

PETER M. KATSAROS

PARTNER



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PRIMARY PRACTICES

Litigation

Complex Commercial Litigation

Employment Litigation

With a national civil litigation practice spanning nearly four decades, Peter M. Katsaros has significant experience with multi-million dollar commercial, tort and employment litigation for both plaintiffs and defendants. Peter has been lead trial counsel in more than 30 trials and 16 appeals, and has managed litigation matters in high verdict countries in 20 states and the UK.

Peter's litigation practice includes experience with complex civil litigation, antitrust, breach of contract and restrictive covenant, tortious interference, business torts, fiduciary duties, fraud and misrepresentation, product liability, and defamation. He has successfully defended multiple clients against lost profits claims, protecting the businesses' best interests. Peter has also overseen several eminent domain cases and subrogation cases. Additionally, Peter has unique experience with Internet litigation and has managed several cases concerning defamation on the Internet.

Peter's litigation style has earned him commendations from both his clients and the courts. He has tried to verdict, negotiated and settled numerous cases by deploying novel legal theories, leveraging unique litigation tactics and garnering expert opinions from industry leaders. Peter's clients include large corporations, financial institutions, chemical and pharmaceutical manufacturers, insurance companies, construction companies, real estate developers and business executives and owners in diverse fields and professions.

In addition to his substantial commercial litigation practice, Peter regularly represents businesses, unions, pension funds and individuals in a variety of labor and employment litigation matters. Peter has handled claims of age, race, gender, disability, national origin and retaliation employment discrimination, pregnancy discrimination, *quid pro quo* sexual harassment, wrongful dismissal and defamation, and hostile work environment. Peter has also defended unions in many secondary boycott lost profits jury cases in federal court. He has experience litigating ERISA claims.

Additionally, he has handled professional malpractice issues involving attorneys, accounting professionals, and actuary professionals and has experience representing hospitals and physicians with the termination of physician privileges, leveraging novel legal theories on liability, damages and attorney's fees to protect his clients.

Peter is also available to mediate commercial and employment disputes.

Peter is the co-founder and principal of Speaking Legally, Inc., an Illinois MCLE consulting firm that provides public speaking skills to lawyers and professionals nationally. Additionally, he is the co-founder and principal of Speaking Freely, Inc., a provider of performance-based public speaking workshops.

Peter serves as a faculty member for the National Institute of Trial Advocacy, teaching Jury Trial Practice, Deposition Practice, Negotiation,

Mediation and Alternative Dispute Resolution. He also teaches at Northwestern University Law School as an Adjunct Professor of Trial Advocacy and Legal Ethics and has done that for thirty years. Peter's expertise in his field is widely recognized, as he has published articles on jury instructions in fraud cases and on defamation on the Internet.

REPRESENTATIVE EXPERIENCE COMMERCIAL LITIGATION

- Secured notable defense verdict from a Chicago jury in a \$31 million legal malpractice case in which a prominent patent attorney was accused of not protecting his client's interest in four patent applications to be used in international insurance transactions.
- Defense of a physician and nationally prominent medical journalist in a \$15 million defamation and tortious interference case brought by a medical laboratory claiming business interruption and lost profits.
- Conclusion of a \$30 million dollar complex commercial litigation matter in which Peter represented a California bank that had been sued for numerous business torts stemming from the sale of five loan packages and a withdrawn \$16.5 million IPO. Peter led a five member defense team in bringing the litigation to a settlement of no damages to the plaintiff bank, but rather a \$200,000 loss in attorneys' fees and expenses.
- Representation of an international chemical manufacturer in federal court litigation in a \$25 million antitrust and business torts case arising from the monopolization and conspiracy to monopolize a market for pharmaceutical intermediates. Issues of service of process and personal jurisdiction over foreign corporations headquartered in Germany and India were litigated successfully and reported in *United Phosphorus Ltd. v. Angus Chemical Co., et al.*, 43 F.Supp.2d 904 (N.D. Ill. 1999).
- Representation of an international agrochemical manufacturer in a commercial defamation case against Greenpeace involving substantial claims for construction delay damages and stock losses in an IPO, in which a settlement was reached following a six-day jury trial.
- Defense of a nationally known real estate developer in two commercial lawsuits involving alleged construction defects and fraudulent business practices in which a favorable settlement was reached following mediation.
- Defense of an international financial services company against a \$5 million lost profits claim brought by a vendor that had been terminated from a 14 year old business relationship.
- Defense of the former president of a national pharmaceutical company in a breach of fiduciary duty case tried to a jury, in which Peter won a motion for directed verdict at the close of the plaintiff's case after successfully excluding all of the plaintiff's damages evidence.
- Representation of an interstate trucking company and its principals in the defense an action for injunctive relief, breach of restrictive

- covenant, fiduciary duty and fraud.
- Representation of a national distributor of computer products in a suit against its former sales manager which involved novel theories of breach of fiduciary duties and conspiracy in the use of a confidential customer list and the pre-resignation solicitation of key sales people. A settlement of 85% of the client's business losses was secured on the eve of the jury trial.
 - Representation of a landowner in an eminent domain case brought by a public university in which a jury verdict for the landowner that exceeded the valuation of the university's three experts by \$65,000 was obtained.
 - Representation of an international pharmaceutical manufacturer in a bailment for negligence in the warehousing of medical equipment in which a successful settlement was obtained on the eve of trial.
 - Representation of a major insurance carrier in an insurance subrogation case against a television manufacturer for the fire damage to an apartment building caused by a defective television set. A six-figure settlement for the insurer was obtained on the eve of a jury trial.
 - Representation of an insurer in a subrogation action against the manufacturer of a roofing system that collapsed in which a six-figure settlement of the claim was negotiated on the eve of trial.
 - Representation of a large container manufacturer in a case involving a bailment action arising out of the destruction of a chemical inventory in a warehouse in downstate Illinois in which a six-figure settlement in favor of the plaintiff was obtained.
 - Representation of a major insurer in a case involving the jury trial of a roof collapse of a commercial building following a severe winter in northern Utah in which a six-figure verdict in favor of the plaintiff was obtained.
 - Defense of a domestic television manufacturer in a product liability case involving a fire allegedly caused by the defendant's product. The case was successfully settled on the eve of the jury trial.

LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT LITIGATION

- Settlement of a \$2.6 million age, race and retaliation discrimination case brought against one of the world's largest financial institutions and commercial banks.
- Representation of four senior police officers in an age and race discrimination case against their employer in which a \$1 million settlement was reached on the third day of a federal jury trial.
- Representation of the vice president of a software development company in a *quid pro quo* sexual harassment case in which a \$925,000 settlement was secured for the plaintiff despite the fact that the company was in its infancy and its principal product had never been completed.
- Settlement of a Title VII national origin (Mexican-American) employment discrimination claim brought against a suburban Chicago school district by its former Director of Bilingual

Education for \$650,000 on the eve of a jury trial. In the course of readying the case for trial, both the District's Superintendent and Deputy Superintendent, who had orchestrated the discrimination, were terminated.

- Settlement of a federal age discrimination case against an insurance brokerage firm for \$333,000 in which a 53-year-old, experienced account manager was terminated from her job by the Generation Y manager of this fast-growing, trend-setting company.
- Victory in four tenured teacher dismissal cases brought by Chicago suburban school districts, returning the teachers to work with all of their back pay, fringe benefits and seniority. Two of the cases were settled after appeals.
- Defense of a Chicago public school principal threatened with dismissal during a CAP (performance improvement plan), in which the CAP was ended, allowing the principal's career to proceed as planned.
- \$75,000 settlement of a defamation case against a Chicago suburban school district for a special education teacher whose supervisor authored an annual performance evaluation with false and disparaging information and then initiated a baseless performance improvement plan against the teacher.
- Settlement of a Pregnancy Discrimination Act case for a real estate manager against a real estate holding company for \$250,000 on the eve of a jury trial.
- Settlement of a sex and age discrimination/hostile working environment and defamation case for a prominent development officer against one of the most powerful lobbies in the US for \$150,000 through negotiation.
- Settlement of a sex discrimination/hostile work environment case for a university administrator against an internationally prominent university for \$110,000 through negotiation.
- Defense of a clinical psychologist for a federal agency against unjustified negative reviews, age and sex discrimination, and imminent dismissal threats. The reviews were withdrawn, discrimination ceased and the client's future employment opportunities were restored.
- Defense of a prominent union against a \$15 million lost profits claim brought by an international manufacturer of intermodal equipment, in which a directed verdict at the close of the plaintiff's case in a jury trial was secured.
- Defense of a prominent union in a \$7.5 million lost profits claim brought by a Fortune 500 manufacturer, stemming from alleged interference with the construction of a steel manufacturing machine, in which the \$7.5 million claim was reduced to a nuisance settlement.
- Independent counsel for two prominent Taft-Hartley Health and Welfare Funds in Illinois with assignments including investigation of sexual harassment allegations brought against a key management employee and investigations of breach of fiduciary duty allegations against a fund trustee.
- Representation of five Taft-Hartley pension funds in six complex commercial litigation matters (legal, accounting and actuarial

malpractice and ERISA/RICO claims) involving the recovery of four million dollars in damages in lost pension fund assets.

- Representation of an international property and casualty insurer in a major fraud/breach of contract lawsuit brought by one of the agents of the insurer in which the plaintiff was seeking millions of dollars in compensatory and punitive damages when the case went to trial. After four and a half years of litigation, the plaintiff's expert in economics was successfully barred on a Daubert motion, and an *in limine* motion prohibiting admission of plaintiff's key liability evidence was granted. The plaintiff never recovered from those losses and fell to a directed verdict at the close of the plaintiff's case. Peter then went on to defeat the plaintiff in an appeal to the West Virginia Supreme Court. He has defended this client against similar assaults by plaintiffs in New York, Alabama, Delaware, South Carolina, Louisiana and Illinois since 1990.

TORT AND PROFESSIONAL MALPRACTICE

- Victory in jury trial for a prominent Chicago patent lawyer accused of not protecting his client's ownership interest in patent applications allegedly worth \$31 million.
- Representation of a prominent, national construction firm in a case involving the "experimental" insurance policy exclusion and a rare form of cancer, in with a \$600,000 settlement was reached on the eve of a jury trial through the use of novel legal theories on liability, damages and attorney's fees, against a stop-loss carrier and a third party administrator.
- Victory in 14-day jury trial for a family of entrepreneurs and developers who sued their former lawyer for negligence and conflict of interest in failing to perform the due diligence necessary to acquire patents for a new products company.
- Settlement of a federal legal malpractice case for \$450,000 for a personal injury plaintiff, whose former lawyer had lost her case by failing to diligently prosecute it.

BAR ADMISSIONS

- State of Illinois
- U.S. District Courts for the Northern District of Illinois, Northern District of Indiana, and Delaware
- U.S. Courts of Appeals for the Seventh and Third Circuits
- U.S. Trial Bar for the Northern District of Illinois

EDUCATION

- University of Chicago and University of Illinois, J.D., 1978
- Rhodes Scholar Finalist; Stahr Award for Outstanding Undergraduate; Moffat Award for Outstanding Undergraduate in Economics; General Motors Academic Scholarship; Pi Kappa Alpha Fraternity, President
- Indiana University, B.A., Economics, *summa cum laude*, 1972
- Resolution Resources Corporation, Mediator Training, 1998

AWARDS & HONORS

- “Leading Lawyer,” Commercial Litigation, Employment Litigation, Computer and Technology Law, Leading Lawyers Network (Illinois)
- AV Preeminent®, Martindale-Hubbell

MEMBERSHIPS & AFFILIATIONS

- American Bar Association, Member
- American Association for Justice (f/k/a Association of Trial Lawyers of America), Member
- Federal Bar Association, Member
- Illinois Trial Lawyers Association, Member
- Chicago Council of Lawyers, Member
- Seventh Circuit Bar Association, Member
- University Club of Chicago, Member
- Markey-Wigmore Inn of Court, Member
- The Economic Club of Chicago, Member

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- Career Transition Center of Chicago, Board of Directors, 2013-present
- Old Irving Park Community Clinic, Board of Directors, 2011-14

PROFESSIONAL HISTORY

- Partner, Hahn Loeser & Parks LLP, 2019-present
- Partner, Golan Christie Taglia, 2009-19
- Adjunct Professor of Trial Advocacy and Legal Ethics, Northwestern University Law School, 1990-present
- Staff, Governor Dan Walker of Illinois, 1973-75; Executive Director of the Governor’s Commission on Mortgage Practices, 1973-75
- Staff, U.S. Senator Adlai E. Stevenson III of Illinois, 1972

PERSONAL

Beyond his nationally recognized legal practice, Peter is a published author – known for his two books, “Old Irving Park Literary Society” and “A Renaissance Man.” Both books, published by Berwick Court Publishing Company are collections of short stories, essays and poems that delve into parts of Chicago history, politics and the justice system. In addition to creative writing, Peter enjoys using his time outside of the office to run marathons, play tennis and enjoy the city’s theater entertainment.