

Appellate and Supreme Court

As appellate specialists, we partner with trial teams inside and outside our firm to develop successful legal strategies and present compelling arguments in our clients' most important trials and appeals.

And we are among the best at what we do. *Chambers USA* (2026) recognizes us as "a market leader" and describes our team as having "top-flight appellate talent." Additionally, we are one of only three firms to earn the highest ranking, Band 1, for Texas appellate litigation in the *Chambers USA* guide.

That is no accident. We have earned those accolades and the trust of our clients through decades of dedicated client service, seamless collaboration with trial lawyers, and briefs that are hard to ignore. We have delivered precedent-setting victories in bet-the-company appeals across a wide variety of subject matters. And we have earned the respect of judges across the country along the way. While we litigate cases from coast to coast, our practice is especially strong in these forums:

Texas/Fifth Circuit Our foundation is litigation in Texas state and federal courts. Many of our appellate lawyers have clerked at the Fifth Circuit or the Texas Supreme Court (or both), and we've led countless appeals in those courts and other Texas intermediate appellate courts. For any civil appeal in Texas or the Fifth Circuit, there's a good chance we've been there and done that.

U.S. Supreme Court Our team handles cases at the highest level of the judiciary—often against elite practice groups from the country's largest firms—and we routinely win. We've had eight merits cases in the Supreme Court in the past five Terms and secured multiple wins in business disputes—a uniquely strong national record. Litigation before the Supreme Court is not like litigation before any other tribunal. There is an art and a science to crafting a winning cert. petition, striking the right notes in a brief in opposition, coordinating a powerful amicus campaign, lobbying the Solicitor General effectively, and building merits briefing that resonates with the Court. Our experience creates advantages that others miss. And we are often retained in the courts of appeals to position cases for the Court—whether to maximize or minimize the odds of further review.

Federal Circuit Our group also boasts a top-notch Federal Circuit appellate practice, adept at handling appeals from both district courts and the Patent Office on defining questions of law. The group is led by [Debbie McComas](#)—the #1 Best Performing Federal Circuit Attorney according to *Patexia's CAFC Intelligence Report* (2025)—and is stocked with lawyers who clerked at the Federal Circuit and in trial courts with active patent dockets.

A primary reason for that strong record is our deep bench of talented lawyers. We have one of the largest full-time appellate teams of any firm in Texas, with experience in hundreds of appeals across the country. Our lawyers have clerked at the U.S. Supreme Court, the Fifth Circuit, the Federal Circuit, the Texas Supreme Court, and other courts at every level of the judiciary.

Like any strong group, the standard for excellence starts at the top, with three legends of the Texas appellate bar—[Nina Cortell](#), [Lynne Liberato](#), and [Mike Hatchell](#)—each of whom has received the Texas Bar Foundation's prestigious [Gregory S. Coleman Outstanding Appellate Lawyer Award](#) (in 2015, 2016, and 2019). Our group also stands out for having outstanding appellate lawyers in every generation. Yet our strength extends far beyond a handful of marquee names. The 2026 *Chambers USA* directory recognizes nine members of our appellate team across multiple ranking

categories, from Senior Statespeople to Up and Coming lawyers, underscoring the exceptional depth of our appellate bench and the continuity of excellence across generations.

Another differentiator is our group's ability to jump in and contribute long before the appeal, when the case is still in the trial court. What we bring to the table there is often as important as what we do on appeal. Through a laser-focused approach to shaping litigation strategy, preserving error, crafting and arguing the jury charge, and preparing all manner of legal briefing, our appellate lawyers can help you achieve your goals in the trial court—or at least make sure that an adverse result is well-positioned for reversal on appeal. To assist in that work, we use [cutting-edge empirical studies](#) we conceived and conducted to evaluate the likely outcome of the appeal and guide our trial and appellate strategy.

For all these reasons and so many more, our Appellate Practice Group is here to help with your most important trials and appeals.

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