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Rising Star: Weil's Jessie Chiang

By **Jon Hill**

Law360 (August 18, 2026, 4:00 PM EDT) -- Weil Gotshal & Manges LLP's Jessie Chiang has steered multibillion-dollar debt deals that have helped finance major merger and acquisition transactions by Keurig Dr Pepper, Home Depot and McCormick, earning her a place among the banking law practitioners under age 40 honored by Law360 as Rising Stars.

Her most challenging matter:

Last year, U.S. beverage conglomerate Keurig Dr Pepper announced that it had agreed to buy European coffee giant JDE Peet's in a more than $18 billion (€15.7 billion) deal that would set the stage for a tax-free spinoff of their combined coffee businesses.

Keurig turned to Morgan Stanley and Mitsubishi UFJ Financial Group for bridge financing to facilitate the acquisition, entering into an $18.7 billion credit facility that went down as one of last year's largest transactions of its kind.

Chiang led the Weil team advising Morgan Stanley and MUFG in their roles as joint lead arrangers and bookrunners. "It was super challenging in the sense that it was so novel," she said.

Because JDE Peet's is a Dutch company, the acquisition had to accommodate Dutch "certain funds" rules and tender-offer procedures. Chiang first had to understand how those requirements worked and then build them into the bridge financing, putting her skills at navigating cross-border legal frameworks to the test.

Although U.K. acquisition financings offered a starting point, Chiang said the Dutch rules were not identical. Adapting the credit agreement to suit their requirements while still enabling

2026 LAW360 RISING STAR

Jessie Chiang
Weil

Age: 37
Home base: New York
Position: Partner
Law school: Columbia Law School
First job after law school: Associate at Cravath

Keurig to achieve its own objectives was a "fascinating" process, she said.

Later, Chiang advised another Morgan Stanley unit on a separate $12 billion term loan for the transaction and helped counsel initial purchasers in a roughly $6 billion senior-note offering intended to partially finance the Keurig-Peets deal. The acquisition ultimately closed at the beginning of April.

Other notable matters:

Goldman Sachs' participation in a $1 billion senior secured-term loan for Millrose Properties proved an out-of-the-ordinary assignment for Chiang: advising on financing that a borrower would use to finance someone else's purchase.

"We were actually funding the funder," she said.

Millrose is a real estate investment trust that focuses on land banking for homebuilders, serving them through a "home site option" purchasing platform. It secured the loan facility in order to support its commitments to provide financing for homebuilder deals.

Chiang led the Weil team advising Goldman Sachs as administrative agent, lender, joint lead arranger and joint bookrunner on the facility, which closed in June 2025. The highly customized final structure included multiple term-loan tranches and the ability to reallocate among them.

Given that Goldman sat two steps removed from the end use of funds, Chiang said they had to think carefully about where and how the bank could protect itself as a lender that would not have contractual privity with the downstream parties.

"An investment-grade, real estate-backed leverage fund facility is just not something that you usually do," she said.

Next, when Home Depot moved last summer to buy specialty building-products distributor GMS Inc. for about $4.3 billion, it turned to Weil for counsel.

Chiang served as lead partner on the deal's financing, which was structured as three separate credit agreements rather than a conventional bridge facility. This design allowed Home Depot to lower its borrowing costs and preserve repayment flexibility.

"A bridge is a really expensive instrument," Chiang said. "You're paying for peace of mind, but some companies, particularly those with better credit ratings, are choosing to forgo a bridge and instead go straight to a term loan."

More recently, Chiang led the Weil team guiding units of Citigroup, Goldman Sachs and Morgan Stanley on a $15.7 billion bridge facility supporting spices and seasonings mainstay McCormick & Co. in its planned acquisition of Unilever PLC's foods division.

The nearly $45 billion cash-and-stock transaction, announced in March, marks the biggest-ever deal for either McCormick or Unilever and will create a combined company that McCormick has said will be a "global flavor powerhouse."

The bridge financing was put together while McCormick was still negotiating the merger, allowing it to move forward immediately once a deal was reached and ensuring that the necessary liquidity would be available to satisfy the cash leg of the merger's structure.

After the merger agreement was announced, Chiang said she and her team worked with Citi, Goldman and Morgan Stanley on syndicating the bridge to bring in other lenders and then began arranging for the permanent financing that is ultimately intended to replace it.

"You can't build a bridge to nowhere," she said. "You always have permanent financing waiting at the end of your bridge."

The McCormick matter also underscored the strides that Chiang has made professionally. The person at Citi who initially reached out to Chiang about the deal was in fact the first banker she had worked with as a first-year associate more than a decade earlier, she said.

"I've been really lucky in my career," she said. "I'm super grateful to all the people who have taught me and super, super grateful to my clients for choosing me. It amazes me every day."

How she became a banking lawyer:

Growing up in Beijing, Chiang didn't have her sights set on becoming a high-powered New York lawyer. In fact, when she came to the U.S. for college, it was classics that she studied, specializing in Roman literature and archeology.

Although Chiang was fascinated by her coursework, she was eventually faced with the practical question of what to do with a classics education. "It was really on a whim that I decided to apply to law school," she said. "I kind of fell into it."

After graduating and joining her first law firm, Chiang said she happened to be assigned to a banking partner and went on to complete three corporate rotations at the firm. Banking proved the best fit, setting her career on a path toward financing work.

Today, Chiang's practice spans all types of financings, including investment grade financings, leveraged acquisition financings and debtor-in-possession financings, and it has featured some of the market's largest transactions. In the past 12 months, she has advised on more than $75 billion in debt transactions.

What motivates her:

No detail is too small for Chiang, particularly not when a complex financing transaction is on the line. "I actually love the technicality," she said.

That's because, as she explained, a credit agreement contract must hold up not only at signing but also potentially years into a company's future. The challenge lies in finding the right combination of provisions to preserve a borrower's "flexibility to operate" while ensuring that lenders still "have the protection they need," Chiang said.

Figuring out that balance is "the most interesting part of the job," Chiang said, "even if that sounds a little bit nerdy."

--As told to Jon Hill. Editing by Karin Roberts.

Law360's Rising Stars are attorneys under 40 whose legal accomplishments belie their age. A team of Law360 editors selected the 2026 Rising Stars winners after reviewing more than 1,100 submissions. Attorneys had to be under 40 as of April 30, 2026, to be eligible for this year's award.
