



Kirstie Brenson

ASSOCIATE

Kirstie is a thoughtful, creative, and dedicated litigator who is committed to exceeding client expectations.



Industries

[AI, Metaverse & Blockchain](#)
[Family Office Services](#)
[Hospitality](#)
[Media & Entertainment](#)
[Private Companies](#)
[Sports](#)

Practices

[Communications & Technology](#)
[Complex Litigation](#)
[Private Clients, Trusts & Estates](#)

Languages

French

Education

University of Chicago, JD, 2018
The College of William & Mary, AB, 2012

Offices

[Chicago](#)

Phone

312.258.5638

Email

kirstie.brenson@afslaw.com

Kirstie concentrates her practice on the media, entertainment, and sports industries and on avoiding and resolving disputes among owners of privately held businesses. She has successfully represented clients at all stages of litigation – in state and federal trial courts, in arbitrations, and on appeal, including in the Seventh Circuit and the Illinois Supreme Court.

Kirstie puts her curiosity to work for her clients by identifying issues before they become problems and by proposing strategic solutions consistent with her clients' ultimate objectives. Kirstie has uncovered issues with clients' internal practices and helped clients to correct those issues to avoid significant liability.

During law school, Kirstie was a student attorney with the Exoneration Project, where she gained experience with fact investigation, oral advocacy, and complex research regarding novel legal arguments.

Client Work

- Obtained a preliminary injunction preventing the enforcement of an Iowa law that required the removal of books from school and classroom libraries on behalf of Penguin Random House, four award-winning authors, the Iowa State Education Association, teachers, a librarian, and a high school student.
- Obtained a \$95 million settlement for the co-founder of a proprietary trading firm after a four-week jury trial and on the morning of closing arguments for claims for wrongful removal as an owner and manager.
- Drafted reply brief that led a unanimous Illinois Supreme Court to abolish the “test the waters” doctrine, which for at least 30 years some Illinois courts had invoked to limit a party’s absolute right to a single substitution of judge, ensuring uniformity throughout the state.
- Conducted an adverse direct witness examination, successfully briefed and argued motions in limine, and successfully argued jury instructions in connection with a four-week jury trial.
- Drafted briefs that defeated summary judgment and reconsideration on complex breach of contract

claim.

- Briefed successful Seventh Circuit appeal, resulting in affirmance of dismissal of Sherman Act and Illinois Deceptive Trade Practices Act claims.

Solving Disputes Series

Our content series, “Solving Disputes Among Business Partners and Owners,” helps owners anticipate potential problems when structuring their businesses and find solutions to common issues among owners of privately held businesses, both before and during litigation. Kirstie is a leading contributor to the series.

[View Solving Disputes Series](#)

Presentations, Publications & Recognitions

Presentations

- “Fighting Fiduciary Fires: Causes and Cures for Trust and Estate Disputes,” NYSSCPA 2024 Annual Private Wealth Conference, New York (Dec. 12, 2024)

Recognitions

- Illinois Rising Star, *Illinois Super Lawyers*, Thomson Reuters (2023-2024)
- Roger Pascal Pro Bono Award (2023)
- Go To Thought Leader, *The National Law Review* (2022)

Professional Activities

Pro Bono

- The Exoneration Project, Clinical Student

Professional Memberships

- American Bar Association
- Chicago Bar Association

Bar Admissions

[Illinois](#)

Court Admissions

[US Court of Appeals, 7th Circuit](#)

[US Court of Appeals, 8th Circuit](#)

[US District Court, Northern District of Illinois](#)