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INNOVATION: JENNY NIEVES, PARTNER

FRAGOMEN, DEL REY, BERNSEN & LOEWY

Q&A **What are some of your proudest achievements from the past year?** My

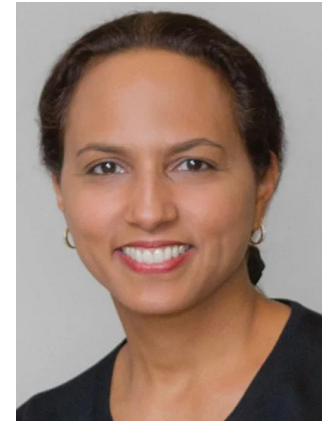
proudest achievements from the past year have been working with our Operations Efficiency Manager to design and implement a centralized Case Assembly service for Fragomen's New York office, and develop standards and processes for the firm's Mail Processing Operations Center (MPOC).

The Case Assembly service standardized and streamlined case assembly tasks that were otherwise performed individually by all New York legal teams, by combining a dedicated administrative team with a collaborative technology platform to assemble approximately 35,000 petitions annually at significantly reduced costs and in less time. Development of the Case Assembly service included planning and executing the initial service rollout, conducting data studies to project volume and staffing needs, developing and implementing a staffing/cost plan, and onboarding all New York legal teams.

I also worked with the MPOC team to standardize their processes and develop alternate service options where standardization was not viable due to client needs. The MPOC uses cutting-edge technology, including artificial intelligence, to reduce mail processing times and improve efficiency by automatically scanning and capturing data points, and uploading them into Fragomen's proprietary case management system. I oversaw the onboarding of the New York legal teams who now benefit from MPOC's automated data processing, including increased productivity and less administrative tasks for the legal teams.

What, if any, obstacles stood in the way of your innovation, and how did you overcome them?

Change management has been the biggest challenge in rolling out new services, whether it be convincing case teams to adopt the latest standards or implementing new pro-



Jenny Nieves. Courtesy photo

cesses or tools. We overcame these challenges by working with each team to thoroughly understand their needs and challenges and then leveraging our findings to implement robust standards to satisfy each team's requirements, while still maintaining efficiency. To ensure adherence to the new processes, we implemented monitoring and enforcement processes to provide a consistent experience for all users.

What is the best advice for younger attorneys looking to advance their own innovative ideas or visions?

Don't create a problem to solve, but don't accept the status quo either. Don't be afraid to voice your ideas even if your firm hasn't identified a problem or asked for your opinion. Some companies are resistant to change, may not recognize that there's a problem or may lack the accountability in leadership to effectuate change.

Be patient, persuasive and persistent to get your idea in front of the right people. Not every idea will get the buy-in needed to make changes, but every idea promotes thought and discussion—and that is a good start.