



→ Benjamin G. Chew

Partner

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Benjamin Chew is a partner in the Business Trial Practice Group in the firm's Washington, D.C. office.

Areas of Practice

Ben Chew is a Fellow of the American College of Trial Lawyers ("ACTL"), the most prestigious, invitation-only society of senior trial counsel in the United States. A multifaceted litigator, Ben represents clients in complex commercial litigation and arbitrations in the District of Columbia, Virginia, Delaware, Maryland, New York, California and throughout the United States and internationally. He handles diverse commercial disputes, including defamation, corporate governance, breach of fiduciary duty, intellectual property, government contracts, breach of contract, class actions, derivative shareholder and other corporate governance actions, international disputes, Lanham Act, UCC, products liability, real estate, bankruptcy, employment (including noncompete), insurance law, white collar defense, fraud, and RICO litigation. In what has been called the "trial of the century," Ben served as lead trial counsel with Camille Vasquez in an American actor's victory in his defamation case in Fairfax County, Virginia (the "Fairfax Case"). Prior to the Fairfax Case, Ben successfully prosecuted two breach of fiduciary cases for this actor in Los Angeles. He also successfully represented an American singer and actress in several cases, including two relating to an Academy Award nominated documentary film, a professional chef and an American actor.

Fluent in Spanish, Ben was part of the team representing a Financial Oversight and Management Board for Puerto Rico in the pending bankruptcy proceedings, and has litigated for Dominican, Ecuadorian, Guatemalan, Nicaraguan, and Panamanian clients in the U.S. He has represented governments of Dubai (securing the dismissal of a multimillion-dollar arbitration award by Bechtel) and Honduras in U.S. litigation, and currently represents the Republic of Kazakhstan. In 2013, after passing the Kosovo Bar, he defended the holder of the country's telecommunications franchise there in criminal proceedings brought by (EULEX), securing his acquittal and enabling his company to keep its franchise. Before the European Court of Human Rights, Ben represented a leading Georgian political and business lender in a petition to restore his wrongfully revoked citizenship, and favorably resolved a defamation claim for the former prime minister of the Czech Republic. Last year Ben helped secure the dismissal of a defamation action in the Eastern District of Virginia filed against the current Prime Minister of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. He currently represents the co-creator of an orthodontic device and technique in multiple arbitrations and court cases.

Ben remains committed to *pro bono*, successfully representing an African American honors graduate of the University of Virginia in his civil rights case against certain government officers. He served as counsel for one of the plaintiffs' groups in the landmark Black Farmers class action litigation against the U.S. Department of Agriculture based on systemic discrimination in farm loan programs, which resulted in a \$1.2 billion settlement.

Ben represented a Native American plaintiffs' group in the parallel Keepseagle class action, settled for just under \$1 billion. He represented two Olympic gold medalists in a matter involving an investigation conducted by the World Anti-Doping Agency.

In addition to being a Fellow of the ACTL, Ben is ranked in Chambers High Net Worth for Defamation/Reputation Management, and The Legal 500 named him a "Recommended Lawyer" for Media and Entertainment: Litigation. Benchmark Litigation named Ben a "Top Trial Lawyer" and a "Litigation Star," and the National Law Journal named him a "Sports/Gaming/Entertainment Law Trailblazer." Ben has been selected by his peers for inclusion in The Best Lawyers in America for commercial litigation for each year since 2017. He also serves as a Trial Advocacy Instructor at Harvard Law School.

Honors

Fellow, American College of Trial Lawyers

Legal Impact Report, *Variety*, 2024

Defamation/Reputation Management, *Chambers High Net Worth*, 2023-2024

Media, Technology and Telecoms – Media and Entertainment: Litigation, *The Legal 500 US*, 2023-2024

Top Trial Lawyer, Litigation Star, *Benchmark Litigation*, 2023-2024

Entertainment Litigator of Year Award, *Benchmark Litigation*, 2023

Impact Case Award, *Benchmark Litigation*, 2023

Commercial Litigation, *The Best Lawyers in America*, 2017-2024

500 Leading Lawyers in America, *Lawdragon*, 2023-2024

Trailblazer, Sports & Entertainment, *National Law Journal*, 2022

Experience

- Served as co-lead counsel for an American actor in his defamation jury trial victory against his former wife in the Circuit Court of Fairfax County, Virginia.
- Represents the co-creator of an orthodontic device and technique in multiple commercial disputes in JAMS arbitration and in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia and in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York.
- Represents plaintiff in his defamation action against an American rapper in Los Angeles, California.
- Serves as co-defense counsel for a Mexican singer, songwriter and businesswoman in a California Child Victims Act case.
- Successfully defended a prominent political figure in a high-profile defamation case brought against him in the Circuit Court for the City of Alexandria, Virginia.
- Served as co-counsel for the sitting Prime Minister of the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) and secured the dismissal of a defamation case against him in 2023 in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia.
- Successfully represented former major university president in his claim for breach of contract (non-disparagement).

- Successfully prosecuted a defamation claim relating to false claims of vote-switching in the 2020 U.S. presidential election.
- Before the U.S. Bankruptcy Court, Ben has represented plaintiffs and defendants in adversary complaints, preference actions, and related matters.
- Represented one of the five largest U.S. defense contractors, prosecuting claims of breach of contract, Lanham Act violations, conspiracy and tortious interference, and patent infringement.
- Served as co-counsel for class representative Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan Board in securities class action litigation before the Eastern District of Virginia, securing the second-highest settlement of its kind in the history of the district.
- Counseled a large multinational corporation against the Sandinista government of Nicaragua in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit.
- Secured the dismissal - upheld in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit - of a multimillion-dollar conspiracy and tortious interference complaint against a major software company.
- Secured dismissal on summary judgment of multimillion-dollar conspiracy and tortious interference claims relating to a major DITRA procurement in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia.
- Served as counsel for plaintiffs in landmark class action discrimination cases against the U.S. Department of Agriculture - settled for \$1.2 billion and settled for \$760 million.
- Successfully defended multidistrict action on behalf of a dietary supplements manufacturer in the U.S. District Court for the District of Massachusetts.
- Won intellectual property/corporate opportunity case in U.S. District Court in Reno, Nevada, preserving company's right to ownership of process at issue and zeroing out plaintiffs' claim for more than \$100 million in damages.
- Represented the Government of Dubai and won dismissal of petition to enforce a large arbitration award in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia, 360 F. Supp. 2d 136 (D.D.C. 2005).
- Represented the Republic of Honduras and won summary judgment defeating multinational corporation's claims for breach of contract and fraud in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Florida, upheld by the Eleventh Circuit. 40 F.3d 380 (11th Cir. 1994).
- Successfully prosecuted case for current prime minister of Georgia in the European Court of Human Rights (2012).
- Secured acquittal for defendant in a EULEX criminal trial in Kosovo, thereby allowing the client to retain the country's telecommunications concession, as described in "Importing the Rule of Law to Kosovo" (January 1, 2014).
- Won summary judgment for major U.S. shipbuilder in a breach of contract case in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia (Alexandria Division).
- Successfully defended case for multinational insurance company in the Eastern District of Virginia (Richmond Division).
- Represented the daughter of an American journalist in pro bono case—judge ruled that Hill can return home to Princess Street.
- Won comprehensive injunctive relief for government contractor in RICO/patent infringement/breach of contract case in the Eastern District of Virginia (Norfolk Division).

- Prosecuted successful derivative action claim on behalf of multiple investors, including an American singer and actress, against major pharmaceutical company.

Articles

- Co-author, "End of the Hollywood Handshake Deal," *Law Practice, Entertainment & Sports Contracts*, October 19, 2018
- Co-author, "Defending Trade Associations in Products Liability Cases: Voluntary Assumption of a Duty to Consumers," March 2006

Media Mentions

Attorney Benjamin Chew, Who Worked on Johnny Depp Trial, Joins Sheppard Mullin
Variety, 09.18.2024

Sheppard Mullin Scores Depp Trial Pro From Brown Rudnick
Law360, 09.17.2024

Brown Rudnick Brand and Reputation Co-Chair Joins Sheppard Mullin
The Recorder, 09.17.2024

Speaking Engagements

Panelist, "Tell Us Everything: Handling the Demand for Information in High-Profile Trials in the Internet Age,"
Council for Court Excellence, July 16, 2024

"Risks, Responsibilities & Reputation: What Is the Role of the GC," The Legal 500 Roundtable, September 28,
2023

Panelist, "Malice in Wonderland: Today's Changing Defamation Landscape," Federal Bar Association Webinar,
May 15, 2023

Guest, "Stopping the Shootings," BBC Americast Podcast, April 2, 2023

Panelist, "Defamation and Related Claims," Practising Law Institute's Communications Law in the Digital Age
2022, New York City, November 2022

Presenter, Forum on Enforcement of International Arbitration Awards, Pristina, Kosovo, 2017

"Wearing Two Hats – How In-House Lawyers Ethically Balance the Role of Lawyer and Business Advisor," ACC
National Capital Region's Signature Luncheon on Ethics, McLean Virginia, October 20, 2016

Memberships

Trial Advocacy Instructor, Harvard Law School (2023 and 2024)

Legal Analyst, Court TV

Legal Analyst, Law & Crime Network

Legal Analyst, Today Show Australia, Weekend Sunrise

Member, Lawyers' Club of Washington

Practices

Brand and Reputation Management

Entertainment, Technology and Advertising

International Reach

Latin America

Litigation

Education

J.D., University of Virginia School of Law, 1988

B.A., Princeton University, 1984

Admissions

District of Columbia

Virginia

Republic of Kosovo

Languages

Spanish