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# TRAILBLAZERS

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## DANIEL CONNOLLY

BRACEWELL

**PIONEER SPIRIT** For more than three months, Daniel Connolly worked in a secure room, poring over millions of documents belonging to the personal lawyer of the leader of the free world. Connolly was one of the lawyers appointed to screen which documents federal prosecutors could use in their investigation of Michael Cohen, President Donald Trump's longtime fixer and attorney, and payments made to an adult film actress on Trump's behalf. Bracewell built a secure compartmented information facility, or SCIF, installing security equipment and computers that had never been connected to the internet to ward off hackers. Shortly after the review, Cohen pleaded guilty and was sentenced to prison. From Connolly's perspective, "the whole process went seamlessly."



**TRAILS BLAZED** A former Manhattan prosecutor and special counsel in the New York mayor's office, Connolly has tackled numerous big, high-profile legal challenges. He conducted an independent review of decades-old claims from victims of sexual abuse by priests in the Archdiocese of New York, digitizing records and clearing the way for victims to be compensated. Church leaders wanted to "address the sins of the past ... to ensure the church had truly done what it needed to do to correct issues regarding child abuse." Connolly also represented members of the Raymond Sackler family, part owners of Purdue Pharma, the manufacturer of OxyContin, in litigation concerning the company's role in the opioid crisis.

**FUTURE EXPLORATIONS** Connolly has watched the practice of law evolve and law firms get bigger and bigger for more than a decade. But he thinks the coronavirus crisis of 2020 demonstrates the benefits of relatively smaller firms like Bracewell, where lawyers and staff support each other in difficult times. "We all know each other. We all know each other's families. I believe it's firms like that that are going to be able to hold together better."