ArentFox Schiff LLP
Attorneys

Laura Zell

PARTNER

Laura is a Partner in the Complex Litigation and Government Enforcement and White Collar groups.



Industries

Beverage & Food
Consumer Products
Fashion & Retail Law
Health Care
— Government Investigations

Practices

Complex Litigation
Copyright
Government Enforcement & White Collar
False Claims Act Investigations & Litigation
— Investigations
Trade Secrets, Noncompetes & Employee Mobility
Trademark

Education

University of Notre Dame, JD, Dean's Award, Highest Grade in Deposition Skills; cum laude, 2015

University of Maryland, BA, 2012

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Laura specializes in intellectual property litigation, with a focus on trademark, trade dress, and copyright infringement, and complex litigation, as well as white collar defense and internal and government investigations. Laura has taken a leading role in trademark and white collar trials in federal court, providing her with significant experience in all phases of litigation, ranging from discovery, motions practice, and witness preparation to direct and cross-examinations and post-trial motions.

Intellectual Property Litigation

Laura regularly represents clients in intellectual property disputes in federal court and in *inter partes* proceedings before the Trademark Trial and Appeal Board, and has experience with domain dispute proceedings arising under ICANN's Uniform Domain-Name Dispute-Resolution Policy. Laura has experience litigating trademark, trade dress, and copyright infringement cases and claims related to advertising and unfair competition.

White Collar, Investigations, and the False Claims Act

Laura counsels and represents companies and individuals through investigations, criminal prosecutions, and enforcement actions by the US Department of Justice (DOJ), US Attorney's Offices throughout the country, and the US Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC). Laura has experience advising clients on matters involving the False Claims Act, the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act, federal securities laws, government contracting and procurement fraud, theft of trade secrets, economic espionage, health care, mail, and wire fraud, and export violations. Laura also has experience assisting clients in responding to state and federal government subpoenas and civil investigative demands (CIDs).

Client Work

Laura's representative matters include:

— Obtained voluntary dismissal of criminal complaint against entrepreneur accused of export-control violations (M.D. Fla.).

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Obtained declination of two proton therapy centers in a False Claims Act, Stark Law, and Anti-Kickback Statute investigation (W.D. Ok.).

- Obtained voluntary dismissal of indictment against foreign entity for alleged economic espionage and trade secret theft (D.D.C.).
- Prevailed in trademark opposition proceeding on behalf of multinational manufacturer of pet food (*Mars, Incorporated v. PAGS Inc.*, Opp. No. 91221462 (T.T.A.B.)).
- Prevailed in trademark opposition proceeding on behalf of a multinational clothing company (*Industria de Dise ño Textil, S.A. (Inditex, S.A.) v. Benzara, Inc.*, Opp. Nos. 91242880 and 91246000 (T.T.A.B.)).
- Obtained pretrial diversion for businessman accused of violating FARA and committing bank fraud (N.D. Cal.).
- Obtained dismissal of civil lawsuits through successful motions to dismiss and motions for summary judgment in a variety of cases, including on behalf of a foreign telecommunications company in a trademark infringement case (N.D. Cal.), a national restaurant chain and related individuals in a copyright infringement case (M.D. Fla.), a foreign media and broadcasting company in a copyright infringement case (S.D.N.Y.), a national trade association as an intervenor in a biotechnology-related lawsuit (N.D. Cal.), and a domestic telecommunications company in federal and state courts.
- Provided pre-litigation strategy and counseling for entities in the fashion and retail, food and beverage, and consumer products industries on matters related to trademarks, trade dress, copyright, anti-counterfeiting, unfair competition/false advertising, and right of publicity.
- Obtained declinations following investigations by the DOJ and NSF-OIG into university and professor disclosures made in federal research grant proposals.
- Obtained early compassionate release from incarceration of a defendant under the CARES Act.
- Obtained dismissal of civil complaint for employment discrimination and harassment on behalf of a multinational café chain.
- Representation of engineer accused of economic espionage and theft of trade secrets and won acquittals on economic espionage charges after three-week jury trial (D.D.C.).
- Representation of professor accused of fraud, making false statements, and obstruction of justice and won acquittals on 19 counts; client receive sentence of probation (W.D. Va.).
- Representation of entities in investigations into whether pharmaceutical manufacturers and patient assistance programs violated the Anti-Kickback Statute and False Claims Act relating to the provision of co-pays, obtaining declination of one entity (D. Mass.).
- Representation of an executive of a multinational commodities company in bribery and corruption investigation by DOJ.
- Representation of a private equity executive in securities fraud cases brought by DOJ and SEC.
- Conducted internal investigation of possible compliance lapses at a large multinational consumer goods corporation.

Professional Activities

Laura organizes and oversees an annual Halloween fundraiser in ArentFox Schiff's DC office, which has raised money for DC Legal Aid, CAIR Coalition, and N Street Village.

Laura's past pro bono work includes spending a week in Karnes City, Texas, at the Karnes Family Detention Center to provide legal services to detained asylum-seekers, including many recently reunited fathers and sons. Laura also represented a Maryland state inmate in a Section 1983 civil rights case involving allegations of excessive use of force, denial of medical care, and inadequate conditions of confinement. She has also provided legal services to a lifelong veteran in connection with a military case before the US Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces, and has volunteered at the Landlord Tenant Resource Center, DC Legal Aid, and LearningPlunge, an educational nonprofit.

Previous Work

Prior to joining ArentFox Schiff, Laura served as a law clerk for the US Attorney's Office in Pennsylvania. Laura also worked as a legal intern at the Office of General Counsel for the University

of Notre Dame.

Publications, Presentations, & Recognitions

- Laura received JD Supra's 2022 Readers' Choice Award for White Collar Defense.
- Laura was recognized in the 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2026 and 2027 Editions of Best Lawyers: Ones to Watch.
- Laura was selected to the 2023 Washington, DC Rising Stars List.
- Laura received the Albert E. Arent Pro Bono Award for her pro bono work in 2017 and 2018.

Laura's publications include:

- Ross Q. Panko and Laura E. Zell, *Half-Baked: D.C. Circuit Rejects Attempt to Extend Territorial Reach of Copyright Act and Lanham Act to U.K.*, 32 Intell. Prop. & Tech. Law Journal 19 (2020).
- "Don't Wait! Federal Court Sends Case Back to TTAB," *Lexology*, co-authored with Randy Brater and Ross Panko, May 11, 2018
- "Licensee cannot rely on its licensor's trademark use to establish priority," *World Trademark Review*, October 10, 2017

Bar Admissions

Pennsylvania
District of Columbia

Court Admissions

US District Court, Eastern District of Pennsylvania
US District Court, Western District of Pennsylvania
US District Court, Middle District of Pennsylvania
US District Court, District of Maryland
US District Court, District of Columbia
US Court of Appeals, District of Columbia Circuit
US Court of Appeals, 9th Circuit