



Crystal Jamison Woods

Partner

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Crystal Woods has a diverse legal practice involving labor and employment and complex commercial litigation, with a primary focus on litigating disputes and counseling on matters implicating trade secrets, restrictive covenants and fiduciary duties.

She has successfully represented clients in a range of disputes before state and federal courts, administrative agencies and arbitration panels, including disputes involving enforcement of employment agreements and restrictive covenants; workplace discrimination, retaliation and harassment; wage-and-hour class and collective actions; and a variety of tort and complex contractual matters. She has significant experience defending and prosecuting high-stakes claims involving business entity separations, executive departures, and the usurpation of corporate opportunities by former high-level employees – cases that often require emergency injunctive relief. Her background in the fiduciary duty arena also includes conducting internal investigations, assisting clients in civil and criminal matters before regulatory bodies and defending shareholder derivative actions.

Crystal regularly advises companies on employment aspects of significant business transactions, including overseeing due diligence of a target's employment practices and counseling on executive employment, separation and restrictive covenant agreements. She also counsels employers on compliance with federal, state and local employment laws and regulations, and on litigation avoidance measures.

- Litigation, Arbitration and Investigations
- Class Actions
- Commercial Contracts Disputes
- Intellectual Property and Technology
- Employment

- Energy and Natural Resources
- Healthcare
- Hospitality and Leisure

- On trial team representing a private equity investment advisor and one of its portfolio company's former executive team and a competitive private equity investment advisor, based on corporate usurpation, conspiracy, breach of fiduciary duty, and misappropriation of trade secrets, in which the client was seeking in excess of \$700 million. After nine weeks of trial, on the eve of closing arguments, the case ended with a settlement, for which the clients were extremely pleased.
- Represented an insurance industry client in a multi-billion dollar securities class action, a separate multi-billion dollar receivership claim, numerous related lawsuits filed in both state and federal court, a federal multi-district litigation (MDL) processing, and appellate proceedings in the Fifth Circuit Court Appeals and the United States Supreme Court. See Chadbourne & Parke LLP, et al. v. Troice,

134 S. Ct. 1058 (2014); *Rishmague v. Winter*, 616 Fed. Appx. 138 (5th Cir. 2015)

- Defended a Texas corporation as well as its officers and directors in shareholder derivative action arising from a merger transaction and obtained full dismissal of claims
- Represented a publicly traded technology company and its board of directors in a Delaware class action arising from a US\$560 million merger transaction
- Prosecuted claims for breach of contract and misappropriation of trade secrets against a software developer who began using proprietary software developed for a specialty pharmacy in order to wrongfully compete in the specialty pharmacy industry, including obtaining a preliminary injunction
- Defended national employer in an action brought by eight former employees on behalf of themselves and others who were similarly situated asserting FLSA and various Missouri state law causes of action in connection with alleged unpaid overtime
- Represented a publicly traded waste management company and its board of directors in a nationwide shareholder class action arising from a US\$525 million merger transaction
- Counseled clients on compliance with employment agreements, including non-competition and non-solicitation provisions
- Assisted a trial team in representing a large private equity investment advisor in litigation involving fiduciary duty, shareholder derivative, defamation and contractual claims, ultimately recovering US\$2.8 million in attorney's fees for the client and a take-nothing verdict in its favour, in which the recovery sought against them was approximately US\$200 million
- Assisted a REIT in an SEC inquiry regarding marketing practices, resulting in the SEC closing the inquiry after attorney presentation; counseled the REIT in developing new policies and procedures relating to the preparation, approval and dissemination of marketing and advertising materials
- Represented an oil and gas company in an SEC investigation of embezzlement and kickbacks by the company's CEO and CFO, including interaction with the SEC
- Represented broker-dealers and investment advisors in investigations and examinations by the SEC and FINRA
- Represented 100+ financial advisors in federal court litigation arising from an alleged Ponzi scheme and in related appellate proceedings at the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals and the United States Supreme Court

CREDENTIALS

Admissions

- Texas

Recognitions

- Best Lawyers Under 40, D Magazine (2019 and 2021)
- Super Lawyers Texas Rising Star, Texas Monthly (2020)
- Super Lawyers Texas Rising Star, Texas Monthly (2018)
- Super Lawyers Texas Rising Star, Texas Monthly (2017)

Education

- J.D., Southern Methodist University School of Law 2009
cum laude
Staff Editor, *International Law Review*
- B.S., University of Texas 2005
cum laude

Courts

- United States District Court for the Eastern District of Texas
- United States District Court for the Northern District of Texas
- United States District Court for the Southern District of Texas
- United States District Court for the Western District of Texas

Memberships

- Dallas Women Lawyers Association Mentoring Circles (2020)
- Dallas Bar Association, WE LEAD (Class of 2019)
- Dallas Bar Association
- Dallas Bar Association Judiciary Committee
- Dallas Bar Association, Labor and Employment Section
- Dallas Association of Young Lawyers (DAYL)
- Vice-Chair, DAYL CLE Committee, 2011
- Chairman, DAYL Social Committee, 2012 and 2013
- Co-Chairman, DAYL Trial Skills Bootcamp, 2016-2020
- DAYL Trial Skills Bootcamp Committee, 2014-2016
- Associate Member, Patrick E. Higginbotham American Inn of Court, 2016-2017
- Women's White Collar Defense Association
- Texas Bar Foundation, Life Fellow
- Chairman, DAYL Courthouse Tour Committee, 2017

INSIGHTS

Publications

NLRB proposes new standard that will greatly expand scope of “joint employment”

13 September 2022

The NLRB's proposal effectively returns to the joint employment standard as it existed in the wake of the 2015 Browning-Ferris decision.

Governor Greg Abbott and the Texas Legislature take steps to limit employer vaccine mandates

20 October 2021

Recent developments and implications.

- "Restrictive Covenants and The Pandemic: An Altered Landscape for Employers," *DLA Piper*, (June 2, 2021)
- "The New Proposal to Expand EEO-1 Reports to Include Pay Data: What You Need to Know OutSolve Effective Affirmative Action Blog" (February 16, 2016)
- "U.S. Supreme Court Issues Two Important Securities-Law Opinions" (March 12, 2013)
- "Supreme Court to Address Fraud-on-the-Market Presumption in Federal Securities Class Actions" (June 26, 2012)
- "What to Expect in SEC Enforcement Actions" (pdf) *Financial Fraud Law Report* (May 2012)
- "SEC Enforcement Actions; A Look at 2011 and What to Expect in the Next Year" (February 28, 2012)

- "U.S. Supreme Court Limits Scope of Primary Liability Under Federal Securities Laws" (June 16, 2011)
- "Supreme Court Unanimously Rejects Fifth Circuit's Loss Causation Standard" (June 9, 2011)
- "U.S. Supreme Court to Review Fifth Circuit's Controversial Loss Causation Rules for Securities Class Actions" (pdf) *Compliance Week* (March 3, 2011)
- "Family Tradition: Cuban Policy Reform as Raul Castro Takes the Reins," *Law & Bus. Review of the Americas*, Volume 15, Issue 4

Events

Previous

US employment law update

12 October 2021 | 1:00 – 2:00 ET

Webinar

The impact of COVID-19 on employment litigation

20 May 2021 | 12:00 - 1:00 ET

The impact of COVID-19 on employment litigation

Webinar

The impact of COVID-19 on employment litigation

18 May 2021 | 12:00 - 1:00 ET

The impact of COVID-19 on employment litigation

Webinar

Force Majeure Clauses in Contracts: Drafting and Enforcing Provisions for US and International Agreements

11 May 2021

Webinar

- "Rewriting the Rules in the Age of COVID-19: Becoming a Futurist," The Woman in Law Summit Series, (June 2021)
- "Force Majeure Clauses in Contracts: Drafting and Enforcing Provisions for U.S. and International Agreements," Strafford, (May 2021)
- "Law School for the CFO," The CFO Leadership Council (February 18, 2020)
- "Effective Use of Courthouse AV Equipment," Dallas Bar Association (November 21, 2019)
- "Audio/Video Technology Bootcamp," DBA Courthouse Committee (May 17, 2017)
- "Trial Techniques Through Technology," Dallas Bar Association (March 24, 2011, August 11, 2011 and July 12, 2013)
- "Technology in the Courtroom," Solo Practitioner and Small Firm Section of the
- "Dallas Bar Association" (April 2, 2014); Ghana Delegation (June 9, 2014), Plano
- "Bar Association" (October 3, 2014)
- "Dallas County Technology Upgrade," Dallas Bar Association (October 10, 2014); Texas Trial Lawyers Association (October 22, 2014)

NEWS

Two DLA Piper lawyers listed in *D Magazine's* 2021 Best Lawyers Under 40 list

13 January 2021

Crystal Woods, a partner in DLA Piper's Employment practice, and James C. Bookhout, an associate in the firm's Litigation and Regulatory practice, were recently named to *D Magazine's* 2021 Best Lawyers Under 40 list, which recognizes outstanding young lawyers in Dallas.
