

People

Julia R. Lissner

Partner, Litigation

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vCard

Julia Lissner is a litigator, trial attorney, and appellate lawyer who loves partnering with clients to navigate and tackle complex business problems through litigation. Julia represents public and private companies and individuals in a wide range of business disputes in state and federal courts nationwide. She has extensive experience in preparing cases for bench trials, jury trials, arbitrations, and mediations; handling appeals; and conducting internal investigations.

Julia's complex commercial litigation practice spans a variety of substantive areas, including intellectual property, unfair competition, deceptive trade practices, breach of contract, breach of fiduciary duty, professional liability, fraud, restrictive covenants, and class action defense. Julia's broad client base includes automotive and tire companies, other commercial manufacturers, retail chains, software companies, major financial institutions, and real estate investors.

Crain's Chicago Business has recognized Julia five times on its "Notable Leaders" lists, for top Litigators and Trial Attorneys, Women in Law, and Nonprofit Board Leaders. Julia also received a "Trial Lawyer Excellence" award from Law Bulletin Media, and she is a Fellow of the Litigation Counsel of America trial lawyer honorary society.

Notable Work

Intellectual Property Litigation: Represented a U.S. tire company in a high profile trade dress and unfair competition lawsuit in Illinois federal court against a Japanese tire company. Repeatedly obtained monetary and evidentiary sanctions against the opposing parties for withholding highly relevant discovery. Defeated opposing parties' infringement claims on summary judgment and on appeal to the Federal Circuit. Won a \$110 million jury verdict for client.

Appellate: Represented 46 organizations in connection with an amicus brief to the U.S. Supreme Court in a landmark civil rights

Areas of Experience

Litigation
Appellate
Commercial Disputes
Class Action Defense
Employment Litigation
Financial Institutions Commercial Litigation
Intellectual Property
Intellectual Property Litigation
Real Estate Litigation
Securities Litigation
Financial Services
Economic Sanctions and Export Controls

Education

J.D., Chicago-Kent College of Law, 2007, *with honors*, *Chicago-Kent Law Review*, *Seventh Circuit Review*, Executive Editor; *Journal of Intellectual Property*, Executive Articles Editor; Moot Court Honor Society, Vice President
B.S., Northwestern University, 2004, *cum laude*

Admissions

Bars

Illinois

Courts

U.S. Supreme Court
U.S. Court of Appeals, Federal Circuit
U.S. Court of Appeals, Ninth Circuit
U.S. Court of Appeals, Seventh Circuit
U.S. District Court, Central District of Illinois
U.S. District Court, Northern District of Illinois
U.S. District Court, Northern District of Illinois – Trial Bar
U.S. District Court, Northern District of Ohio

Related Content

case securing protections for transgender employees and job applicants.

Business Disputes: Represented an Illinois health system in defending multi-million dollar claims of tortious interference and breach of fiduciary duty brought by physician shareholders of a surgery center. Briefed successful motion to stay Illinois lawsuit pursuant to arbitration agreement and obtained affirmance on appeal. Achieved complete victory for client following week-long arbitration hearing.

Financial Institutions Commercial Litigation: Represented one of the largest banks in the Midwest in an Illinois lawsuit alleging that the bank improperly honored a customer's check containing a restrictive legend. Briefed and argued the successful motion to dismiss and obtained affirmance on appeal, with an opinion that provided an important victory for banks nationwide.

Appellate: Represented seven non-profit organizations in connection with an amicus brief to the U.S. Supreme Court in a high-profile case challenging a Tennessee law banning medical treatment for minors with gender dysphoria and advocating for equal protection under the Fourteenth Amendment for transgender youth.

Appellate: Represented a major national bank in a federal lawsuit and Seventh Circuit appeal involving allegations of wrongdoing in connection with acting as the paying agent for bonds issued by the German government.

Appellate: Represented a software company and related individuals in an Illinois lawsuit and appeal for fraud and breach of fiduciary duty in connection with various Ohio business disputes.

Appellate: Represented a leading provider of credit card processing services in an Illinois lawsuit and appeal for fraud, negligence, and breach of contract.

Appellate: Represented the largest investor in a real estate limited partnership in an Illinois lawsuit and appeal concerning claims of breach of fiduciary duty.

Appellate: Represented several non-profits with an amicus brief to the Seventh Circuit in a landmark case involving a transgender high school student whose Wisconsin school had denied him access to the boys' restrooms.

Business Disputes: Represented one of the world's largest providers of human capital management solutions in a tripartite case in Nevada federal court for deceptive trade practices, breach of contract, negligence, and breach of fiduciary duty in connection with IRS tax filings and deposits.

Business Disputes: Represented a financial advisory company in an Illinois state court lawsuit against a former employee who was making defamatory statements and misappropriating the company's confidential information. Obtained a swift resolution by securing a temporary restraining order and permanent injunction against the employee.

Business Disputes: Represented blockchain-focused German companies in federal and state lawsuits against a blockchain software vendor for the wrongful transfer of a \$1 million NFT and breaches of convertible promissory notes.

Akerman Partners Sergio Acosta and Julia Lissner
Named by *Crain's Chicago Business* as Notable
Litigators & Trial Attorneys of 2025
April 21, 2025

Eleven Akerman Attorneys Recognized Among 2025
Illinois Super Lawyers
February 05, 2025

Akerman Partner Julia Lissner Named Among 2024
Notable Nonprofit Board Leaders
December 02, 2024

Business Disputes: Represented a California aerospace, automotive, and aviation engineering company in defending a multimillion dollar arbitration for breach of contract, and obtained a complete victory for client.

Business Disputes: Represented a prominent real estate investor in a federal lawsuit against other real estate investors and development companies for fraud and breach of promissory note.

Business Dispute: Represented a U.S. tire company in a contract dispute with a freight broker involving warehousing and fulfillment services.

Business Disputes: Represented a premier, technology-focused private equity firm in a New York lawsuit arising out of a multimillion dollar business sale.

Class Action Defense: Represented a major airlines against class action lawsuits in Illinois and Florida alleging violations of the Fair and Accurate Credit Transactions Act (FACTA).

Class Action Defense: Represented an auto financing company in Ohio class action lawsuits alleging improper sales practices.

Class Action Defense: Represented one of the largest banks in an Illinois class action lawsuit alleging improper notice of ATM fees.

Class Action Defense: Represented an automotive repossession company in a Michigan class action lawsuit.

Employment Litigation: Represented a large retail chain in a lawsuit with a former executive involving claims for unpaid compensation.

Employment Litigation: Represented a former executive of a food crafting company in arbitration proceedings to recover final compensation owed under a written employment contract.

Employment Litigation: Represented a Florida disaster clean-up company and its president in Illinois lawsuit arising out of a labor agreement.

Employment Litigation: Represented plumbing companies in multimillion dollar federal court lawsuits arising out of collective bargaining agreements.

Financial Institutions Litigation: Represented the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC), as receiver for failed banks, in internal investigations to identify potential professional liability claims and in court proceedings involving those multimillion dollar claims.

Financial Institutions Litigation: Represented a major retail bank in a federal lawsuit arising out of bank account and safe deposit box rental agreements.

Financial Institutions Litigation: Represented a leading corporate bank in an Illinois lawsuit over the ownership and storage of gold and silver bars.

Financial Institutions Litigation: Represented a leading global financial services firm in California state court investment-related litigation.

Financial Institutions Litigation: Represented a leading mortgage provider in an Illinois action to vacate foreclosure judgment and sale.

Financial Institutions Litigation: Represented the receiver for a failed bank in a federal lawsuit for breach of contract, negligence, and fraud relating to the bank's alleged failure to fund loans.

Intellectual Property Litigation: Represented a premium golf equipment manufacturer in patent infringement litigation against an industry rival in the Western District of Texas.

Intellectual Property Litigation: Represented a leading company in the floating dock industry in two related cases for patent infringement, trade dress infringement, and unfair competition in Indiana and Florida federal courts.

Intellectual Property Litigation: Represented a North Carolina arts organization in defending a music copyright infringement lawsuit filed in New York federal court.

Intellectual Property Litigation: Represented a company that designs, manufactures and installs motorized storage systems in a \$63 million patent infringement lawsuit in Pennsylvania federal court.

Intellectual Property Litigation: Represented a California software company in a copyright infringement lawsuit in Illinois federal court.

Intellectual Property Litigation: Represented an international manufacturing company in a patent infringement lawsuit in Florida federal court.

Intellectual Property Litigation: Represented a U.S. tire company in a trademark infringement lawsuit against a competitor in Nevada federal court.

Intellectual Property Litigation: Represented a London-based market research company in a cybersquatting and trademark lawsuit in Missouri federal court.

Intellectual Property Litigation: Represented a civil engineering firm in defending a copyright infringement and Digital Millennium Copyright Act case in California federal court.

Real Estate Litigation: Represented a real estate investor in a week-long trial for reformation of deed, fraud, legal malpractice, and injunctive relief against his former business partner and his former real estate attorney, and in which Illinois state court awarded client reformation of deed and nearly \$400,000 in compensatory damages and \$750,000 in punitive damages.

Real Estate Litigation: Represented a national restaurant chain in lawsuit involving the interpretation and application of a restrictive covenant in a lease agreement.

Real Estate Litigation: Represented a corporate real estate development company in a multiday arbitration concerning the brokerage commission for a lease renewal.

Real Estate Litigation: Represented the Arizona affiliate of a nationwide luxury day spa in a lawsuit with prominent Chicago real

estate developers arising from a spa management agreement.

Securities Litigation: Represented a hedge fund in connection with a \$50 million federal and state law securities dispute involving privately placed residential mortgage-backed securities.

Securities Litigation: Represented national broker-dealers and their brokers in connection with investment-related claims in FINRA arbitrations.

Related Professional Experience

- Judicial Extern to Magistrate Judge Arlander Keys, U.S. District Court, Northern District of Illinois, 2007
- Judicial Extern to Senior Judge James T. Moody, U.S. District Court, Northern District of Indiana, 2006
- Legal Extern at the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, Division of Enforcement, 2006

Community Involvement

- Northwestern University Alumni Association, Leadership Circle Regional Board, Former Board of Directors & Class of 2004 5th, 10th, and 15th Reunion Co-Chair
- Kohl Children's Museum, Women's Board
- Glencoe Park District, Glencoe Beach and Lakefront Advisory Group Member
- Junior League of Chicago, Former Board of Directors & Vice President of Membership
- Chicago Innocence Center, Former Executive Committee & Board Member

Published Work and Lectures

- Marks, Works & Secrets Blog, Contributor
- The Chicago Bar Association's "Hot Topics and Trends in Intellectual Property Litigation," Moderator, April 6, 2016
- The Chicago Bar Association's "Intellectual Property Law Basics for Non-IP Attorneys," Moderator, October 6, 2015
- *American Banker*, Author, "'Void After 90 Days?' Illinois Court Says No," March 24, 2015
- *Law360*, Author, "Bidding Farewell to Restrictive Legends on Checks," February 13, 2015

Affiliations

- Appellate Lawyers Association, Communications and Publicity Committee, Co-Chair; Board of Directors, 2024-2026
- International Trademark Association, Alternative Dispute Resolution Committee
- Chicago Bar Association, Judicial Evaluation Committee; Intellectual Property Law Committee, Chair and Vice Chair, 2015-2017
- The William J. Hibbler Memorial *Pro Se* Assistance Program
- Lex Mundi Institute, Cross-Border Dispute Resolution Program, 2016
- National Institute for Trial Advocacy (NITA), Trial Skills Program, 2014

Honors and Distinctions

- *Super Lawyers* Magazine, 2025, Listed in Illinois for Business Litigation
- *Crain's Chicago Business*, 2023, 2025, Listed as one of Chicago's "Notable Litigators & Trial Attorneys"
- *Crain's Chicago Business*, 2024, Listed as one of Chicago's "Notable Nonprofit Board Leaders"
- Chicago's *Law Bulletin Media*, 2022, "Trial Lawyer Excellence Award" Honoree
- Litigation Counsel of America, The Trial Lawyer Honorary Society, Fellow
- *Benchmark Litigation*, 2023-2025, Listed in Illinois as a "Future Star"
- *Benchmark Litigation* 2022, Listed in Illinois on the "40 & Under Hot List"
- *Super Lawyers* Magazine, 2012-2022, Listed in Illinois as a "Rising Star" for Business Litigation
- *Leading Lawyers*, 2016-2025, Listed as a "Leading Lawyer" in Commercial Litigation
- *Crain's Chicago Business*, 2018, 2020, Listed as one of "Chicago's Notable Women Lawyers"
- CALI Excellence for the Future Award in Trial Advocacy