquarters Location: New York, New York

Number of Employees: 389

Words you live by: Ask for forgiveness, not for permission.

Personal Philosophy: Do unto others as you'd have done to you.

What book are you reading: *Disappearing Earth* by Julia Phillips

What was your first job: A department store cashier in high school

Favorite charity: New York Lawyers for the Public Interest

Interests: Fiction, crossword puzzles, jigsaw puzzles, and Boston sports

Family: Proud Colombian immigrant born to parents who were professionals in Colombia, but immigrated to the U.S. so their three kids could have a better life. I'm married with two children: our daughter is 10 and our son is 9. We also have a dog who is 3 years old.

The Power to Make the World a Better Place

The day I knew I wanted to become a lawyer was when I was watching *Eyes on the Prize* in a high school classroom in Marlboro, Massachusetts, where I was one of a handful of non-white students in my class and in Marlboro. The documentary, chronicling the Civil Rights Movement, left an indelible impression on me: it showed me people had the power to change laws to make the world a better place.

A pivotal moment for me was the film's discussion of the landmark decision *Brown v. Board of Education* in which the U.S. Supreme Court held that segregated schools were unconstitutional. That decision ignited my passion for educational justice, as it caused me to reflect on the role of education in my life.

As an immigrant from Colombia whose parents cleaned houses, I attended college and law school alongside classmates who were born in America with economic and social

advantages I never knew existed. It was then I realized that I was able to excel in college and law school, in part, because I had obtained a solid primary school education.

Ever since then, I have been a zealous advocate for educational justice. In law school, as an ACLU of Southern California extern, I worked on a lawsuit against the State of California for its failure to provide its students with a free and appropriate public education. And when I joined the private sector, advocating for educational justice and other civil liberties became the cornerstone of my pro bono practice, which continues to this day as a partner at Kasowitz Benson Torres LLP. With Kasowitz's unwavering support, I have been able to build and maintain a robust public interest practice, while practicing corporate law. I handle cases advocating for access to a free and appropriate public education for special educa-

tion students in New York City. I also represent individuals and families in proceedings against the Department of Education, handle class action work on behalf of students who are denied services or otherwise discriminated against, and engage in policy work to help improve accessibility, in addition to cases involving domestic violence, asylum, and sex-trafficking.

I recognize that I'm fortunate to be living the dream that *Eyes on the Prize* put in my heart decades ago. While I thought that I had to be a public interest lawyer to do that, the private bar has been and continues to be an instrumental, critical partner in remedying social injustices in our country. I am incredibly proud to be among the members of this community, fighting hard to enforce laws that help achieve educational equality and change those that do not—which will have a profound impact on students across the nation.



Kelly A. Frawley
Partner

KASOWITZ
BENSON TORRES

Education: JD, St. John's University School of Law; BA *cum laude*, St. John's University

Company Name: Kasowitz Benson Torres LLP

Industry: Law

Company CEO: Marc E. Kasowitz, Managing Partner

Company Headquarters Location: New York, New York

Number of Employees: 389

Words you live by: Know in whose shoes you have not walked.

Personal Philosophy: Never lose your sense of humor.

What book are you reading: *The Nightingale* by Kristin Hannah

What was your first job: Waitress

Favorite charity: St. Michael's Church

Interests: Cooking and volunteering

Family: My husband, Greg, and our toy poodle, Ted



Kindness Has a Seat at the Table

Throughout my life, I have focused on making sure I do the right thing. By that, I mean making decisions that are rooted in integrity and always looking for the good in people. When I started my legal career, anytime I said I would be guided by what is “right,” the overwhelming response was that I would be “swallowed up.” As it turns out, while I may have been nipped a couple of times, I have never come close to being swallowed up.

After law school, I served as an assistant district attorney, handling narcotics cases where I had the privilege to protect not only the community but the criminal defendant. While I was known as a skilled trial attorney, the position was more to me than just that. I never lost sight of the fact that the defendants were people who had life stories and that how I handled their prosecutions could have a meaningful impact on their lives. I listened to them,

not with skepticism, but with integrity and kindness. I was moved when defendants told me I was the first person to ask them about their goals or the circumstances leading to our meeting. That meant more to me than a conviction.

Now, as a partner at Kasowitz Benson Torres LLP, where I focus on matrimonial and family law matters, I continue to try to do what is right, without sacrificing my clients' goals, and obtaining great results for them. Matrimonial law has unique challenges: the cases are often driven by the clients' desire to achieve their definition of justice—to right the wrongs of their marriage. It takes integrity to redirect clients from emotionally-driven litigation.

Moreover, I have found that being guided by doing what's right achieves successful results beyond my cases. In the workplace, it has enabled me to

cultivate a positive work environment among my colleagues. While this approach may seem obvious, it is often forgotten due to the demands of our workloads and our personal lives.

I also am committed to doing the right thing outside the workplace. I believe that having food and shelter are human rights, and that people who are in a position to help someone or their community should do so. For me, that means volunteering with a food pantry and other organizations where I teach children about nutrition and healthy eating by preparing meals with them. By having these human rights met, they too, will have the strength to focus on doing what's right.

When I have questioned my abilities or have lost my footing, I remind myself to do what is right: to be guided by integrity and see the good in people. Afterwards, I always stand up taller.