



LEADERS LEAGUE

Q&A: Cravath's new partners

What does it take to become partner at one of the world's most prestigious firms? To tie in with the launch of our 2020 Litigation guides, we asked four new litigation partners at Cravath, Swaine & Moore about their work at the firm, their general experience, and advice for up-and-coming lawyers.



Michael Addis

What was the most interesting thing you worked on as a Cravath associate, and why?

The opportunity to strategize and advocate in court for both commercial and pro bono clients in some of their most complex cases has been most interesting and fulfilling.

Being part of a skilled and passionate team that crafts courtroom arguments around a host of legal issues, ranging from standing, statute of limitations, causation and statutory and contractual interpretation, for clients as varied as financial, pharmaceutical, technology and energy companies has been a highlight of my commercial practice.

My appellate argument before the Third Circuit en banc, on behalf of an amicus curiae, has been a highlight of my pro bono practice. The question in that case was whether the error of sentencing a defendant for an aggravated crime for which there was no indictment, trial, jury instruction or conviction could be found harmless. I argued that, under Supreme Court precedent, such an error, which violated the defendant's Fifth and Sixth Amendment rights, could not be harmless. Seven months later, the Court, in a 10-3 decision, followed my analysis, vacating the defendant's sentence and remanding for resentencing.



What do you like most about working at Cravath?

While I was in law school, a partner during another firm interview asked me whether I would be at a law firm 10 years later. When I told him I didn't know, he responded that my interest in public service—as a former Teach for America teacher and intern at the Manhattan District Attorney's Office, at the Washington, D.C. U.S. Attorney's Office and at a nonprofit research institute studying the smallpox vaccine—would lead me away from a law firm within 10 years.

It is now over 11 years later, and I am very happy at Cravath. The Firm has provided me numerous opportunities to learn from phenomenal lawyers, many of whom have become mentors and friends, and has consistently supported and encouraged my pro bono practice alongside my commercial cases. I believe the reason that I am still at a law firm is because that firm is Cravath. Cravath's people, the intellectual challenge and variety of its cases, its devotion to pro bono work, and its small size and storied tradition make it unique.

What's needed to make partner at Cravath?

Passion, hard work, judgment and, above all, integrity help associates succeed at Cravath. These qualities are central to the ethos of Cravath, a firm that thrives on the wisdom and camaraderie of its lawyers and employees as it protects the rights of its clients.

Justin Clarke

What was the most interesting thing you worked on as a Cravath associate, and why?

As an associate, I worked on a series of litigations arising out of failed merger transactions. I found those cases to be both fascinating and challenging. The legal and factual issues can be very complex, the litigation schedule is typically highly expedited and the stakes are very high—both economically and, oftentimes, emotionally. They are by far the most difficult cases I can recall working on, but also some of the most interesting.

What do you like most about working at Cravath?

The people who work here—both the legal and non-legal staff—are uniformly excellent at what they do. Beyond that, it is a very warm working environment, and people are collegial and friendly. There is no internal competition—Cravath is a very collaborative atmosphere with primary focus on serving our clients.



What's needed to make partner at Cravath?

Engagement in your work and respect for the people around you. You cannot help your clients resolve their issues unless you are fully engaged by and immersed in those issues. And it is very hard to be successful in any organization unless you are respectful of the people you are working with—including their time, their opinions, their work product, etc.

Sharonmoyee Goswami

What was the most interesting thing you worked on as a Cravath associate, and why?

The most interesting case that I worked on as a Cravath associate was the Amgen biosimilar litigation against AbbVie, relating to Amgen's biosimilar drug called Amjevita. It was one of the first cases that proceeded under the Biologics Price Competition and Innovation Act (BPCIA), a relatively new regulatory pathway, and it involved the first biosimilar to the world's bestselling drug at the time, Humira.

Part of what was especially interesting about the case was the litigation and pre-litigation process under the BPCIA. Unlike a typical patent litigation, which generally starts in earnest with the filing of the complaint, the BPCIA provides for multiple pre-litigation information exchanges in a process that is sometimes colloquially known as the "patent dance." Because this case was one of the first to proceed under the BPCIA, there were many open questions about the level of detail required for each side to comply with the statute that we had to work through.

Another interesting aspect was the sheer number of patents involved. All told, there were more than 100 patents that AbbVie claimed covered Humira, including the formulation, methods of treating disease using Humira and methods of manufacturing Humira. It was fascinating to delve into the different technical areas relating to each patent family, and to decide what litigation approach we would pursue to address the volume of patents. For example, we needed to decide whether we litigate all of the patents as part of a single lawsuit, or whether we would litigate only a single patent from each family at the outset (which ended up being our strategy). We also decided to challenge certain patents through the *inter partes* review framework at the PTO.

What do you like most about working at Cravath?

One of the things I like best about being a litigator at Cravath is the breadth of experience I have gotten as an associate. Although I focus on intellectual property litigation, and so most of my time is devoted to patent, trademark and copyright litigation matters, I have delved into complex scientific issues in many other legal areas, including antitrust and environmental law. For example, when I first started at Cravath, I worked on a team for a client facing major liability relating to a Superfund site in the Midwest. As part of that team, I went to two trials and assisted with two appeals to the Seventh Circuit.



In that case, I learned how to make complex scientific concepts accessible, and how to lay the groundwork for the cross-examination of a technical expert during the expert's deposition. I have continued to use those skills that I developed as a junior associate in my work litigating patent cases.

What's needed to make partner at Cravath?

As many others have observed before me, there is no one way to make partner at Cravath. That said, I think there are steps that associates can take to improve their growth as a lawyer, which will necessarily put them in a better position to make partner. The first is take ownership of your cases as quickly as possible. Often, this means working to know as much about your case as soon as you join the team—read the key depositions, read the hot documents—and do whatever is necessary to absorb that information. If those collections of key information have not been generated, find out if it would be valuable to the team to generate that work product, and then generate them.

The second is to be extremely careful about the information that you provide in response to legal research questions and queries about the case. Sometimes you will be encouraged—even by more senior people—to provide answers quickly because of time pressures and because “the perfect is the enemy of the good.” And, obviously, there are times when there simply isn't enough time to do the comprehensive research necessary to provide the “perfect” answer. But most of the time, it is valuable to take the extra time to make sure that the answer is the very best and most correct answer that can be obtained with the information that is available to you.

[Lauren Rosenberg](#)

What was the most interesting thing you worked on as a Cravath associate, and why?

It's so difficult to choose just one “most interesting” thing I worked on as an associate. As someone who gets bored easily, what I appreciated most was that no two days were the same, and no two cases were the same. We are very fortunate that our clients trust us with their most complex litigation, and in order for us to effectively do our work, we are given this rare opportunity to learn all about the complexities of their businesses. So I was able to learn about solar technology, innovative cancer treatments, short-selling and other investment strategies, and much more. It was sometimes intimidating, but mostly it was exhilarating.

What do you like most about working at Cravath?

It's the people, hands down. I have grown tremendously—professionally and personally—from the unbelievably brilliant individuals at Cravath and continue to learn from them every day. We work closely together in relatively small teams, which fosters collegiality and cooperation. I feel fortunate to count many of my colleagues among my closest friends and mentors.



What's needed to make partner at Cravath?

Well, there is certainly no checklist or roadmap to making partner at Cravath. Our partners are quite different in many ways, which I have always appreciated. But there are certain characteristics all partners tend to share—we are a hardworking, passionate, persistent bunch with a great respect for the work we do and those we do it with. Maybe most importantly, we just weirdly love it.