

# Aalok K. Sharma

## PARTNER

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Office: Minneapolis



**As a former NCAA Division I athlete, Aalok knows it takes the right combination of talent and hard work to be successful in and out of the courtroom.**

Named as a 'Leading Entertainment and Sports Lawyer of the Next Generation' by The American Bar Association (ABA), Aalok is trusted by sports businesses, technology companies, and other industry stakeholders, to provide counsel in matters relating to the future of sports and entertainment, including sports tech, esports, data collection, and legalized sports wagering and integrity.

As a passionate fan and a legal advocate, Aalok understands that the business of sports goes beyond the field. He serves the sports community as the Immediate Past Chair for the Minnesota Twins Community Fund and Past Chair of the Sports Section of the ABA's Forum on Entertainment and Sports. He is also an outreach captain with the Sports Lawyers Association, and serves on the Membership Committee. Aalok has spoken at numerous industry conferences on emerging aspects of the sports industry including esports, smart venue technology, data capture and analytics, and legalized sports wagering and integrity. At the University of Minnesota Law School, Aalok serves as an adjunct professor and educates law students in sports law, including coaching the Sports Law Moot Court team.

## PRACTICES & INDUSTRIES

- Esports, Sports Technology & Wagering
- Sports & Recreation
- Business Litigation
- Construction
- Entertainment & Media

## ADMISSIONS

- Minnesota
- California
- U.S. District Court, Colorado
- U.S. District Court, District of Minnesota

## EDUCATION

- University of Minnesota, J.D., *magna cum laude*, 2013
- Birmingham-Southern College, B.S., Accounting, *cum laude*, 2007

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## Aalok K. Sharma

In addition to his sports and entertainment experience, Aalok is an experienced commercial litigator and frequently assists with bet-the-company litigation. Aalok represents plaintiffs and defendants across industries, and has significant experience handling critical and difficult cases. Over the last decade, Aalok has handled cases involving product liability claims, breach of contract, fraud, breach of fiduciary duty, and other disputes involving shareholders or partnerships. In addition, Aalok is active in the construction bar, and has handled defect and delay claims.

Prior to becoming an attorney, Aalok worked as a certified public accountant in Washington, D.C. He assisted businesses with complex accounting issues involving revenue recognition, troubled debt restructuring, and accounting for uncertain tax positions. Because of his deep financial acumen, Aalok considers clients' business goals and their potential risks to effectively advise on and address their legal needs.

### EXPERIENCE

#### Sports and Entertainment

Represents numerous daily fantasy sports and sports wagering businesses to support their compliance with federal, state, and local laws and regulations.

Represents esports organizations in negotiating and drafting commercial agreements.

Assists startup sports technology companies as a mentor with Sports Tech Tokyo.

Provides guidance to influencers, brands, and others dealing with issues surrounding name, image, and likeness.

Represents professional sports teams in commercial matters involving contract negotiations, stadium operations, insurance, and other day-to-day matters.

Represented defendant in class action litigation involving claims by plaintiffs that they were defrauded in fantasy sports contests due to alleged cheating by the Houston Astros and Boston Red Sox. Aalok obtained dismissal of all claims against his client prior to discovery.

Represents coaches in formal proceedings with the U.S. Center for SafeSport.

Represents players and parents in conflicts with the Minnesota State High School League (MSHSL).

Represents sports and equipment manufacturers across different industries and sports, including football, lacrosse, hockey, and cycling.

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## Business Litigation

Aalok has supported clients in all phases of litigation, including significant motion practice before state and federal courts. He has extensive experience managing protracted litigation in various industries including sports, construction, finance, health care, automotive, retail and manufacturing.

As trial counsel, Aalok's client received a complete victory during a seven-day jury trial in federal court. The case involved alleged breaches of a non-disclosure agreement, and claims that the client misappropriated trade secrets in order to form a competing product.

Secured favorable settlement for health insurers in multimillion dollar disputes with medical providers.

Obtained summary judgment against an insurer when it failed to defend its insured in underlying litigation.

Represented client in case involving violation of non-compete/non-solicitation agreements. Amicably settled case involving liquidated damages.

Represented property owner in dispute with general contractor for clouding title and violating Minnesota lien laws.

Represents owners, developers, general contractors, subcontractors and others in matters involving construction defects, delays, disruptions, lien and bond claims.

Represented drone manufacturer against product defect claims.

Argued multiple disputes before the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit and the Minnesota Court of Appeals.

## RECOGNITIONS

*Minnesota Lawyer* Up & Coming Attorney, 2022

Named to the 2021-2024 *Best Lawyers in America*® "Ones to Watch" list

Leading Entertainment and Sports Lawyer of the Next Generation, American Bar Association, 2019

Leadership Council on Legal Diversity, Pathfinders Program, 2020

Recognized as a Minnesota *Super Lawyers*® Rising Star, 2016 - 2023

Minnesota State Bar Association Pro Bono Award, *North Star Lawyer*, 2014

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## PROFESSIONAL & CIVIC ACTIVITIES

Minnesota Twins Baseball Club Community Fund, Board of Directors, Past Chair, Governance Committee, 2019-2023

American Bar Association, Forum on Sports & Entertainment, Sports Section Past Chair and Standing Committee Member

Sports Lawyers Association, Outreach Captain for Minnesota and Membership/Public Relations Committee Member

Member, Leadership Minnesota, Minnesota Chamber of Commerce

The Sanneh Foundation, Gala4Goals Host Committee, 2019- 2020

Minnesota Zoo Foundation, Associates Board of Directors, 2016-2020

Minnesota Asian Pacific American Bar Association, Vice President of Membership, 2016-2018

## NEWS

Sharma Selected to Leadership Minnesota Class of 2024

09.20.2023

*Best Lawyers in America* Recognizes 32 Stinson Attorneys as "Ones to Watch"

08.17.2023

Stinson Attorneys Selected for Inclusion on 2023 Minnesota *Super Lawyers* and Rising Stars Lists

07.17.2023

Stinson's Sports and Entertainment Attorney Aalok Sharma Highlighted in *Minnesota Lawyer* Article

05.22.2023

Legal Hurdles in Esports Wagering Detailed by Sharma in the *Hennepin Lawyer*

04.13.2023

*Best Lawyers in America*® Recognizes 29 Stinson Attorneys as "Ones to Watch"

08.18.2022

Stinson Attorneys Named to 2022 Minnesota *Super Lawyers* and Rising Stars

08.04.2022

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## Aalok K. Sharma

Stinson Partners Micah Revell and Aalok Sharma Recognized as Up & Coming Attorneys by *Minnesota Lawyer*

08.02.2022

Stinson Elects Nine New Partners in 2022

01.11.2022

Aalok Sharma Selected to NAPABA 2021 Prospective Partners Program

11.16.2021

Stinson Attorneys Named to 2021 Minnesota *Super Lawyers* and Rising Stars

09.02.2021

*Best Lawyers in America* Recognizes 23 Stinson Attorneys as "Ones to Watch"

08.19.2021

Aalok Sharma Featured in the *Minneapolis Business Journal* as New Chair of the ABA Sports Division

11.20.2020

Aalok Sharma Selected as Chair of the ABA Sports Division

11.16.2020

*Best Lawyers* Recognizes 21 Stinson Attorneys as "Ones to Watch"

08.20.2020

Stinson Attorneys Named to 2020 Minnesota *Super Lawyers* and Rising Stars

07.20.2020

Aalok Sharma's Sports Practice Featured in *Hennepin Lawyer*

07.09.2020

Aalok Sharma's Innovative Sports Practice Featured in *Minnesota Law*

06.02.2020

Stinson Attorneys Accepted to the LCLD Fellows, Pathfinders Programs

01.30.2020

### **SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS**

Panelist. "The Metaverse: Risk, Rewards and Realities for Your Business," Association of Corporate Counsel, March 30, 2023

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## Aalok K. Sharma

Panelist, “Gambling & Esports: Major Revenue Opportunities, Major Legal Risks,” Sports Lawyers Association Virtual Conference, May 21, 2021

Panelist, “Sports Law Forum,” Sports Law Weekly & New England Law, April 12, 2021

“How COVID-19 is Changing Technology,” Stinson LLP Webinar, February 9, 2021

Facilitator, “The New Parlay: Partnerships After Murphy,” ABA Forum on Sports, October 16, 2020

Panelist, “Esports Panel: The Convergence of Pro Sports, Music, Investment, Law, and Opportunities for You,” TerraLex Sports & Entertainment Virtual Meeting, October 1, 2020

Panelist, “Esports Panel,” SIPLA - University of St. Thomas Law School, September 25, 2020

“How COVID-19 is Changing Technology, Sports and the Law,” Association of Corporate Counsel Webinar, September 11, 2020

“Sports Gambling Update,” American Bar Association Forum on Entertainment and Sports, October 12, 2019

“Sports Betting and Banking,” Emerging Trends in the Banking Industry, September 2019

“Stinson LLP: Business Esports Law Panel,” Player Up – The Midwest’s Amateur eSports Tournament, August 2019

“Grab Some E-Pine with Michael Proman and Aalok Sharma,” Risk Radio, August 19, 2019

“Betting, Loot Boxes, and Gambling in Esports,” Esports Bar Association, June 10, 2019

“The Next Big Money Sports Trend: Legalized Sports Betting,” Club E Minneapolis, June 6, 2019

“Betting on the Business of Sports,” Sports Lawyers Association Reception, April 5, 2019

“Fast Data and Sports: How Sports Data is Reshaping How We Look at the World,” MCCA Global Tec Forum, April 4 - 5, 2019

“Esports Law 101: The Legal Side of Becoming Legitimate and Successful in the Esports Industry,” KCGameOn 2018, Kansas City, MO, November 30 - December 2, 2018

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# Aalok K. Sharma

## PUBLICATIONS

Founder, Editor and Author, "At the Corners Newsletter," a quarterly publication that discusses relevant topics related to esports, sports technology and wagering.

"Esports Face Significant Legal Risk Over the Collection and Use of Biometric Data", SportTechie, February 19, 2019

"Raise Brand Awareness by Partnering with Athletes," Minnesota Business, November 2016

"Class Action Spells Trouble for Youth Sports," Minnesota Lawyer, November 2016

"California Attempts to Curb Age Discrimination With IMDb Law," Attorney at Law, November 2016

"NFL's Real Concussion Litigation Battle Lies Ahead With Its Own Insurers," Attorney at Law, October 2016

"Oregon Football's Painful Lesson in Insurance Hedging," Attorney at Law, July 2016

"U.S. Women's Soccer Issues Red Card to Pay Gap," Minnesota Lawyer, May 2016

"Monetizing Monikers: Trademarks Provide Dependable Revenue to Athletes & Coaches," Attorney at Law, February 2016

"Fixing the Alleged Tennis Racket," Minnesota Lawyer, February 2016

"Is the Juice Worth the Squeeze? Exploring Loss of Value Insurance Products for Elite Athletes," Attorney at Law, December 2015

Show Me the Tokens - Using Cryptographic Tokens to Activate Fans

04.12.2022

The Anti-Cheating Movement: Ridding Esports of Cheats

10.07.2021

Morality Clauses in Contracts are Escape Hatches for Streaming Sponsors

05.05.2021

The First Circuit Rules that the Wire Act Applies to Sports Betting Only

05.05.2021

What's Loot Got to do With It?

11.11.2020

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An Overview: Colorado's Expansion into Legalized Sports Wagering

11.11.2020

DMCA Takedown Notices: A New Opponent for Streamers

10.15.2020

There is a Price for Athlete Data

08.17.2020

Revisiting the Federal Wire Act on Appeal

08.17.2020

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