



WEIL, GOTSHAL & MANGES



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From left, Jeffrey S. Klein, head of the employment litigation practice; Caroline H. Zalka, partner; David J. Lender, co-chair of the global litigation department; Jonathan D. Polkes, co-chair of the global litigation department and partners Adam B. Banks and Stacy Nettleton.

Q&A **What are some of the department's most satisfying successes of the past year and why? Not more than three days after we submitted our response for this competition, David Lender and Eric Hochstadt and their team secured one of our biggest trial wins in recent memory—a complete defense jury verdict for C&S Wholesale Grocers in an antitrust class action in Minnesota federal court. This was a rare defense win in an antitrust class trial, where the exposure was significant because of the automatic trebling of any damages.**

We also had some high-profile victories for Signet Jewelers in an employment discrimination case that

involves cutting-edge class arbitration issues, and for Showtime in a series of consumer class actions arising out of the Mayweather/McGregor boxing match. Of particular note is Jonathan Polkes's and Caroline Zalka's eve-of-trial summary judgment win for Archstone and Lehman Brothers in a \$4B investor class action in Colorado. This case emanated out of one of the largest REIT transactions in history, and involved proceedings in two Federal Circuit courts, two different state courts and three arbitrations. This win showcased the team approach we take to our most significant litigations.

In addition, we have secured a number of victories for Farmers Insurance in an industry-wide MDL

in Florida federal court involving auto body shop repair costs, and recently won a rare en banc rehearing before the Eleventh Circuit of a consolidated appeal of several component cases we defeated on motion.

A prospective client in crisis calls and asks why your team should be retained. What is your answer? We have the deepest bench in the business, one that includes top-tier talent and covers all disciplines that might be required. We have the trial and courtroom expertise necessary to tackle any dispute, but we back it up with corporate governance, restructuring and financing experience that almost always comes into play in these situations. We've been through so many of these situations, so we know how to prioritize issues and focus on the necessary ones in a proactive way. We have developed these capabilities based in large part on our trial and litigation philosophy—one focused on obtaining the most efficient, business-oriented results.

What traits do you respect most in opposing firms and lawyers? Courtesy, professionalism, pragmatism and efficiency.

What sorts of trends are you seeing in litigation, and what do you think will be the most important development in the law/legal business that

will impact your field in the next 10 years? Law firms will need to continue to focus on efficiencies as price sensitivity continues to become more pronounced. There also will continue to be significant competition for hiring the best talent. We will continue to see a significant drop-off in the number of trials taken to verdict, and concurrently, a consolidation of the top-tier trial work among a smaller number of firms. The most important development to watch over the next decade is which firms are able to develop the next generation of top trial attorneys.

What is the firm doing to ensure that future generations of litigators are ready to take the helm? We have undertaken extensive efforts to promote and advance the next generation of leadership so that our junior partners are prepared not only to manage and try cases, but also to help run a large organization. One of the core elements of our efforts is assigning senior partners to mentor junior partners on all aspects of practice, but with particular focus on client management and development, leadership and profile-raising. We also focus a lot on developing our next generation of trial lawyers in the courtroom. Critical to this is trial experience, and we have made great strides over the course of the past few years by originating opportunities for junior partners to second-chair, and in some cases first-chair, trials around the country.