

Sungaila in The National Law Journal, Law.com: Oral Arguments Disappear in Federal Appeals Courts

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The National Law Journal quoted Haynes Boone Partner M.C. Sungaila in a recent article on the drop in oral arguments at the federal appellate level and what that decline means for parties and their lawyers.

Here is an excerpt of the article:

Some in the circuit courts themselves have acknowledged that problem and have sought to create opportunities for newly minted lawyers to handle appeals. Haynes Boone's Sungaila helped head up an American Bar Association litigation section subcommittee that put together a comprehensive guide to the pro bono opportunities available at each of the circuit courts—opportunities that often lead to the chance to argue. While larger circuits tend to have highly organized and competitive processes for choosing pro bono counsel in certain cases, some smaller circuits keep informal lists of individual lawyers and firms who have reached out by letter to the chief judge to express interest in helping out pro bono when needed.

Sungaila's home circuit, the Ninth Circuit, refers cases to pro bono counsel in immigration and pro se matters that staff lawyers and judges flag as presenting significant legal issues. "They're not saying they're winners, but they do identify that this has a meaty issue and that 'We would benefit from having counsel on both sides,'" Sungaila said.

Sungaila, who also teaches a Loyola Law School appellate clinic, singled out a Ninth Circuit program that allows student law clinics to handle pro bono appeals. She said her students at Loyola argued at the same April session as those from University of Nevada, Las Vegas and University of California, Irvine clinics. Such programs, she admits, require a "pretty robust effort on the staff attorney side" that smaller circuits might not be able to invest.

To read the full article, click [here](#). (Subscription required)

Sungaila was also featured in *Law.com's* Legal Speak podcast discussing the future of the appellate practice.

To listen to the full podcast, click [here](#).