



Christopher George Oprison

Partner

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Christopher Oprison is an experienced trial attorney and litigator, handling high profile and high-stakes litigation and appeals. Christopher focuses his practice on white collar criminal defense, healthcare fraud defense, and complex commercial litigation matters. He represents and counsels US and international corporations and individuals in connection with civil and criminal litigation matters, government investigations, healthcare fraud and issues arising under the False Claims Act (FCA), Foreign Corrupt Practices Act (FCPA), and Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC).

- Litigation, Arbitration and Investigations
- Healthcare

Christopher also represents clients in Congressional probes, in complex matters before federal and state courts and administrative agencies and frequently defends individual and corporate clients in connection with Department of Justice and Securities and Exchange Commission investigations and litigation. Christopher has handled high profile false advertising and false endorsement matters arising under the Lanham Act. He also assists clients with corporate compliance matters, conducting internal investigations on behalf of public company boards and audit committees.

Christopher is dedicated to veterans issues and provides a substantial amount of pro bono legal services to active duty, reservist and retired veterans of the armed services. He served as lead trial defense counsel for one of the Marine Corps' most notable general courts-martial cases in recent years and has been identified as a "recommended attorney" by a nonprofit organization dedicated to providing legal defense services to servicemembers facing the most serious war crimes. Christopher also provides pro bono legal services to protect the rights of injured veterans suffering post-traumatic stress disorder and traumatic brain injury from adverse treatment and discrimination.

Before joining DLA Piper, Christopher was a partner in a leading Miami-based law firm and litigation counsel at a leading global Wall Street-based law firm. From 2006-2008, Christopher served in the White House Counsel's Office as an Associate Counsel and Special Assistant to President George W. Bush where he handled hundreds of Congressional investigations directed at the President and Executive Agencies which implicated White House equities. Some of the more high profile investigations for which Christopher was responsible on behalf of the Counsel's office included the US Attorneys firings, the investigation and later prosecution of former New York City Police Commissioner Bernard Kerik, the alleged use of campaign email accounts by political advisors in the White House, compliance with the Presidential Records Act, the invocation of Executive Privilege by the President, and multiple records lawsuits directed at the White House and executive agencies.

Earlier in his career, Christopher held clerkships for the late-Judge Fred I. Parker of the US Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit (2002-2003), and then-Chief Judge Terrence W. Boyle of the US District Court for the Eastern District of North Carolina (1997-1998). He also served in the United States Marine Corps as a Judge Advocate/Prosecutor (1998-2002) prosecuting hundreds of the most serious felony crimes under the Uniform Code of Military Justice, including more than 30 contested bench and jury trials.

Christopher has also appeared on Fox News, CNN, the Blaze TV and various radio talk shows discussing a variety of legal, political and military issues.

EXPERIENCE

REPRESENTATIVE HIGH PROFILE LITIGATION, APPEAL AND INVESTIGATION MATTERS:

- The former Chief Financial Officer of Dewey & LeBoeuf in an appeal from a criminal conviction in New York Supreme Court for Scheme to Defraud in the First Degree, Securities Fraud in violation of the New York State Martin Act, and Conspiracy in the Fifth Degree. *See People of the State of New York v Joel Sanders*, Ind. No. 773/2014 (Supreme Court of the State of New York, County of New York: Part 72)
- The former Chief Financial Officer of Dewey & LeBoeuf in defending securities fraud charges brought by the SEC. *See SEC v. Joel Sanders, et al*, 14-cv-1528 (VEC) (SDNY 2014)
- Commercial developer in a hotly contested suit to invalidate the election of two non-qualifying candidates for Board of Supervisors for Midtown Miami Community Development District, and defense of Anti-SLAPP counterclaims. Awarded preliminary and permanent injunctive relief invalidating the election and obtaining dismissal of Anti-SLAPP counterclaims. *See DDR Miami Avenue, LLC v. Grant Stern, et al*, Case No. 2016-031254-CA-01 (11th Judicial Circuit)
- Thirty-two successful fashion, lingerie and former playmate models in the Southern District of Florida in claims for false advertising and false endorsement under the Lanham Act, civil theft, right of publicity, deceptive and unfair trade practices, defamation and defamation per se stemming from the unauthorized use and alteration of each model's photographic image in advertisements for events at a Miami swinger/sex club. Defeated motions to dismiss and later obtained summary judgment on liability. *See Jaime Faith Edmondson, et al v. Velvet Lifestyles, LLC, et al*, Case No. 1:15-cv-24442-Lenard/Goodman (SD Fla 2015)
- Seventeen successful fashion, lingerie and former playmate models in claims for false advertising and false endorsement under the Lanham Act, civil theft, right of publicity, deceptive and unfair trade practices, defamation and defamation per se stemming from the unauthorized use and alteration of each model's photographic image in advertisements for events at a Tampa-based swinger/sex resort. *See Jaime Faith Edmondson, et al v. Caliente Resorts, LLC, et al*, Case No. 8:15-cv-02672-SDM-TBM (MD Fla 2015)
- Nineteen successful fashion, lingerie and former playmate models in claims for false advertising and false endorsement under the Lanham Act, civil rights violations under New York state law, defamation and defamation per se, and negligence stemming from the unauthorized use and alteration of each model's photographic image in advertisements for events at a New York-based adult entertainment club. *See Jessica Burciaga, et al. v. CJ NYC d/b/a New York City Gentlemen's Club, et al*, Case No.: 15-cv-06181-NG-SMG (ED NY 2015)
- Spokesmodel from longest running daytime game show, The Price is Right, in threatened litigation for breach of contract and related claims. Aggressive response resulted in claimant dropping threat of litigation
- Major League Baseball franchise in connection with investigation by the Department of Justice of agents accused and later convicted of smuggling Cuban baseball players into the United States
- Pro bono representation of a medically-retired Iraqi war veteran with post-traumatic stress disorder and traumatic brain injury in discrimination claim against Lee County, Florida hotel and hotel owner who denied accommodations at the hotel due to service animal. *See Jason Allen White, et al. v. Vinit Patel, a/k/a Chandrakat Patel, et al.*, Case No. 2017 CA 000146
- Pro bono representation of international fraternity in trademark and trade dress infringement litigation against prominent university and cooperative membership organization. Following dispositive motions rulings, obtained a favorable settlement on behalf of the international fraternity. *See Theta Chi Fraternity, Inc. v. Leland Stanford Junior University Board of Trustees, et al.*, Case No. 16-cv-01336-RMW (ND Cal. 2016)
- Pro bono representation a Marine squad leader charged with murder, conspiracy and obstruction of justice after allegedly orchestrating and attempting to cover up the 2006 shooting of an Iraqi civilian in the Iraqi province of Hamdania. Served as lead trial counsel in the general court-martial and presently coordinating the appeal to the Navy-Marine Court of Criminal Appeals. *See US v. Sgt Lawrence Hutchins, USMC* 2014)
- A Department of Defense contractor and affiliated entity in an investigation by the Department of Justice into alleged violations of the

False Claims Act stemming from allegations that company submitted erroneous incurred cost submissions and requests for provisional rates in accordance with the Federal Acquisition Regulations and violated relevant Cost Accounting Standards. Following an extensive investigation, the Department declined to intervene in the *qui tam* relator's lawsuit. In the ensuing litigation, the court granted the motion to dismiss with prejudice and dismissed the False Claims Act claims. See *US ex rel Turner v. KForce Government Solutions, et al*, 8:13-cv-1517-T-36TBM (MD Fla. 2013)

- A Royal Bank of Scotland foreign desk trader in connection with the ISDAFIX investigation by the Commodities Futures Trading Commission. After an extensive investigation, the Commission opted not to proceed with its investigation against the client trader
- *Whale Wars* star and 35-year leader of the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society in negotiating and helping to coordinate his re-entry into the United States following the issuance of Interpol "Red Notice"
- The late-Ambassador Anthony Marshall, son of Brooke Astor and heir to the estate, in the medical parole application following his conviction and brief period of incarceration. Obtained an unprecedented release under New York's Medical Parole statute after serving only two months of a one-year prison term, against strong opposition from the Manhattan District Attorneys' office
- A Washington, DC lobbyist and former chief of staff to a member of Congress in connection with a grand jury investigation led by the Department of Justice and the FBI into allegations of kickbacks and honest services fraud. Following an extensive investigation, the Department declined to proceed with criminal charges
- A multi-national airline company and its parent corporation in connection with a federal grand jury investigation into allegations that it falsified aircraft maintenance records. Following an extensive investigation, the Department of Justice declined to proceed with criminal charges and closed the investigation
- One of the largest title insurance companies in the United States in connection with a criminal and civil investigation by the New York Attorney General's Office into allegations of improper payments of referral fees in violation of New York state anti-rebating statutes. After an extensive investigation, a favorable outcome was obtained on behalf of the company
- A national accounting firm in connection with tax shelter-related issues, including defense of a civil suit against the firm by various indicted partners seeking advancement of attorney's fees
- A national accounting firm in connection with civil suits by international re-insurance carriers for fraud and auditor malpractice. Successfully achieved a favorable outcome was obtained on behalf of the firm
- Two separate natural gas suppliers in connection with a national price-fixing investigation by the Commodities Futures Trading Commission. Achieved a favorable outcome on behalf of both suppliers

REPRESENTATIVE HEALTHCARE-RELATED LITIGATION AND INVESTIGATIONS

- A radiation technology manufacturer in connection with an investigation by the Department of Justice into alleged violations of the False Claims Act
- An anesthesiology group in threatened litigation for alleged breach of the anesthesia services agreement
- A prominent physicians practice in litigation against a hospital for breach of the hospital bylaws and credentials policy for restricting the admitting and treating privileges
- A spine center in an investigation by the Department of Justice and Department of Labor involving alleged violations of the False Claims Act, as well as Anti-Kickback and Stark law violations
- A prominent treatment center providing CyberKnife radiation therapy in defending against claims for tortious interference and breach of contract by a serial litigant and disruptive physician, defeating the claimant's emergency motion for temporary and permanent injunctive relief
- A large regional hospital in an internal investigation in response to alleged violations of the False Claims Act, as well as Anti-Kickback and Stark law violations
- A regional, mid-western hospital system in responding to a grand jury subpoena
- A radiation oncology treatment center in an investigation by the Department of Justice into alleged violations of the False Claims Act, as well as Anti-Kickback and Stark law violations. The Department declined to intervene in any lawsuit against the center and the *qui tam* relator has not pursued the matter against the center
- A surgery center in an investigation by the Department of Justice into alleged violations of the False Claims Act, as well as Anti-Kickback and Stark law violations. The Department declined to intervene in any lawsuit and the *qui tam* relator dismissed the center from its complaint
- A large medical device company in an investigation by the Department of Justice into alleged violations of the False Claims Act. Following an extensive investigation, the Department declined to intervene in any lawsuit and terminated its investigation

- A parent holding company of one of the largest healthcare systems in the United States and several of its affiliated hospitals in an investigation and later litigation by the Department of Justice and *qui tam* relator for alleged violations of the False Claims Act in connection with claims made under a state's Medicaid program
- A hospital affiliated with one of the largest healthcare systems in the United States in a state class action
- An international manufacturer and supplier of wound care products in connection with an investigation by the Department of Justice into alleged violations of the False Claims Act stemming from two related *qui tam* actions alleging fraudulent billing of Medicare. Following an extensive investigation, the Department declined to intervene in the lawsuit. The federal court subsequently dismissed all fraud-based claims brought by both *qui tam* relators

CREDENTIALS

Admissions

- District of Columbia
- Florida
- Texas
- Virginia

Prior Experience

- Associate Counsel and Special Assistant to President George W. Bush (2006-2008)
- Law Clerk to the Honorable Fred I. Parker, US Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit, (2002-2003)
- United States Marine Corps, Judge Advocate/Prosecutor (1998-2002)
- Law Clerk to the Honorable Terrence W. Boyle (then Chief Judge), US District Court for the Eastern District of North Carolina (1997-1998)

Recognitions

- The George T. Kilavos Alumni Award from Theta Chi National Fraternity for Meritorious Service to the Fraternity stemming from significant pro bono litigation.
- Pro Bono Service Award (2016)
- Navy/Marine Corps Commendation Medal
- "Outstanding Trial Advocacy Award" from the Association of Trial Lawyers of America (Naval Justice School)
- "Award for Trial Advocacy" from the New York Bar Association on Military Affairs and Justice (Naval Justice School)
- Honor Graduate, Marine Corps Officer Candidates School, Quantico, Virginia

Education

- J.D., George Washington University Law School 1997
with honors
National Moot Court Team
- B.A., Political Science, University of California, Los Angeles 1994
with honors

Courts

- Supreme Court of the United States
- Supreme Court of Virginia
- Texas Supreme Court

- United States Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit
- United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia
- United States District Court for the Middle District of Florida
- United States District Court for the Southern District of Florida
- United States District Court for the Northern District of Florida
- United States Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces
- United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit

Memberships

- Board of Trustees, Marine Corps University Foundation: General Counsel, Audit and Executive Committee member (2006, 2008-present)
- Board of Directors and Executive Committee member, Library of Virginia: Appointed in 2013 to a five-year term by former Virginia Governor Robert F. McDonnell
- Member of the Special Committee on Lawyer Malpractice Insurance, Virginia State Bar: Appointed in 2013 to a five-year term by the state bar president

Civic and Charitable

- Board of Directors, Beta Alpha Alumni Association of Theta Chi Fraternity (UCLA) (2015-present)

INSIGHTS

Publications

- "Board of Director and Audit Committee Issues," Chapter 21, *The General Counsel's Guide to Government Investigations*, Government Investigations and Civil Litigation Institute (2019 ed.)
- "Board of Director and Audit Committee Issues," Chapter 21, *The General Counsel's Guide to Government Investigations*, Government Investigations and Civil Litigation Institute (2018 ed.)
- "Board of Director and Audit Committee Issues," Chapter 21, *The General Counsel's Guide to Government Investigations*, Government Investigations and Civil Litigation Institute (2017 ed.)

Events

- Co-Presenter, "Understanding and Navigating DOJ's Guidance on Individual Accountability," Florida Hospital Association Webinar, January 14, 2016
- Speaker, "Taking it to the Feds – Going on the Offense in Government Investigations and Prosecutions," *Litigation: Management or Mayhem? You Choose*, October 2014

NEWS

DLA Piper team wins preliminary injunction blocking Florida's social media "deplatforming" law

1 July 2021

DLA Piper obtained a preliminary injunction yesterday blocking enforcement of Florida's social media "deplatforming" law.
