

Sarah A. Decker

Partner

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OVERVIEW

Sarah Decker is a commercial litigator and strategic business advisor at the firm who concentrates her practice in the manufacturing industry, with a particular focus in the areas of commercial and consumer products, metals manufacturing and fabrication, aerospace, and specialty chemicals. Sarah represents and counsels public and private companies and individuals in a wide variety of complex commercial matters, including contract disputes, business torts, supply chain management, product liability, personal injury, oil and gas, and intellectual property matters. Sarah collaborates with her clients to proactively identify and mitigate business risks by implementation of practical, cost-effective commercial solutions. She efficiently resolves disputes in alignment with her clients' larger business objectives and also maintains an active trial practice, representing clients in federal and state courts and in domestic and international arbitrations.

Sarah's defamation experience is significant. She recently secured a non-monetary settlement resulting in pre-discovery voluntary dismissal by a public-figure plaintiff of his defamation suit against a media defendant in Mississippi federal court. In 2016, Sarah was an integral member of a trial team obtaining a US $40.4 million jury verdict for a plaintiff hedge fund manager in a private-figure defamation suit in New Jersey state court. The 2016 verdict (listed as the 45th-highest in the National Law Journal's Top 100 Verdicts of 2016) was upheld in 2019 and has been paid.

Sarah also maintains an active internal investigations practice, conducting domestic and international whistleblower and other investigations and counseling clients on their interactions and cooperation with federal and state agencies. Sarah has advised industrial and chemical manufacturers and financial services corporations in matters involving complex financial reporting, compliance, data breaches, bribery, and fraud.

PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND

Sarah joined the firm in 2013 after graduating from Duquesne University School of Law, where she taught trial advocacy and litigation technology as an adjunct professor. From 2018 through 2020, Sarah practiced as a New York State prosecutor, specializing in crimes against children and sexual abuse. As a prosecutor, she secured a guilty verdict in May 2019 convicting a defendant of Unlawful Manufacture of Methamphetamine in the 3rd degree and various other class D felony and misdemeanor crimes of sexual abuse.

Sarah rejoined the firm in 2021 as a primary member of the Commercial Disputes practice group and secondary member of the Investigations, Enforcement, and White Collar practice group.

ACHIEVEMENTS

- Recognized by *The Legal 500 United States* as a Recommended Lawyer for General Commercial Disputes, 2025
- Awarded the Lynette Norton Memorial Fund Award, Katie Elisabeth Westbrook Award, and Shalom Moot Court Award for outstanding academic achievement, exceptional skills in trial advocacy, and a keen sense of ethics and professionalism
- Awarded 2011 Student Trial Advocacy Competition (STAC) National Champion, 2011 National Civil Trial Competition Finalist, and 2012 STAC Regional Semi-Finalist
- Member of The Order of the Barristers for attaining high honor through the art of courtroom advocacy

PROFESSIONAL / CIVIC ACTIVITIES

- Adjunct Professor (former), Litigation Technology and Trial Advocacy, Duquesne University School of Law
- Coach (former), Trial Advocacy Program, Duquesne University School of Law

EDUCATION

- J.D., Duquesne University School of Law, 2012 *(summa cum laude)*
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- B.S., University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown, 2009 *(summa cum laude)*

ADMISSIONS

- Bar of New York
- Bar of Pennsylvania
- United States District Court for the Western District of Pennsylvania

THOUGHT LEADERSHIP *POWERED BY HUB*

- 22 January 2026, Open Justice and Access to Court Documents: What to Expect When Litigating in Europe
- 14 January 2025, Litigation Minute: A Look Back and Ahead
- 18 January 2022, COVID-19 Vaccination Sweepstakes: Best Practices for Employee Incentives

- 20 October 2021, No Supplies in the Chain

NEWS & EVENTS

- 6 January 2025, K&L Gates Names Nearly 35 New Partners, Of Counsel, and Policy Professionals Across Firm

AREAS OF FOCUS

- Commercial Disputes
- Internal Investigations
- Mass Tort
- Product Liability
- White Collar Defense and Investigations

INDUSTRIES

- Aerospace and Defense
- Consumer Goods and Services
- Energy
- General Manufacturing
- Manufacturing
- Metals Manufacturing and Fabrications
- Specialty Chemicals

REPRESENTATIVE EXPERIENCE

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- Represented sports media analyst in public-figure defamation suit by former professional athlete, securing non-monetary settlement resulting in pre-discovery voluntary dismissal of action in its entirety
- Represented information technology services company in breach of contract action by utilities services auditor, securing dismissal of action in its entirety with award of costs and disbursements
- Represented major aerospace materials supplier in domestic arbitrations involving claims of breach of long-term supply agreements

- Advised major aluminum manufacturing company in connection with supply chain disputes, material and labor shortages, and commercial relationships with suppliers and customers
- Advised major technology company on global supply contract disputes and antitrust claims
- Represented chemical manufacturer against misrepresentation and breach of contract claims arising under asset purchase agreement
- Represented foreign director of US manufacturing company in suit for appointment of provisional director to break board deadlock
- Represented US director of foreign company in connection with claims of breach of duty in sale of company
- Represented cruise line in breach of contract and Unfair Trade Practices and Consumer Protection lawsuit arising from COVID-19-related cancellations
- Represented global technology company in breach of contract suit arising from commission arrangement with independent contractor
- Represented plaintiff hedge fund manager in a September 2016 jury trial in New Jersey state court resulting in jury verdict for defamation in the amount of US$40.4 million (the 45th-highest verdict in the US in 2016 as reported in the National Law Journal's Top 100 Verdicts that year)
- Represented global manufacturer of fiber cement products in breach of warranty and product liability suits
- Represented global manufacturer of strip processing machinery in employee personal injury suit

INVESTIGATIONS EXPERIENCE

- Conducted cross-border internal investigation involving evidence in the US and Japan for energy sector client in connection with allegations of accounting fraud as a result of a US$6 billion-dollar cost overrun on a first-of-a-kind construction project
- Conducted internal investigation involving evidence in Italy for energy sector client arising out of whistleblower complaint of management's alleged receipt of off-the-book payments for scrap sales and history of private bribery
- Conducted data breach investigation for asset management client arising out of suspected cybersecurity incident involving suspicious network activity and server crash
- Conducted cross-border internal investigation involving evidence in the US and France for energy sector client arising out of whistleblower complaint of management's alleged failure to timely recognize costs in its estimate to complete a construction project for a state-owned utility
- Conducted internal investigation for energy sector client in connection with revenue recognition deficiency and material weaknesses in controls related to project accounting and cost management
- Conducted investigation into crime rates and use of public funds at the direction of the chairman of a select committee established by a bi-partisan majority of a state legislative body

Defamation Experience

- Advised a telecommunications company regarding competitor online posts, including posts about the terms of a confidential deal that fell through. Cease-and-desist letter was drafted but not sent
- Advised PDI, Inc., a developer of clinically advanced products for the healthcare environment, including the PDI Healthcare Profend® Nasal Antiseptic Kit, regarding competitor marketing. Cease-and-desist letter status not confirmed
- Advised BridgeBio Pharma, Inc., manufacturer of acoramidis and Attruby®, regarding competitor marketing. Cease-and-desist letter status not confirmed
- Advised Endolumik regarding disparaging emails by a sales agent following termination. Cease-and-desist letter was sent
- Advised a global technical professional services and consulting firm regarding a counter-cease-and-desist demand to a competitor concerning statements made during a bid process for public utilities services
- Advised Pat McAfee, Inc. and Pat McAfee regarding publicly and privately threatened defamation claims arising from comments on a viral Internet story. The claims were resolved to the parties' satisfaction
- Advised Pat McAfee, Inc. and Pat McAfee regarding a privately threatened defamation claim arising from the show's use of an image while commenting on Fordham's involvement as a school in NCAA point-shaving indictments. The matter is being resolved, and the parties are permitted to state only that the claims were resolved to each party's satisfaction
- Advised ERShares regarding allegedly defamatory news articles about fund performance and advised against filing suit
- Advised Caleb & Brown regarding a defamation complaint filed in Washington state court but not yet served, including pre-service considerations. The client retained a local Washington firm after service of the complaint
- Advising Ocean Fleet Services regarding public interest groups' and private persons' defamatory attacks on the client's business model, including a cease-and-desist and takedown campaign
- Advised an internal team regarding potential grounds for suit involving an expert's recirculation theory about continuous mining machines causing an uptick in coal workers' pneumoconiosis cases