

Law Firm Leaders



Drew Beres is a co-founder and managing partner of Croke Fairchild Duarte & Beres. He is a corporate attorney whose practice focuses primarily on investment fund formation, the structure and operation of investment funds and their related management companies, and general corporate and regulatory matters including ongoing strategic counsel and guidance to a variety of clients. He has successfully guided investment funds, financial institutions, government agencies, highly regulated companies, family offices, emerging and growth companies, and Fortune 100 companies through some of their most challenging issues and compelling opportunities.



Mary Clare Bonaccorsi chairs the health care litigation and disputes practice at Polsinelli and is the managing partner of the firm's Chicago office. She serves as outside general counsel and trusted business advisor to health care and life sciences companies including domestic and international medical equipment suppliers, specialty pharmacies, home health care providers, home infusion providers, hospice providers, pharmacy benefit managers, academic medical centers, hospitals and health systems, laboratories, ambulatory surgery centers, dialysis providers and pharmaceutical manufacturers.



Patricia Brown Holmes is managing partner of Riley Safer Holmes & Cancila LLP. She previously served as an associate judge in the Circuit Court of Cook County, was an Assistant U.S. Attorney and an Assistant State's Attorney. She also was the chief assistant corporate counsel for municipal prosecutions for the City of Chicago. She concentrates her practice on high-stakes commercial litigation, white collar crime and legal client counseling. Patricia has defended companies accused of commercial fraud, civil conspiracy, strict liability and negligence. She also has significant experience working with city of Chicago and state of Illinois government officials.



David Goodman is the former managing partner of a national law firm's Chicago office and now runs his own firm, Goodman Law Group | Chicago. David is a trial attorney focusing on commercial litigation, with a particular emphasis on protecting the interests of business insurance policyholders. In addition to guiding tech and startup companies through complex disputes such as “business divorces” and other contentious matters, David also applies his experience to helping founders and key executives manage risk and avoid conflicts.



Manish Mehta is partner-in-charge of Benesch's Chicago office. He focuses his practice on intellectual property litigation, post-grant reviews, patent prosecution and counseling. He represents clients in a variety of industries including pharmaceuticals, medical devices, automotive, e-commerce, chemical and computer software and hardware.



Tim Tomasik is a founding member of Tomasik Kotin Kasserman, LLC, and serves as the current president of the Chicago Bar Association. Tim is a trial attorney with experience representing clients in a variety of practice areas, including complex premises liability, aviation litigation, medical negligence, medical liability, hospital liability and mass disasters.

Legal Operations, Innovation and Technology Experts



Jessa Baker is chief operating officer of Applegate & Thorne-Thomsen and oversees all business affairs and operations within the firm, including in long-range planning, growth and development, finance, human resources, information technology, marketing, business development, risk management, compensation and administration team oversight. Jessa is also a member of the firm's management and partner compensation committees.



Virginia Essandoh is Chief Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Officer of Ballard Spahr. She advises and collaborates with firm management, including Department Chairs, Office Managing Partners and administrative professionals to implement the firm's diversity, equity and inclusion strategic goals and inspire the concepts of diversity, equity and inclusion into firm culture. This ranges from high-level development of diversity-related recruitment, development and retention, and advancement for lawyers at all levels to client collaborations that advance diversity, equity and inclusion in the profession as a whole. Virginia sits on the management committee and expanded board and is responsible for overseeing, implementing and providing strategic leadership to diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives.



Daniel Farris is one of the founders of NMBL Technologies, a legal tech company working to innovate and improve the way legal services are delivered by re-inventing the modern law practice. Daniel is also a former Software Engineer and Network Administrator with a master's in computer science. When he isn't building disruptive legal technology solutions, he is handling tech and privacy matters for midsize companies to large cap multinationals at a Global 20 law firm. He previously chaired national technology transactions and privacy & data security groups at two AmLaw 100 firms.



Mike Haven serves as president of the Corporate Legal Operations Consortium (CLOC), a global community of experts focused on redefining the business of law. By helping legal operations professionals collaborate with each other and with other industry players, including law firms, technology providers and law schools, CLOC works to help set industry standards and practices for the profession. Mike also serves as senior director, associate general counsel and head of legal operations at Intel.

Commercial Litigation (incl. Products Liability)



Keri Arnold is a trial attorney with over twenty years' experience defending companies in product liability, environmental and complex commercial litigation. She has tried over a dozen cases to verdict, including seven as first-chair trial counsel, on behalf of major pharmaceutical, tobacco and energy companies. Keri has supervised the management and discovery of mass actions pending in state and federal courts and has extensive experience developing complex medical and scientific evidence for presentation at trial. Keri is a partner at Wilkinson Stekloff.



Sondra Hemeryck has counseled clients in a wide range of class action cases and other complex litigation in federal and state courts. She represents clients ranging from individuals to Fortune 50 and multinational corporations in cases involving consumer fraud, deceptive trade practices, antitrust, breach of warranty, breach of contract, insurance bad faith, trademark and trade dress infringement, copyright infringement and defamation. Sondra is a partner at Riley Safer Holmes & Cancila LLP.



Nicole Wrigley has handled nine-figure business disputes, multibillion-dollar class actions and complex multi-district litigation proceedings. In one of her most high-profile cases, she represented a beef producer seeking over \$6 billion in damages in a defamation case against ABC News and secured a confidential settlement in the case. She has counseled both businesses and individuals on product liability, breach of contract, tortious interference, securities fraud, defamation and disparagement, negligence, professional liability and mass tort, and CERCLA. Nicole is the vice chair of the trial practice group at Benesch.

Data Privacy



Lisa Acevedo advises clients in the areas of federal health privacy laws and regulations, including HIPAA, FERPA and the Confidentiality of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Treatment Records (42 CFR Part 2), as well as state laws governing the confidentiality of health information, mental health records and records containing other highly sensitive information. She also advises multinational health care companies with international data protection laws that impact their use and transfer of health data, including the EU Privacy Directive, General Data Protection Regulation and Privacy Shield compliance. Lisa is a shareholder at Polsinelli, where she chairs the firm's health information privacy and security team.



Desiree Moore counsels corporations, educational institutions and high-profile individuals in proactively planning for and effectively managing digital crises including data breach, online defamation, harassment, impersonation, university and other educational scandals, celebrity disgrace events, and leaked confidential and proprietary information. She also helps clients identify and manage the risks associated with social media. Desiree is actively involved in the firmwide Women in the Profession group and spearheads the Women's Mastermind program, which supports the business development goals of women associates and partners. Desiree is a founding member of the digital crisis planning and response (DCPR) client solution and a partner at K&L Gates.



Michael Waters is an experienced litigator in tech transactions and data privacy. He counsels clients across industries through nearly every conceivable type of data breach, from system-wide network intrusions and ransomware attacks to situations involving cyber extortion, stolen laptops and computer hardware, email compromises, wire fraud and employee wrongdoing. He also assists clients in managing the privacy risks associated with maintaining and transferring information. Michael is a shareholder at Polsinelli.

Executive Divorce



Dean Dussias has been a practitioner in the area of family law for over 30 years and has built his reputation by representing entrepreneurs, executives and other prominent clients in high-profile and financially complicated divorce cases with a careful, discreet approach that solves problems and mitigates risks. Dean serves as principal for Dussias Wittenberg Koenigsberger LLP.

Intellectual Property



Bob Barrett concentrates his practice in intellectual property law, specifically strategic counseling and portfolio management, leveraging his decades of experience handling patent litigation, prosecution, licensing, due diligence, portfolio management and counseling. Robert's extensive experience includes working with companies in the biotech, chemical, software, e-commerce, health care, manufacturing, medical device, packaging and food science spaces. He has acted as strategic IP advisor for some of the world's largest and most prominent companies including Nestlé, Baxter International, Wm. Wrigley Jr. Company, Ondo Nalco Chemical, Methode Electronics and Kyocera, as well as for a number of the nation's leading universities. Bob serves as the intellectual property practice area leader for K&L Gates.



Tom Gemmell is an intellectual property and business litigator. He represents clients in the aerospace, automotive, health care and manufacturing industries. In the area of Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS), commonly referred to as "drones," Tom is proficient in FAA regulations, UAS technologies and operations in national airspace, and is among the first to obtain FAA authorization for the commercial use of drones. Tom serves as lead of the transportation and logistics practice, and co-leads the unmanned aircraft systems and advanced robotics practice and the aviation practice at Polsinelli.



Kal Shah represents clients in complex commercial litigation and intellectual property litigation matters, including trademark and patent matters in science and internet applications, bioengineering, electrical technologies and lighting systems, mechanical systems and wireless technologies. Kal also represents clients in Lanham Act disputes, software license and copyright matters, and other related cases. Kal serves as chair of the intellectual property litigation practice group and co-chair of the diversity and inclusion committee at Benesch.

Labor and Employment



Rob Entin is a labor and employment generalist who counsels clients on employee discipline, hiring and firing, restrictive covenants, wage and hour, and reasonable accommodation issues, with a particular focus on representing large employers in the health care field such as hospital systems. He also represents clients in workplace safety investigations. As a former in-house counsel for a Chicago-area labor union, Robert understands both sides of unfair labor practice charges, representation at arbitrations and collective bargaining agreements. Robert is a shareholder at Polsinelli.



Alan King litigates individual and class action employment cases in federal and state courts across the country, and has vast experience representing employers before federal, state and local administrative agencies across numerous industries, including retail, airlines, healthcare, telecommunications, education and financial services, as well as municipalities and minority-owned businesses. He regularly advises and advocates for clients on complex employment law issues, including matters involving discrimination, harassment, retaliation and whistleblower claims at the federal, state and local levels. Alan also conducts high-stakes and sensitive workplace investigations across all industries. He is a partner at Riley Safer Holmes & Cancila LLP.



Margo Wolf O'Donnell counsels clients on strategic training, drafting employment and separation agreements, managing individual and group discharges and conducting high-level internal investigations. She also defends claims involving allegations of discrimination, harassment, wage and hour violations and breach of contract. She can speak to issues surrounding cannabis in the workplace. Margo serves as co-chair of the labor and employment group at Benesch.

Mergers & Acquisitions



Jessica Fairchild counsels founders, private equity sponsors, family enterprises and corporations in the corporate M&A space. Her focus on building relationships and client-centered approach to acting as a legal and business advisor has helped her garner many long-term clients with whom she has worked on M&A matters and beyond, including as general counsel for their growing organizations. Jessica is a co-founder and partner at Croke Fairchild Duarte & Beres, and currently serves as co-chair of the firm's management committee.



Daryll Marshall represents private equity sponsors and public and private borrowers in connection with leveraged buyout financings for acquisitions, working capital facilities, recapitalizations and portfolio restructuring transactions in the health care industry. He also has extensive experience representing debtors in loan workouts and in-court and out-of-court restructurings, including debtor-in-possession facilities and exit financings. Daryll chairs the corporate/private equity finance group at Benesch.

Pro Bono



Ron Safer is one of the top trial lawyers in the country for complex, high-stakes civil litigation. He also maintains a significant pro bono practice focused on overturning wrongful convictions and helping wrongfully convicted individuals fight for compensation through civil suits. Many of the clients he has helped spent decades in prison for crimes they did not commit, and his cases have received widespread media attention and achieved record-setting awards for clients. Ron is a partner at Riley Safer Holmes & Cancila LLP.



Jeremy Barber is a former federal prosecutor and experienced trial attorney. He oversees the extensive pro bono program at his firm, which includes handling family law cases involving domestic abuse, challenging wrongful convictions, and advocating for reduced sentences, compassionate release and the civil rights of incarcerated individuals. Jeremy is a partner at Wilkinson Stekloff.

Real Estate



Debbie Kleban represents clients in the affordable housing development and financing space. She leads the firm's New Markets Tax Credit (NMTC) team, representing QALICBs (borrowers), NMTC investors and CDEs (lenders) in connection with projects and businesses being financed utilizing NMTC allocation. Debbie is a founding member of Applegate & Thorne-Thomsen and serves as the firm's managing partner.



Rodney Perry helps clients resolve complex civil litigation matters and business disputes. He represents financial institutions and a wide variety of other clients in commercial real estate related matters, including commercial (judicial and non-judicial) foreclosures, bankruptcy real estate litigation, guaranty litigation, fraud and negligent misrepresentation litigation, lien priority litigation, construction disputes, mechanics lien litigation, title insurance litigation, landlord and tenant/leasing disputes and other litigation involving contract interpretation, fraudulent conveyance litigation, land use, zoning and permitting litigation, and property rights disputes. Rodney is a partner at Riley Safer Holmes & Cancila LLP.



Eric Greenfield focuses his practice on domestic and cross-border real estate transactions. He has represented a wide range of clients including developers, lenders, REITs, real estate funds, private equity firms, pension funds and other institutional investors. A strong focus of Eric's practice revolves around student housing as well as various classes of commercial real estate. Eric is a shareholder and the division chair for the real estate division at Polsinelli.

Regulatory Matters (incl. Antitrust)



Rakesh Kilaru is an accomplished antitrust litigator. He serves as co-lead counsel for the NCAA in a putative antitrust class action lawsuit brought by current and former student-athletes under the Sherman Act challenging NCAA rules that prohibit or limit them from receiving compensation for the commercial use of their name, image, and likeness (NIL). He represents the NFL in a putative class action lawsuit challenging the NFL's multibillion-dollar exclusive distributorship arrangement with DIRECTV for Sunday Ticket. Rakesh is counsel for Altria in antitrust litigation involving its minority investment in e-cigarette maker JUUL Labs. And he has played a leading advisory role regarding potential antitrust issues in several confidential merger matters. Rakesh is a partner at Wilkinson Stekloff.



Michael Martinez concentrates his practice on multi-district class actions and arbitrations involving a wide spectrum of antitrust and complex commercial litigation issues. Michael has represented numerous global and domestic corporations in a wide variety of federal and state court cases involving antitrust claims under Sections 1 and 2 of the Sherman Act and the Robinson-Patman Act as well as unfair competition and deceptive trade practice claims under numerous state statutes. Michael serves as managing partner of K&L Gates's Chicago office.



Juan Morado advises hospitals, health systems, physician groups, consulting firms, pharmacies and other clients, helping them to ensure compliance with regulatory requirements and implement industry best practices. He has held numerous roles in government legal offices, beginning with the City of Chicago Corporation Counsel, as associate general counsel to the Illinois Governor's office under Pat Quinn and, more recently, as General Counsel and Ethics Officer to the Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board (HFSRB). The HFSRB through the Certificate of Need process oversees the comprehensive health planning process of health care facilities and was recently expanded to cover outpatient surgery centers. Juan is of counsel at Benesch.

Trials



Moira Penza is a trial lawyer with a record of success leading and winning high-stakes civil and criminal cases. Moira recently served as trial counsel for Altria Group, Inc. in an administrative proceeding before the FTC related to its minority investment in JUUL, where she led the preparation and examination of Altria's science witnesses. She also represents Altria in consumer protection, personal injury, private antitrust suits arising out of the same investment. Previously, Moira served as co-lead trial counsel for defendants Warner Chilcott and Watson (then-owned by Allergan) in an \$8 billion federal antitrust class action arising out of allegations of anticompetitive conduct related to an oral contraceptive. Moira is a partner at Wilkinson Stekloff.



Nick Secco is a nationally recognized trial lawyer whose practice revolves around complex commercial matters, toxic tort cases and environmental claims. Nick has conducted trials covered by The American Lawyer, Law360, National Law Journal, The New York Times, The Los Angeles Times, Crain's Chicago Business and various other media outlets. The Legal 500 identified him as a leading practitioner in the field of Mass Tort and Product Liability Defense. Nick serves as chair of Benesch's trial practice group.

White Collar Criminal Defense



Dave Resnicoff is a former federal prosecutor who investigated allegations of misconduct by health care companies, government fraud and other federal crimes. Dave has extensive experience in the pharmaceutical, medical device, hospital supply and hospice industries, and his practice focuses on matters involving the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act, U.S. health care fraud and abuse regulation, and False Claims Act litigation. Dave guides companies on how to respond when the government is making inquiries through civil and criminal investigative demands and subpoenas, and he defends against civil and criminal government enforcement actions. Dave is a partner at Riley Safer Holmes & Cancila LLP.