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# TRAILBLAZERS

REGULATORY & COMPLIANCE



WINSTON & STRAWN LLP

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### CHRISTINE A. EDWARDS

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**PIONEER SPIRIT** Chris Edwards began her career in Washington, D.C., in government relations for Dean Witter before going to law school. “That opened up my eyes to the ways this country and the world work.” She operated side by side with regulators and members of Congress and the administration and saw that regulators can dictate what the future of an industry can be like. “I thought law and compliance are the mechanics of how a company works better. Compliance is the intersection between business operations and the law.”

**TRAILS BLAZED** When she was named general counsel of Dean Witter in 1990, Edwards broke the glass ceiling on Wall Street. “It was extraordinarily lonely. I went to meeting after meeting where I was the only woman.” Since then, Edwards has spent enormous amounts of time and energy supporting other women—both lawyers and nonlawyers—in the corporate setting, for example, sponsoring workshops for women deputy general counsel to train them on what they need to know to become general counsel. “I’m passionate about that, and passionate about getting women on boards of directors.”

**FUTURE EXPLORATIONS** There has been a progression making the position of chief compliance officer into a substantial role, especially for companies in highly regulated businesses. “I think we will see continued expansion in the role of general counsel and chief compliance officer from a risk management perspective.” She expects both positions to be more actively involved in managing risks throughout businesses, such as new product launches and global expansion. “Lawyers used to think compliance was beneath them, but going forward, risk assessments and risk management will be part of their responsibilities.”