

Checking In

In this series, Practical Law Advisory Board members discuss their current work and key legal developments in their practice area.



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What do you think is currently the biggest challenge facing litigation attorneys? The coordination of multiple actions that share the same underlying conduct but involve varied procedures and applicable rules is one of the more complex aspects of large-scale litigation today. At Cravath, we are often coordinating actions with government and plaintiffs' lawyers simultaneously — even though the relationships are different and the timeline for discovery may vary between the regulatory agency action and the civil action.

As litigation has become increasingly global, we are also frequently navigating the minefield of issues and considerations that come up for clients who have matters pending across multiple jurisdictions, as there may be different priorities in cases that are in different stages of litigation around the world.

Are there any changes on the horizon that you think will significantly affect the litigation process? The increased use and availability of litigation financing, along with the potential changes in incentives that it brings, may impact the litigation process.

Litigation financing enables clients to move legal costs off of their balance sheets, allocating them to a funder that is entitled to a portion of any eventual recovery. With this type of financing, litigation is less likely to impact a corporation's quarterly profits and shareholder votes, which have been traditional considerations in a corporation's decision to litigate or settle. Additionally, litigation financing may enable a plaintiffs' class action firm to manage risk and take on more matters than it would have absent the financing.

What recent legal or market developments have significantly impacted your practice? We litigate a wide variety of cases at Cravath and regularly advise our clients on a host of subjects, including legal and market developments. One such development is an increase in securities and antitrust claims based on alleged non-compliance with statutes. For example, financial clients increasingly face claims from the various regulatory and market changes that the Dodd-Frank Act initiated. For clients in heavily regulated areas, a number of cases now have some securities or antitrust components.

How has technology affected your approach to litigating a case, including case management or discovery considerations? Although there are various new technologies to help us litigate, such as artificial intelligence-driven case research, analytics of judicial decisions, and technology-assisted discovery review, these technologies also pose challenges. For example, we now help our clients to preserve and collect increasingly varied and complex electronically stored information, including audio, video, and geo-location information from mobile devices. Cravath recognizes these shifts and continues to make significant investments to take advantage of the advancing technologies and anticipate related challenges that impact our clients.

What do you like most about your job? I love that I work on fun, cutting-edge, interesting cases involving matters that are most critical to our clients, and that I do so alongside colleagues who are extraordinary lawyers and human beings. Our litigation department includes trial lawyers with broad courtroom experience in complex litigation spanning all industries. Each of our cases provides an opportunity to use our skills, expand our knowledge base, become more well-rounded, and help clients navigate complex issues toward a successful outcome.

Why did you decide to be part of the Practical Law Litigation Advisory Board?

Practical Law provides a wide-ranging set of resources, all reflecting the latest developments across practice areas. It has a terrific network of contributors and allows lawyers to share insights as the landscape for our work continues to evolve.

What is the best career advice you ever received? Be deliberate about your career and take ownership of it. Define "success" on your own terms.

What important lessons have you learned throughout your legal career?

I have learned that any successful lawyer has made mistakes along the way. The defining moments are not the mistakes themselves, but how you respond to and recover from those mistakes. When you make a mistake, acknowledge and own up to it. Inform the relevant people, formulate a plan to correct the issue, and adjust so that you never repeat the same error.

What one piece of advice would you give to a law student considering a litigation career?

Litigation is fast-paced and requires constantly assessing new challenges, juggling priorities, adapting quickly, and putting out fires. Focus on being agile in your role, but more importantly, bring your authentic self to work and make your voice heard.

If not an attorney, what would you wish to be?

I have always loved teaching, so if not a lawyer, I would be an 11th grade English teacher or a literature professor at a state or community college. I am fortunate that Cravath invests a great deal in training and developing associates, which allows me to teach and mentor while also practicing law.