

Ex-US Prosecutors Join Forces For New White Collar Boutique

By [Jack Rodgers](#) | 2023-02-21 16:38:08 -0500 · [Listen to article](#)

Two former [U.S. Department of Justice](#) prosecutors, whose practices focus on white collar law, financial fraud and other complex commercial criminal and civil matters, have joined forces to launch an Atlanta-based boutique firm focused on white collar trials and investigations.

David M. Chaiken and Kamal Ghali have formed Chaiken Ghali LLP, which according to the firm's website, focuses largely on four practice areas. Chaiken Ghali will work with clients undergoing white collar criminal investigations, with corporations facing federal lawsuits, on high-stakes business disputes involving fraud and on internal investigations on behalf of corporations.

Chaiken Ghali will represent business executives, corporations and other clients involved in white collar disputes, as well as civil and criminal government investigations, according to the firm's Tuesday release.

The duo also will represent clients in corporate internal investigations, having experience working with bank, tax and health care fraud issues, as well as cybercrimes and bribery cases, the firm said.

Both attorneys overlapped at the DOJ and worked together to try a multidendant public corruption case involving millions of dollars of government contracts obtained through bribes, according to the release. The pair won the trial and successfully defended their jury's verdict on appeal, the firm said.

Chaiken has been running a boutique white collar practice of his own, [ChaikenLaw Ltd.](#), for the past two years, according to the release.

Chaiken, an Emory University School of Law graduate, has a range of prior experience, having worked as a [King & Spalding LLP](#) and Heller Ehrman LLP litigation associate, according to his [LinkedIn](#) profile. Before launching his own firm, Chaiken worked as a white collar and government investigations partner at [Troutman Pepper](#).



David M. Chaiken



Kamal Ghali

Ghali's most-recent role was working as a [Bondurant Mixson & Elmore LLP](#) partner, where he also led that firm's white collar defense practice, the firm said.

Ghali's other work with Bondurant Mixson included founding its cyber and digital litigation practice and working on a number of business and related complex commercial disputes. He spent over four years with the firm, according to his LinkedIn profile.

Combined, Chaiken and Ghali have more than 15 years of experience as federal prosecutors, working on a range of related issues.

Ghali worked as a white collar and cybercrime prosecutor and also worked as deputy chief of the U.S. attorney's office in Atlanta. He and Chaiken both spent time with the Economic Crimes section of the Atlanta office, according to their LinkedIn profiles.

Ghali, who earned his degree from the University of Michigan Law School, began his legal career as a clerk to two federal judges before joining Bondurant Mixson as a litigation associate in 2009, according to his LinkedIn profile.

In an interview with Law360 Pulse on Tuesday, Ghali and Chaiken reflected on their relationship at the DOJ, saying they had met there before working together on the high-profile white collar case mentioned in the firm's release. That experience bonded them and cemented a working relationship that continued past the duo's time in public service.

"Once you're in the trenches with someone in a multiweek trial, with multiple defendants, we got to know each other really well, there was a lot of mutual respect, and it was great just to have Dave's guidance and experience in the office in that trial," Ghali said. "And since then, we've been collaborating on a number of different matters, both in private practice, we've had cases as co-counsel. That collaboration has continued, and I see this as the next step of what has been a great partnership over many years."

Chaiken said his firm had seen significant demand for white collar attorneys since its 2020 launch, which warranted expansion, he said. The Atlanta market was also underserved with white collar-focused boutiques, Chaiken said, which made for a great opportunity for the partnership.

But Ghali's addition also expanded the firm's capabilities to a range of other work, specifically in cybersecurity, cryptocurrency and cybercrime matters, Chaiken said.

Often, civil and business litigation issues will involve a criminal component, which made the pair's overlapping practices a good foundation to launch their boutique firm, Ghali said.

"Some of our skills complement each other," Chaiken said. "Where I might have a little more experience in a particular area, or he might have a little more experience in a particular area, and so we think that we complement each other very well."

For Ghali, he most enjoyed defending clients in trial work when their work mattered most. But the most satisfying wins for Ghali were ones that no one hears about, he said.

"It's the one where you're able to convince a prosecutor not to charge your clients, your client doesn't have to deal with the reputational harm of an indictment, the embarrassment, the cost," Ghali said. "And so while trial work is incredibly challenging, rewarding, can be exhilarating, it's those quiet victories no one hears about that I actually enjoy the most."

--Editing by Andrew Cohen.