



# KDW Secures Compensation For 9/11 Fiancées

August 10, 2004

Kelley Drye secured awards from the 9/11 Victims' Compensation Fund ("VCF") for two pro bono clients who lost their fiancés on September 11th. While it initially appeared questionable, given federal and state law, as to whether fiancées would be able to receive any award under the VCF program, Kelley Drye was able to secure participation for both clients through advocacy of awards by the VCF to domestic partners, negotiation with the families of the decedents, and a showing to the VCF that each of the clients were, as of 9/11, in a domestic partner relationship and economically dependent on their fiancés, resulting in recoveries of approximately \$900,000 each. By documenting the personal and economic relationships between Kelley Drye's clients and the decedents, Kelley Drye was able to persuade the VCF to increase the awards in respect of the decedents, thus securing distributions for the clients without diminishing the recoveries for the families.

Kelley Drye's success turned in part on prior decisions gained through Kelley Drye's advocacy for these same clients before New York's Workers' Compensation Board ("WCB"), which granted both clients surviving spouse death benefits as the domestic partners of the deceased. In addition to representation before the VCF and WCB, and as part of a continuing effort to help those affected by the tragic events of September 11, Kelley Drye also aided one client in creating a charitable foundation in the name of her deceased fiancé.