

Alumni@Dentons

Grow | Protect | Operate | Finance

Spring 2022

IN THIS ISSUE

02

Editor's Note

03

Highlights,

06

New Laterals

08

Alumni Spotlight

10

Accolades

14

Recent Successes

17

Pro Bono

18

Diversity and Inclusion

22

Dentons Delivers

23

Retirements

26

In Memoriam

We are pleased to share this issue of Alumni@Dentons with our extended Dentons family in the US Region.

Drop us a line at alumni@dentons.com and let us know what you liked about this edition and what you would like to see in the future. Also, keep us posted on what you have been up to and we will be happy to share it in our next issue.



Editor's Note

With this issue, we are delighted to announce the selection of our new chief executive officer, the elevation of 32 lawyers to partners, shareholders or counsel, the launch of our newly revamped website, and recent successes in complex business transactions and high-stakes litigation.

While we continue to reach new heights in the provision of legal services, we are also very proud of how Dentons has mobilized to support our people in Ukraine and Russia through the current crisis. We are equally proud of how our partners have collaborated across markets to provide clients with helpful insight and guidance during this time of global uncertainty.

We know our clients want to hear from us during crises such as these—as evidenced by the 1,300 clients who have attended sessions on legal and business implications. All recordings from our Ukraine/Russia crisis webinar program can be found on the homepage of [dentons.com](https://www.dentons.com). We have also launched a substantive global hub on our website containing all the relevant insights and useful links that are helping our clients through this crisis.

We hope you enjoy the contents of this issue. Please contact us with your comments or suggestions, and we thank you for your input!

Highlights

Sonia Martin Appointed Dentons US CEO



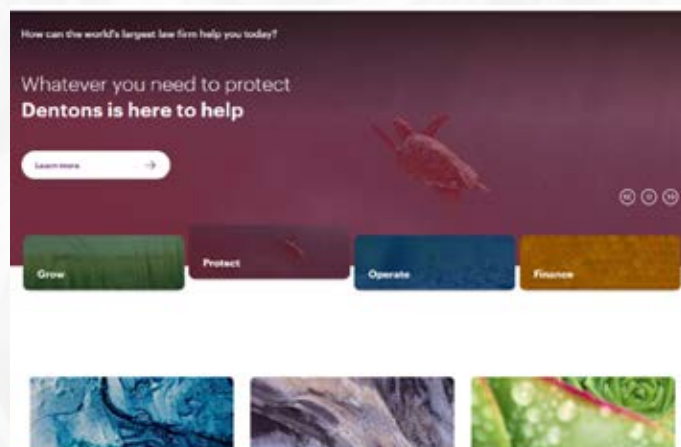
Dentons is pleased to announce that **Sonia Martin** is our new Dentons US chief executive officer. Sonia, who celebrated her silver anniversary with Dentons in January, has long been a leader at Dentons' local, national and global levels. Most recently serving as vice-chairperson for the Dentons US Board and managing partner of Dentons' San Francisco and Oakland offices, she has twice been named a BTI Client Service All-Star and one of the National Diversity Council's Top 50 Most Powerful Women in Law in California. A founding member of the WomenLEAD (Leadership, Entrepreneurism, Advancement, Development) Committee and a member of our Global LGBTQ+ Network, Sonia is passionate about our firmwide commitments to inclusion and diversity.

Sonia will work alongside US Region Managing Partner **Toby McClamroch** to lead our presence in 44 offices across the US. She has also been appointed to the Dentons Global Management Committee and the United States Region Management Committee, and will continue to serve on the Global Board, a role she has held since 2019.

Mary Wilson will maintain her existing role as Dentons US managing partner, working alongside Sonia to support leadership in advancing practice plans, driving client service priorities and progressing diversity and inclusion initiatives.

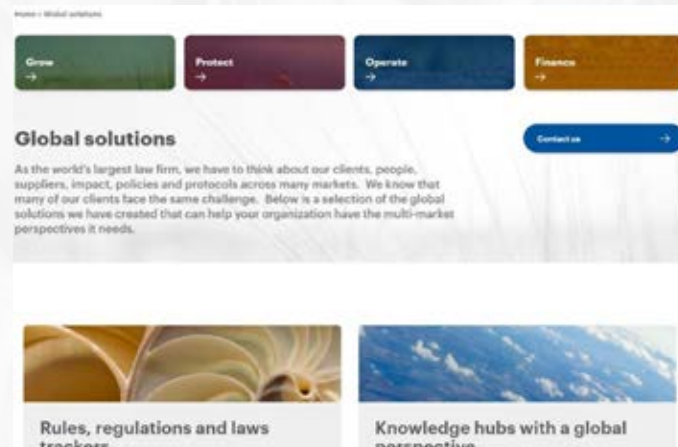
We look forward to all we will achieve, for our clients and our Firm, under Sonia's leadership.

Dentons Refreshed Website Goes Live



Dentons has evolved our approach to address the market and client expectations.

The key pillars are:



- Framing our services to help clients meet their core objectives to grow, protect, operate and finance their organizations

- Taking a “client-in” approach by starting every engagement with the client’s business objectives and challenges, and then delivering the breadth of our capabilities across regions and practices to address those objectives
- Thinking firmwide, connecting clients to colleagues with the experience and capabilities best suited to their needs—leveraging the full scope of our global firm while still ensuring local relevance

We encourage you to visit our newly refreshed [dentons.com](https://www.dentons.com) to learn how our new approach aligns more closely with how our clients operate in the world.

- If growth is on your mind, [find articles](#) on “AI and your growth strategy,” “Thinking of buying some distressed assets,” “Investing in renewable energy projects in Europe” and “Doing business in....” or peruse our selection of tools to assist your growth, such as our “Foreign direct investment (FDI) global tracker,” “Global tax guide” and “EU transparency registers comparative tool.”

- Is protecting your assets or positions, or managing your risks, a current concern? [Check out](#) our “Investigations and compliance hub” or view a recording of a recent CLE program on “Global sanctions in a changing world.”
- Whether you provide or seek finance – we can help. The [finance page](#) includes links to webinars on “Sustainable finance disclosure regulation” and “Investment and ESG,” as well as a “fintech comparison tool” and a “global taking security guide.”
- If improving efficiency or bringing consistency and predictability to day-to-day matters are high on your agenda, the [operate page](#) includes a “Global collective redundancy guide” and an “ESG global solutions hub.”

Dentons Elevates 32 Lawyers in US

New partners/shareholders	
Trey Bolling , Tax/Real Estate, Birmingham	Kyle Matula , Capital Markets, New York
Claire Bornstein , Health Care, New York	Nicole Mersky , Capital Markets, New York
Lyndon Bradshaw , Litigation and Dispute Resolution, Salt Lake City	Geoffrey Miller , Restructuring, Insolvency and Bankruptcy, New York
Joshua Burress , Litigation and Dispute Resolution/ White Collar Crime and Government Investigations, Indianapolis	Ryan Moore , Corporate, Birmingham
Uchenna Ekuma-Nkama , Commercial Litigation, Atlanta	Christopher O’Leary , Capital Markets, New York
Kate Erdel , Litigation and Dispute Resolution/ Employment and Labor, Indianapolis	Joni Ploeger , Workers’ Compensation, Des Moines
Scott Garrett , Litigation and Dispute Resolutions, St. George, UT	Sean Raisch , Real Estate/Finance, Des Moines
Craig Giometti , Commercial Litigation, Washington, DC	Kyle Resetarits , Real Estate, Indianapolis
Ashley Gregson , Litigation and Dispute Resolution, Salt Lake City	Martin Rice , Real Estate, Kansas City
Kelvin Hsu , Real Estate, San Diego	Jonathon Schroeder , Real Estate, Ames, IA

New partners/shareholders

Erika Lopes-McLeman, Commercial Litigation, Short Hills

Shannon Shin, Commercial Litigation, Chicago

Rebeca Linz, Corporate, Naples, FL

Judith Shophet Sidkoff, Commercial Litigation, Los Angeles

Lauren Macksoud, Restructuring, Insolvency and Bankruptcy, New York

David Simonton, Commercial Litigation, San Francisco

Aaron Marcus, Employment and Labor, Louisville

Breanna Young, Trusts and Estates, Des Moines

Mary Mathew, Intellectual Property and Technology, New York

Ryan Zucchetto, Capital Markets/Tax, New York

New Counsel

Andrew Kim, Intellectual Property and Technology, Chicago

Mengmeng Zhang, Commercial Litigation, San Francisco



New Laterals



J. Winston Busby has rejoined Dentons as a shareholder in the Trusts, Estates and Wealth Preservation practice in Birmingham, where he counsels individuals, families and business owners on estate planning, trust planning, wealth preservation, probate, and tax planning.



Tyler Coe joined Dentons as a Litigation shareholder in the Des Moines office. Tyler represents high and medium net worth individuals, including business owners, executives and professionals, in their high conflict disputes, most often divorce and child custody cases.



Christopher Hagenbuch has joined Dentons' Venture Technology and Emerging Growth Companies practice as partner. Resident in the New York Meatpacking office, Chris represents private equity, venture capital and other institutional investors along with emerging growth tech companies in strategic transactions.



Dentons continued to accelerate momentum in its Venture Technology and Emerging Growth practice with the addition of **Travis Leach** as a partner in the Phoenix office. Travis is a trusted advisor to his clients and counsels them globally on corporate and transactional matters, private equity transactions, venture financings, corporate governance, securities offerings, and mergers and acquisitions in the technology and other sectors.



Deborah Renner has rejoined the Firm as a partner in the Commercial Litigation practice. Deborah joins from the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority (FINRA) where she handled broker-dealer regulatory matters. Her practice focuses on class action defense, financial services litigation and broker-dealer regulatory matters. She is a nationally recognized class action lawyer and has represented amici before the Supreme Court.



Dentons expanded our Commercial Litigation practice in New York with the addition of highly recognized litigator **Tomasita Sherer** as partner. She has more than 20 years' experience helping global companies resolve their business disputes through litigation, arbitration, mediation or other cost-effective methods.



Former Assistant United States Attorney **Timothy Storino** rejoined Dentons' litigation team as a partner in the Chicago office. Tim brings more than 15 years of litigation experience, including white-collar defense and investigations, complex civil litigation matters, and commercial litigation.



Crystal Walls has re-joined the Firm's Real Estate practice as a shareholder in the Birmingham office. Crystal's practice focuses on commercial real estate transactions, including finance, purchase, sale, leasing and development. She also has experience in the area of public finance for municipalities, counties and state agencies



Alumni Spotlight



Marlene Nations

SVP, Legal Affairs and General Counsel
Hollywood Park Management Company LLC

Marlene Nations practiced law at Dentons for 37 years before leaving in 2019 to serve as senior vice president of legal affairs and general counsel for Hollywood Park Management Company LLC (HPMC), a 298 mixed-use project known as Hollywood Park in Inglewood, CA. SoFi Stadium, home to the Los Angeles Rams and Los Angeles Chargers, and YouTube Theater are located in Hollywood Park, along with an office building that is home to the NFL Network. In addition, retail, multifamily residential, hotel, and more office and other entertainment uses are either already started or planned.

Tell us about your current role and what led you to the position?

I head up a Legal/Risk Management team that is responsible for the development, management, financing, operation, technology and leasing of the development.

What led me to this position started with simply saying “yes” when one of my Dentons’ partners, Alan Bornstein, asked me if I wanted to work with him on a transaction involving some real estate in Los Angeles. That transaction turned out to be the acquisition of the Hollywood Park land. After that initial transaction, I continued to work with Alan and the ownership team and after a couple of years they asked me to come on board as the first GC of HPMC.

What do you enjoy most about your role?

There are so many unbelievably cool things about this job. Starting with most recent events: Who gets to work at a Super Bowl as your work site, with the home team winning! Who gets to work at 20 or more NFL games every season? Who gets to attend concerts that include the biggest musical acts in the country (and yes, I did go to all four BTS shows and the Rolling Stones). And, back to the beginning of this adventure, who gets a

chance, after 37 years at one job, to make a complete right turn and have a job that, in addition to using the real estate knowledge I gained during my years at Sonnenschein/SNR Dentons/Dentons, introduces you to a whole new world of experiences, challenges and issues, working with the brightest, most talented group of individuals, across a wide range of areas, including architecture, construction and design, technology (from digital signage, to broadcast, to apps, to DAS and Wi-Fi, etc.), event operations and programming, facility security, risk management, and privacy/data and employment issues. Even my children and their friends now think that I have a cool job.



What are some of your favorite memories from your time at Dentons?

Well 37 years creates a lot of memories. My first golf outing with Harold Shapiro. Our annual Chicago real estate group pre-Thanksgiving celebrations. Our period of Friday afternoon cocktail hours. Late night dinners with colleagues before there was an Internet. Attending PNC Day at the Races and other outings with Jana Barbe and JP Morgan.

Are there any aspects of working in a law firm that you miss?

Business services professionals! And not just secretaries but also those who took care of ordering and setting up printers, contract managing, software selection, food service, employee hiring and onboarding, purchasing insurance—all those things that just magically occur at Dentons which, when you work for a startup (even one with such a large job) are nonexistent.

What are some of the most important skills lawyers must develop to succeed?

The ability to separate the chaff from the wheat (i.e., of all the issues presented, which are the ones that can really hurt?), the ability to listen and understand the other parties' views, clear and concise writing, respect for other people and their views, and an ability to have fun.

Did you have a mentor during your time at Dentons?

When you work at a place as long as I worked at Dentons, you have many mentors. So many people helped and guided me along the way. However, the two people who helped me when I needed it most in the early days of my career were Steve Davidson and Bob Messerly. Steve, a few years ahead of me, had the formidable task of teaching me the ins and outs of being a real estate lawyer while at the same time serving as each other's "tag team" member, handing things up and back as needed and working together to cover an incredibly large and demanding workload. Bob, a few years behind me, had the misfortune to spend a very large part of his early years at Dentons working with me, which gave us the flexibility to move things around as client demands shifted and new matters came in. The phrase "No man/woman is an island" has been around for so long because it is true.

My career, and what kept me at Dentons for so many years, is 100 percent because of the people I worked with and who helped me professionally—teaching me, working alongside me, advising me (many of you know how often I would stop by and "borrow your brain" to help me work through some difficult issues), taking on matters for and with me, giving me meaningful and interesting work to do and, more personally, by being my friends, personal confidantes and people I really just enjoyed hanging out with.

What are your passions outside of work?

I honestly hate questions like this as I always feel bad that I really do not have that many passions (any of you also feel that way?!). I am more of a "go with the flow/enjoy the opportunities that come your way" type of person. That being said, being with my family, my dog, reading, hiking/walking/being outside, and our national parks are things I really like. Those of you who have known me for a long time will remember my Christmas stocking needlepoint period, which ended after I completed seven. Now that we are gaining new family members, I am gearing up for another Needlepoint Christmas Stocking phase.

What do you do in your 'me time'?

I am a pretty ordinary person and, as noted above, much of my work time is spent doing things most people do in their me time: attend sporting events, concerts, award shows, etc. I also enjoy walking the dog, reading books, sitting in the sun/going to the beach, dining with friends and family, and taking long walks. Being new to LA, we also try to take day trips to interesting and beautiful places in Greater Los Angeles, from the area's natural wonders to museums galleries, etc.

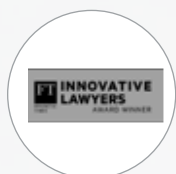


Accolades

Firmwide Awards and Rankings



Law360 selected Dentons as Practice Group of the Year in four areas: Cannabis, Fund Formation, Insurance and Structured Finance. The annual feature spotlights legal practices that have helped clients successfully navigate significant, large and complex matters and achieve great results for their businesses



Dentons was awarded "Innovation in the Business of Law: New Solutions" at the Financial Times' Innovative Lawyers Awards North America 2021, for our launch of Dentons Global Advisors (DGA), an elite multidisciplinary advisory firm that provides integrated strategic counsel and support for clients facing complex opportunities and challenges. The Firm was also shortlisted in three other categories, including "Most Innovative Legal Practitioner" (for Chicago Regulatory partner **Jeffrey Fort's** work developing an innovative method for a client to earn and monetize carbon credits while reducing greenhouse gas emissions) and "Innovation in Sustainability & ESG" (for developing a system that incentivizes and rewards manufacturers for creating innovative ways to reducing greenhouse gas impact from manufacturing operations)



Juristat ranked Dentons among 2021's Top Patent Firms, including, for the second year in a row, No. 1 overall for patent applications relating to the biotechnology and organic fields, and ranked fifth for patent applications relating to computer networks, multiplex, cable and cryptography/security



The Restructuring, Insolvency and Bankruptcy group received Deal of the Year honors in the small restructurings category at the 2021 Americas M&A Atlas Awards, for its work on Astria Healthcare's chapter 11 bankruptcy. Our team restructured approximately \$100 million of debt and secured a refinancing loan from the Multicare Healthcare System, allowing the three-facility hospital chain in the Yakima Valley, WA, to re-emerge from bankruptcy with a much smaller and more sustainable debt structure



Chambers FinTech 2022 has ranked Dentons as a leading law firm in the US and seven other jurisdictions, including: Netherlands, Canada, Chile, Malaysia, Russia, Singapore, Kenya and Spain. Chambers FinTech is a comprehensive guide to the leading Fintech professionals in 40+ jurisdictions around the world. The ranking is based on research involving in-depth interviews with innovators and experts worldwide



Dentons earned 408 rankings in the 2022 U.S. News – Best Lawyers “Best Law Firms” survey. Our teams across the US Region received 40 national practice area rankings, including 19 in Tier 1, and 368 local or regional practice area rankings, including 195 in Tier 1



Global Investigations Review recognized Dentons as a leading global law firm for corporate investigations in the **2021 edition of the GIR 100**. The annual guide highlights the top 100 firms from around the world able to handle sophisticated, cross-border, government-led and internal investigations, based on submissions from law firms and extensive research.



For the second year in a row, UsableNet named Dentons a leader in the defense of website accessibility litigation under the Americans With Disabilities Act, an emerging area of digital accessibility litigation and compliance. Based on a survey conducted by UsableNet in 2020 and 2021, our clients trusted and hired us more than any other law firm to protect their businesses by defending in such lawsuits

Individual Recognitions



Louisville Senior partner **John W. Ames** has been recognized by the American Bankruptcy Institute (ABI) with its 2021 Lifetime Achievement Award. ABI’s highest award recognizes John’s sustained and deep commitment to the leadership and governance of the organization



BTI Consulting named partners **Sarah Armendariz** (Real Estate, Kansas City), **Gary Goodman** (Real Estate, New York), **Sandy Hauser** and (Litigation, New York) and CEO **Sonia Martin** among its 2022 Client Service All-Stars, an annual report based on hundreds of in-depth, independent interviews with top legal decision-makers





Atlanta Public Policy partner **Thurbert Baker** received the 2021 Francis X. Bellotti Award from the National Association of Attorneys General (NAAG) and was listed as one of Savoy Magazine's 2022 Most Influential Lawyers



Indianapolis Managing Partner **Keith Bice** and managing associate **Katie Jackson** were recognized as members of Indiana Lawyer's "Leadership in Law" award winners. Keith was named a "Distinguished Barrister," which honors lawyers who have been in practice for at least 20 years, and Katie was named an "Up and Coming Lawyer," which recognizes lawyers who have been in practice for 10 years or less.



Dentons lawyer **Julian Butler** was inducted into the Alabama Academy of Honor class of 2021. The Academy was created by the state in 1965 "to bestow honor and recognition upon living Alabamians for their outstanding accomplishments and service."



Dentons shareholder **J. Mason Davis** was honored by the Birmingham Bar Association with the L. Burton Barnes III Public Service Award for his distinguished service in the field of law, including taking on many civil rights cases



New York Litigation/White Collar partner **David Kornblau** received the Legal Aid Society's 2021 Pro Bono Publico Award. David was honored for his outstanding work with Legal Aid on a civil rights action for a client who had been brutally tased and placed in an illegal chokehold by an NYPD officer with a history of misconduct



The Daily Journal named Los Angeles Restructuring, Insolvency and Bankruptcy partner **Sam Maizel** a Top Healthcare Lawyer in California for 2021 for his high-profile work on behalf of troubled health care industry entities, including his role in the bankruptcy cases of Verity Health System of California, the second largest nonprofit hospital bankruptcy in US history.



Atlanta Employment and Labor partner **Rodney Moore** was inducted into Black Legend Awards Silicon Valley's Black Legends Hall of Fame Class of 2022. The honor recognized Rodney as a "Black Pioneer of Silicon Valley" for serving his clients and community. Rodney was also named the sole recipient of the "Hardeman-Sweet Award for Law and Justice," for his significant contributions to enhance the quality of life for the Black community and the general population in Silicon Valley



Washington, DC, Federal Regulatory partner **John Cotton Richmond** will join the Scowcroft Strategy Initiative, part of the Atlantic Council's Scowcroft Center for Strategy and Security, as a nonresident senior fellow. His work will focus on human rights, foreign policy, security and strategy, and will provide clients an opportunity to participate on Atlantic Council panels and help shape policy discussions



Tanya K. Shunnara, a shareholder in our Birmingham office who works in the Trusts, Estates and Wealth Preservation practice, was elected as a Fellow of the American College of Trust and Estate Counsel, an international organization of about 2,400 lawyers who are peer-elected to membership by demonstrating the highest level of integrity, commitment to the profession, competence and expertise



Des Moines Litigation Shareholder **Stan Thompson** was appointed executive director of the Iowa Civil Rights Commission by Governor Kim Reynolds. "Stan's extensive experience in business litigation, practicing for the past 36 years, coupled with his knowledge in ethics and professional conduct will make him a valued leader for the commission," the Governor said in a press release.

Recent Successes

Defeating a Class Action over 'Loot Boxes' – Litigators in **New York, San Francisco and Oakland** and **Orange County, CA**, secured the dismissal with prejudice of a class action against a US multinational technology company. The plaintiffs alleged that certain video games available through our client's app store violated California's unfair competition law by offering "loot boxes," which are acquired through in-game currency and offer a random chance of rewards. The plaintiff alleged that this constituted illegal gambling, from which the client was profiting by taking a cut of app store revenue spent on virtual currency. The court ruled that loot boxes do not violate the law and that the alleged loss of virtual currency is not economic injury.

Facilitating a Vineyard Acquisition – A multidisciplinary transaction team in **Atlanta, New York, St. Louis, San Francisco, Oakland, Silicon Valley, Los Angeles** and **San Diego** represented a South Korean conglomerate in its \$250 million acquisition of one of the most highly regarded wineries in the Stag's Leap region of Napa Valley, CA.

Advising on a bank merger: – A team of lawyers from **Indianapolis** and **Cincinnati** served as legal counsel to First Merchants Corp. in its merger agreement with Michigan-based Level One Bancorp, valued at approximately \$323.5 million. Founded in 2007, Level One, which will merge with and into First Merchants, has grown into one of the largest community banks in Michigan. First Merchants will remain the second-largest financial holding company headquartered in Indiana. The transaction is expected to be completed in the first half of 2022, subject to shareholder and regulatory approvals.

Securitization for Winter Storm Uri – A team of lawyers in **Washington, DC, New York, Kansas City** and **Dallas** represented a nonprofit electric generation and transmission cooperative in northeastern Texas in closing a \$908 million securitization—the first such transaction completed under a 2021 Texas law (shaped in part by our team) that allows electric cooperatives to use securitization financing to recover certain extraordinary costs incurred during Winter Storm Uri. In that February 2021 storm, our client's cost of power went from a February weekly average of \$800,000 to \$860 million. The deal will significantly minimize the impact of those costs, including exorbitant charges imposed by the entity that operates the state's electrical grid, on the member cooperatives' 230,000 customers.

Advising on Adventureland Acquisition – A cross-border team led by lawyers in **Des Moines** performed legal due diligence and drafted transaction documents for Spanish-headquartered Parques Reunidos in connection with its acquisition, through US subsidiary Palace Entertainment, of Adventureland, a family-owned leisure park in Altoona, IA. Parques Reunidos operates theme parks, zoos, marine parks, water parks and lodging properties in 14 countries.

A Victory for the Beltline – An **Atlanta** Litigation team secured an important win for the City in a class action involving the popular Atlanta Beltline, a former railroad corridor that has been converted into a multi-use public trail. The putative class members claimed ownership of the property underlying the Beltline and sought tens of millions of dollars in damages for alleged inverse condemnation and trespass, which could have significantly impacted the trail's ongoing development. The Georgia Court of Appeals unanimously affirmed the trial court's denial of class certification, finding the plaintiffs had not satisfied any of the statutory requirements.

American Eagle Outfitters Buys Quiet Logistics – A team of lawyers in **Pittsburgh, San Diego, San Francisco, Kansas City** and **Louisville** represented Pittsburgh-based American Eagle Outfitters Inc. (AEO) in its acquisition of digital fulfillment operator Quiet Logistics Inc. for US\$350 million, as the apparel retailer looks to take greater control of its supply chain. Devens, MA-based Quiet Logistics has eight fulfillment centers in six cities where workers aided by robots fulfill shipping orders for various digital apparel and lifestyle brands.

Solar Company Raises Investment Funding – Lawyers in **Salt Lake City** and **Lehi, UT**, represented Lumio Inc. in the completion of \$110 million investment funding. Lumio is one of the nation's top five residential solar providers.

Protecting a Vaccine Mandate – On behalf of a leading commercial airline, a **Honolulu** Litigation team defeated an application for a TRO that would have enjoined the airline from enforcing a mandatory COVID-19 vaccination policy on its workforce. The seen employee plaintiffs claimed that the company, by rejecting their requests for accommodation (i.e., periodic testing while permitting them to remain unvaccinated), discriminated against them on the bases of religion and disability status. A federal district court found no irreparable harm justifying injunctive relief and that plaintiffs failed to establish a likelihood of success on the merits of their claims. The complaint also asks the court to certify the lawsuit as a class action.

Closing a Cross-Border Acquisition – In a transaction that spanned the US, Czech Republic, Mexico, Canada and Chile, and drew on our expertise in M&A, finance, real estate, environmental, tax, insurance, employment, sanctions and antitrust, a team of lawyers in **New York, Washington, DC, Pittsburgh, Atlanta, Phoenix, Dallas, Los Angeles, Oakland** and **San Diego**, supported by colleagues in Prague, Mexico City, Santiago and Toronto, advised a Czech-based global chemicals producer on its US\$520 million acquisition of a mining solutions business and US\$380 million acquisition financing.



Closing a 5G Infrastructure Deal – A Washington, DC, Federal Regulatory team represented a T-Mobile, the leading wireless network operator, in its successful negotiations with the nation's largest provider of communications infrastructure for a new 12-year agreement to support the continued deployment of the client's nationwide 5G network. The deal is one of the largest in the client's history.

An Appellate Win in an ERISA Class Action – Concluding several years of hard-fought litigation, lawyers in **Kansas City** and **Chicago** secured a unanimous affirmance from the Eleventh Circuit in favor of a major insurance company. The plaintiffs in the consolidated class action alleged ERISA violations relating to the termination of retiree life insurance benefits for about 14,000 retirees. Joining the case after the court had preliminarily enjoined our client from terminating the benefits for the named plaintiffs, we achieved summary judgment and the cases were dismissed with prejudice. The three-judge Eleventh Circuit panel affirmed, holding that (i) the reservation-of-rights provisions in the ERISA plan documents did not permit a cause of action for failing to provide the benefit and (ii) any misrepresentations or fiduciary duty violations were time-barred.

Advising on an Equity Investment – Lawyers in **Washington, DC, Short Hills, NJ, and Kansas City** advised a clean energy company on a multimillion-dollar equity investment and joint development program with one of the world's largest oil field services companies. Our client, which is based in Durham, NC, with plant operations in LaPorte, TX, is developing advanced technology that converts natural and renewable gas into zero-emissions power at a lower cost.

Pro Bono

Partnering With Clients to Help the Underserved

In 2021, Dentons collaborated with several firm clients on meaningful pro bono work. These projects all focused on providing assistance to immigrants and refugees.

Our first 2021 collaboration was in January, in recognition of Financial Services Pro Bono Day. Dentons lawyers partnered with lawyers from PNC Bank to represent 15 clients who were seeking to renew their DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals aka DREAMERS) authorization to remain in the United States. After being trained (on Zoom) by the National Immigrant Justice Center, teams of Dentons and PNC lawyers met with their DREAMER clients to assist in completing the arduous applications. The teams were assisted admirably by legal assistant Sandra Davalos from her home outside Chicago. While we often hear about win-win situations, this DACA clinic was a win-win-win: Our pro bono clients all received renewals and were grateful for our service; our Dentons colleagues had soul-enriching, meaningful experiences assisting the DREAMERS; and last but not at all least, Dentons and PNC Bank's relationship grew even closer by sharing this important and life-affirming experience.

We partnered with longtime Dentons client BMO (Bank of Montreal) to represent a young gay man who fled his home in Russia after suffering extreme physical and emotional abuse on account of his sexual orientation. The Dentons-BMO team drafted a compelling legal memorandum and affidavit to supplement the client's asylum application, and we then represented the client during his asylum interview. On July 9, 2021, our client was approved for asylum and with the help of the Dentons/BMO team, he finally knew for sure that he was safe and secure, and could live freely in the United States. Again, the partnership with an important client resulted in a win-win-win.

Another example of collaboration was coordinating with AT&T in-house lawyers later in 2021 to win asylum for a torture victim seeking refuge from the Democratic Republic of Congo. The client was working as a missionary and administering aid to women and children of Goma who had been raped and tortured. Government forces wrongly accused the client of being a member of a violent anti-government group, imprisoning and severely abusing him for eight weeks. After escaping from prison through the aid of a Catholic priest who risked his own life in the process, the client made it to the United States and applied for asylum. As a result of the great work of the Dentons-AT&T team, which was led by senior associates in Chicago, our client is now able to permanently live in peace in the United States.

We are continuing our pro bono collaborations with firm clients in 2022. In addition to immigration work, we will be expanding our collaborations to include expungement work on behalf of low-income clients whose long-ago convictions have prevented them from maximizing their participation in the workforce.

Recognition From a Pro Bono Partner



CARE USA created a [video](#) thanking its pro bono legal partners, including Dentons, and discussing the value of pro bono legal service to its mission. Dentons has provided crucial transactional assistance; helped to develop and support humanitarian programs, such as the Social Impact Fund (our largest project with CARE in 2021); and advised on complex matters involving employment, government investigations, litigation, real estate, regulatory compliance, tax and venture technology

Inclusion and Diversity Diversifying Senior Leadership Through Sponsorship

In January, Dentons launched the 2022–23 US Emerge Sponsorship Program, one of our most significant efforts to advance diverse, women and LGBTQ+ lawyers into partnership and leadership. The award-winning 18-month program pairs sponsors and protégés from across the US Region who will work together to pursue opportunities for business development and for personal and professional growth.

Past Emerge participants built and branded new practice areas, obtained new clients and matters, grew their networks and meaningfully increased billable hours. We are confident that the new Emerge cohort will carry on that success, while advancing our strategic imperative of fostering a diverse and inclusive Firm that also reflects the expectations of our clients.

OTHER TOOLS IN OUR DEI TOOLKIT

Dentons has a wide range of other resources and initiatives that are helping us become the world's most inclusive law firm:

- The **Allyship Playbook** discusses the importance of allyship to all of us and to our clients; the role of allyship as part of the broader diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) agenda; the personal experiences and perspectives of colleagues from around the world; and practical advice and guidance on how to be an effective ally.
- The **Global Women's Sponsorship Pilot** is a 12-month program designed to enhance women's access to client opportunities, raise the profile of women colleagues and embed a culture of sponsorship and accountability for women's advancement across the Firm.



- **Ensuring the Inclusive Allocation of Firmwide Matter Credits** is a program that shares best practices for allocating credits to boost participation of diverse colleagues—not only an important part of our DEI strategy, but also increasingly an imperative for current and prospective clients.
- The **WOW (Women of the World) Legal Program** brings together voices from both in-house teams and from across the broader business community in a global network of mutual support and learning. More than 1,400 people from more than 40 countries have signed up to participate so far, while many clients have joined our WOW global webinar series to profile leading women and explore career development topics. Click [here](#) to register for our WOW Program.
- Our **Inclusion Advisory Council** welcomed 25 new members this year, joining 30 council alums in sharing their thoughts and ideas to help us continue building greater firmwide understanding and engagement. The council meets quarterly alongside our Inclusion and Diversity Leadership Council, providing input and guidance on the direction and effectiveness of our firmwide efforts.

Disability Awareness Month

Dentons acknowledged Disability Employment Awareness Month with a firmwide event hosted by the Disability/Accessibility Affinity Group. Guest speaker Kate Nash, the founder and CEO of PurpleSpace, a networking and professional development hub for disabled employees, network and resource group leaders and allies, led a discussion about the future of disability inclusion and the role of storytelling to increase disability awareness in the workplace. She also discussed the about the impact of COVID-19 and remote work on disability accommodation, how to talk about invisible disabilities, and the importance of recognizing mental health as a disability category.



Recognizing the Economic Contribution of the Disabled

The Firm participated in #PurpleLightUp, a global movement that celebrates and draws attention to the economic contribution of the world's 386 million disabled employees. As major landmarks all over the world were lit up in purple in honor of the day, members of our own community participated by sending in photos of their purple attire, purple holiday decorations and even purple hair.



Native American Heritage Month

In observance of Native American Heritage Month, we spotlighted our Native American Law and Policy practice, ranked Band 1 by *Chambers USA* and Tier 1 by the *Legal 500 US* in 2021. The team helps tribal governments navigate Congress, federal agencies and the courts to protect their treaty and sovereign rights and to help further their governmental and economic development goals. Key service areas include treaty rights protection, land acquisition, Indian gaming, litigation/dispute resolution, environmental law and tribal governance, among others.

Also, our Native American Affinity Group, chaired by Washington, DC, Federal Regulatory and Compliance associate **Maurisa Bell**, moderated a panel discussion exploring the experiences of Native students entering law school and higher education, the push to increase the number of Natives applying for clerkships, mentorship opportunities and other ways to support Native students and professionals. Maurisa was joined by Helen Padilla, executive director of the American Indian Law Center, and Victoria Parker, a member of the Western Shoshone Tribe, former military police officer and law clerk for the Hon. Judge Donald Harris, and Jeremy Aliason, a lawyer and mentor with the Arizona State University Pathway to Law Initiative.



Black History Month



Dentons celebrated Black History Month with a special program hosted by our Black Professional Alliance (BPA) Affinity Group. Author, musician and screenwriter James McBride led a lively conversation about how his personal identity and life experiences have shaped his worldview and artistic perspective. He also discussed the importance of intersectionality in our cultural and political conversations and the power of storytelling as a universal skill across industries. McBride's landmark memoir, *The Color of Water*, which describes his family history and his relationship with his mother, a Jewish immigrant from Poland, has sold millions of copies.



In observance of Black History Month, Dentons shareholder **J. Mason Davis** was selected by Regions Bank as its 2022 "History in Motion" honoree. Mason was honored at a reception in Birmingham, AL, attended by senior officers of the bank, local and state government officials, business and community leaders, and his friends and family. "History in Motion" celebrates the accomplishments of African Americans who have made history and the contributions they've made to our communities and nation. Previous honorees include Representative John Lewis and former US District Judge for the Northern District of Alabama Judge U.W. Clemon.

Accolades



The Leadership Council on Legal Diversity (LCLD) has once again named Dentons a "2021 Top Performer and Compass Award" winner. Dentons has been named a Top Performer for six consecutive years and has won a Compass Award for two consecutive years.



Dentons has been named to the Human Rights Campaign Foundation's 2022 Corporate Equality Index (CEI) for the 10th consecutive year.



Dentons Durham Jones Pinegar has received its 2022 certification from Utah Center for Legal Inclusion.

Dentons Delivers

Gift of the Drummer

Each year, Dentons participates in the “Gift of the Drummer” program around the holidays. Run by Catholic Community Services and Refugee Relief, GOTD provides gifts to refugee families who are trying to assimilate into our communities. The gifts are typically in the form of clothing and schooling needs. This year, the **Salt Lake City** office was able to donate gifts for over 25 children along with additional items, which will be used in new refugee welcome kits.



Spreading ‘Legacy Love’

Chicago colleagues spruced up the staff lounge at Legacy Charter School, including colorful decorations, tasty treats and an interactive message board. The volunteers created an atmosphere appropriate for the theme “Legacy Love,” coined by the school principal, to brighten the lounge during February.



Can Play is a nonprofit organization that provides development and recreational programs to children and adults with financial, physical, cognitive, or emotional needs. On February 25, a Dentons team from Des Moines that included **Beth Katz Coonan, Spencer Willems, Mike Richards, Sean Raisch** and **Amy Sue Montgomery** experienced play from a different perspective—3-on-3 wheelchair basketball..



Retirements

Please join us in thanking and congratulating 14 colleagues who announced their retirement since January 2021. A few of these colleagues will remain active with the Firm in new capacities, while others will turn attention to their next chapters. All have played integral roles in Dentons' success and the success of our clients and colleagues.

Jana Cohen Barbe was the first woman appointed to Dentons' Global Board; the Firm's first global vice chair appointed from the US Region; and the first woman to chair our Real Estate practice and Financial Institutions sector. A foremost authority on low-income housing tax credits, she founded the Tax-Oriented Investments practice and grew it into one of the Firm's largest groups. She retired after 26 years with the Firm.

Chuck Cohen, co-founder of Cohen & Grigsby (now Dentons Cohen & Grigsby) concentrated over his 50 year career on matters of corporate governance, securities regulation of capital formations and business combinations. He was also a dedicated member of the faculties of the University of Pittsburgh School of Law, Ave Maria School of Law, Duquesne University Law School and West Virginia University School of Law. He retired after more than 40 years with the Firm.

FT (Tread) Davis provided constitutional and business counsel and litigation services to boards of public companies and their special committees, owners and managers of closely held businesses and their estates, and nonprofit organizations. His practice concentrated on corporate, family business, estate planning and First Amendment law. He retired after 35 years with the Firm.

Kent Herink provided patent application services to clients in biological sciences sector, with a particular emphasis in the corn and soybean seed industries. His career tracked the sector's dramatic evolution from largely conventional cross-breeding and little or no statutory protections to present day genetic transformation techniques. In the area of mechanical inventions, subject matter included agricultural harvesting and processing equipment, building and construction systems, medical devices, and carbon tracking and sequestration. He retired after 40 years with the Firm.

Ralph Kelley, a member of the Trusts, Estates and Wealth Preservation practice, advised high net worth individuals and families, as well as their related businesses, on sophisticated estate planning, estate administration and tax work. He recently authored his memoirs, *Engineer - Navigator - Lawyer*, documenting a career that included working on an Alaskan dairy farm and serving with the US Air Force in Japan. He retired after 20 years with the Firm.

Stan Landfair counseled companies in the chemicals, aerospace, electronics and other manufacturing industries on environmental compliance matters, and represented them in environmental enforcement proceedings and other litigation matters in administrative forums, state and federal courts and the US Supreme Court. A recognized authority on the Toxic Substances Control Act, the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act, the California's Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act (Proposition 65) and their analogs in other countries, he retired after 38 years with the Firm.

John Leslie, a member of the Energy and Climate Change practices and managing partner of the San Diego office, concentrated on energy regulatory litigation, with a particular focus on natural gas and electricity issues. He represented energy producers, consumers and marketing and trading companies in proceedings before state and federal agencies, including in connection with the development and refinement of regulatory structures for renewable energy procurement and alternative resource development. He retired after 35 years with the Firm.



Jason Maschmann, a member of the Litigation and Dispute Resolution practice, defended clients in complex, high-dollar commercial litigation matters, with an emphasis on the defense of consumer class actions. He successfully defended insurers, agricultural concerns, retailers, consumer reporting agencies and real estate companies in breach-of-contract claims, non-compete agreements, partnership disputes, product liability, state law fraud and negligence claims, and consumer protection statutes. He retired after 12 years with the Firm.

Patrick Moran, a former chair of our US Real Estate practice, handled a wide variety of commercial real estate and related financing matters, with focus on leasing, development and finance; secured construction and term loans; and unsecured revolving credit loans to REITs and other real estate companies. He represented developers in venture formation, financing and leasing of major projects; worked with landlords and tenants in the leasing of more than 20 million square feet of office space. He retired after 45 years with the Firm.

Dick Mosher, a member of our Litigation and Dispute Resolution practice, handled arbitrations, mediations, cross-border commercial transactions, intellectual property licensing and protection, civil and criminal litigation, regulatory and environmental compliance, employment and labor law matters, M&A and strategic alliances, insurance coverage disputes, and security law, captive insurance, charter schools and international business issues. He retired after four and a half years with the Firm.



Kevin Pinegar, founder and a former CEO and Chairman of Durham Jones & Pinegar (now Dentons Durham Jones Pinegar), focused on advising business and corporate management, leadership and general counsel in business transactions, corporate governance and compliance matters and securities offerings and regulatory issues, including periodic reporting under federal securities laws. He retired after 28 years with the Firm.

George Skibine, a counsel in the Public Policy and Regulation and Native American Law and Policy practices, advised clients of all aspects of the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act, especially in the areas of class III gaming compacts, revenue allocation plans for the distribution of per capita payments and provisions pertaining to gaming on newly acquired lands. An enrolled member of the Osage Nation of Oklahoma, George was extensively involved in the federal acknowledgment process, contracting under the Indian Self-Determination Act, compacting under the Tribal Self-Governance Act, the land-into-trust process, and tribal government matters. He retired after 10 years with the Firm.

Bill Timmons, a former co-chair of our US Real Estate practice, represented lenders in a wide range of financing transactions, including construction, permanent and revolving credit loans, and the closing of more than \$20 billion in syndicated secured and unsecured revolving credit and term loans to REITs and other real estate companies. He also advised on senior and subordinated debt structures, including mezzanine loans and first-loss participations, and represented institutions, developers and corporations in acquiring, developing, financing and disposing of properties. He retired after 37 years with the Firm.

Margaret Van Houten provided tax-effective estate planning to business owners, farmers, executives and professionals and also assisted with retirement planning and complex trust and estate administration matters. She chaired the Iowa State Bar Association Probate and Trust Law Section's Power of Attorney Act Drafting Committee, which resulted in the 2014 passage of the Iowa Uniform Power of Attorney Act. She retired after 14 years with the Firm.

Lem Ward advised clients on matters of state and local government law, particularly in the areas of zoning and land use, transportation, infrastructure financing, public-private partnerships, municipal real estate transactions and economic development. Prior to Dentons, he spent 20 years in the City of Atlanta Law Department, including as chief counsel. He retired after six years with the Firm.

In Memoriam



Jeff Baker, a litigation lawyer in the Des Moines office passed away unexpectedly on January 7 at the age of 61. A graduate of Winona State University and Drake University Law School, Jeff was a trial lawyer primarily focused on workers' compensation. "I had the great pleasure of working with Jeff over the course of the past several decades," recalls a colleague. "While he was certainly a very talented attorney, he was an even greater person. I don't ever remember Jeff being in a bad mood and his laugh was so infectious."



Ira Roxland, a former Dentons partner resident in the New York office passed away on February 4 at the age of 78. A graduate and active alumnus of New York University School of Law (LL.M.), Cornell Law School (JD) and Columbia University (AB), Ira was a revered and respected lawyer and mentor for over 47 years. He practiced in the areas of Corporate, Mergers and Acquisitions, Competition and Antitrust, and Securities and Corporate Finance. A longtime pro bono attorney, Ira was an active member of the Lawyers Alliance and the Council of New York Law Associates.



Carl Salans, one of the original three founders of Dentons' legacy firm Salans, passed away on October 20, 2021, at the age of 88. Educated at Harvard University, Cambridge University and the University of Chicago, Carl went on to a highly successful career in the Office of the Legal Advisor at the US State Department, where he worked from 1959 to 1972. There he rose to the position of Deputy Legal Advisor, one of the top roles within that office, serving in that capacity from 1966 to 1972. During that period, he advised on many of the most sensitive geopolitical issues of the times, including advising on the Pentagon Papers matter; advising US delegations in some of the highest profile international negotiations, including the Geneva conference on the neutrality of Laos and the Vietnam Peace Talks; and participating in multiple international treaty negotiations, including as head of the US delegation to the UNESCO Conference which established the World Heritage Convention. After leaving the State Department in 1972, he joined the Samuel Pizar law firm in Paris, where he met Eliane Heilbronn and Jeffrey Hertzfeld, with whom he would, six years later, establish Salans Hertzfeld & Heilbronn, later renamed Salans. In 2013, Salans combined with Fraser Milner Casgrain and SNR Denton to form global law firm Dentons.