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Cravath has advised clients in
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Cravath litigators devise creative resolutions
to complex disputes, consistently pushing
beyond the “playbook” to deliver the best
results for our clients.

Cravath, Swaine & Moore LLP

Lauren Roberta Kennedy, Partner—Litigation

Lauren Roberta Kennedy is a partner in Cravath's litigation department who focuses her practice on complex civil litigation related to antitrust, contractual disputes, intellectual property, and securities.

She has been recognized on the 40 Under 40 list by Bloomberg Law and by several publications, including *Law360* as a Rising Star for Competition and *Benchmark Litigation* as a Future Star and on its 40 & Under List.

Lauren was born in Mt. Kisco, New York. She received an A.B. summa cum laude in English from Georgetown University in 2007, where she was elected to Phi Beta Kappa, and a J.D. from Columbia Law School in 2010, where she was a James Kent Scholar and a Harlan Fiske Stone Scholar. Following her graduation, she served as a law clerk to the Honorable Robert S. Smith of the New York Court of Appeals. Lauren joined Cravath in 2012 and was elected a partner in 2018.

Describe your practice area and what it entails.

I represent clients in a wide range of industries in all stages of critical litigation. In particular, I have significant trial experience in state and federal courts around the country. Broadly speaking, my practice involves working with clients who are facing business-critical litigation and then achieving the best possible outcome given their unique circumstances. Much of these outcomes are realized through litigation but also involve knowing my clients' businesses and their long-term goals inside and out so that I can provide daily counsel about how to accomplish what the client wants. In recent years, my practice has focused on antitrust, which has further deepened my appreciation for the business side of my ongoing litigation work.

What types of clients do you represent?

I have clients in the healthcare, financial services, and pharmaceutical sectors, to name a few, and I have also dedicated time to pro bono matters. Learning the ins and outs of different clients' business and litigation needs is crucial to how we handle their matters, whether or not they ultimately go to trial. I also work with a number of strategic clients who have been with the firm for years, through many different stages of their life cycle, such as Blue Cross Blue Shield. I was elected partner at a time when we represented just 1 Blue Plan in ongoing antitrust litigation, but now we represent 15 Plans as well as the Blue Cross Blue Shield

Association, and these cases make up a significant part of my daily practice.

What types of cases/deals do you work on?

More often than not, the matters brought to us by clients are pressing issues that can threaten their entire business model, and these all-hands-on-deck situations are well-served by our team-based approach here at Cravath. I am technically a generalist litigator, having trained across the entire spectrum of matters. Right now, I am doing a lot of antitrust litigation work. Being able to call upon my entire skill set and work collaboratively across the department and with colleagues in other areas of the firm really adds value to my practice and for my clients.

How did you choose this practice area?

I deliberately selected Cravath because it offered training as a generalist and because I wanted the opportunity to do complex litigation across a range of matters and industries. As an associate, I trained in the firm's rotation system; I really valued the breadth and depth of the experience I obtained by working on a team. Being a generalist in a rotation system meant that I got variety so I always felt I was learning something new while also having built-in mentors and teachers so that I felt I was prepared and able to succeed no matter what new task or issue came my way. Ultimately, Cravath's culture of collegiality and collaboration is key to finding bespoke solutions for our clients.

What is a “typical” day like and/or what are some common tasks you perform?

It runs the gamut, but I do a lot of meeting and speaking with clients. Alongside being a litigator and handling active cases—meaning, I spend a lot of time with judges, their special matters, and referees—I am also very much involved in my clients' day-to-day business activities. As a result, I spend a good amount of my time either on the phone or emailing clients, helping them not only with ongoing litigation but also their potential litigation-related business needs as well. I am also in constant communication with my associates on projects, whether that involves comments on a brief, strategizing on case discovery, or providing thoughts on a deposition outline. I find this feedback and mentorship role particularly satisfying in teaching the next generation here at the firm.

What training, classes, experience, or skills development would you recommend to someone who wishes to enter your practice area?

If you want to litigate, my recommendation is to find opportunities to practice public speaking. At its core, your job as a litigator is communication: You need to know your audience and then know how to effectively persuade that audience. This involves being able to break down and convey complex information in simple terms that anyone can understand. It also involves being comfortable hearing your own voice out loud, not simply in your head or on the written page, requiring the ability to think on your feet. These skills can be honed in a formal setting, such as in mock trial, but can also be sharpened by simply raising your hand and actively participating in class.

What is the most challenging aspect of practicing in this area?

One of the most challenging aspects of the bet-the-company litigation that our clients bring to the firm is that their core business practices are often being challenged. This means that we have to help our clients balance the realities of ongoing litigation defense with the fact that our clients are not actually in the business of litigation; they are busy meeting the needs of their own clients and customers and often play an extremely important role in their respective industries and in the U.S. economy overall. At the end of the day, we have to

achieve a favorable litigation result without disrupting the core work our client actually does.

What do you like best about your practice area?

I am constantly learning! Nothing about the work I do is cookie-cutter or one-size-fits-all. The work is challenging in the best possible way. I am constantly digging deep into the facts and learning about different industries and aspects of the U.S. economy so that I can appropriately advise and litigate on behalf of my clients. I also appreciate that with complex cases, working together on a team becomes even more important: We often have to get creative and walk paths that are not yet forged, and this sort of innovation happens best when you can bounce ideas off one another and collaborate.

What are some typical tasks that a junior lawyer would perform in this practice area?

Our litigation associates handle first drafts of documents, whether they're working on briefs, pleadings, discovery requests, talking points for clients or the court, or deposition outlines. They receive feedback and mentorship from not only partners but also other lawyers at the firm. At Cravath, our junior lawyers also get great hands-on experience as they rotate through different partner teams: They have client contact, take depositions, and appear in court. As the team members who often know the record best, junior associates are key to helping build our case and trial strategy.

What kinds of experiences can summer associates gain in this practice area at your firm?

Summer associates do substantive work that emulates what they can expect when they come back to the firm as first years. Our summers are involved in a lot of the same assignments and projects that our junior associates handle, including writing first drafts of documents, conducting legal research, and attending court hearings and depositions in a supporting role. Summer associates also participate in team and client meetings and, in this way, contribute meaningfully to case strategy. Our goal for our summer associates is that they leave with a true sense of the work they will get to do as junior lawyers at Cravath.

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