

THE AM LAW LITIGATION DAILY

Litigation Leaders: Kwame Manley of Paul Hastings on Making the Client Experience Just As Good as the Outcome

By Ross Todd

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Welcome to another edition of our *Litigation Leaders* series, featuring the litigation practice leaders at some of the biggest and most innovative law firms in the country—and the world.

Meet **Kwame Manley**, global chair of the litigation department at **Paul Hastings**, who is based in Washington, D.C. A former federal prosecutor, Manley previously served as chair of the firm's investigations and white-collar defense practice.

Lit Daily: Tell us a little about yourself—perhaps even a thing or two your partners would be surprised to learn about you.

I am the global chair of the litigation department at Paul Hastings. I lead a phenomenal team of 450 trial lawyers handling matters ranging from bet-the-company litigation, white-collar defense and complex cross-border matters.

Before stepping into this department chair role, I led the firm's investigations and white-collar defense practice, helping us navigate multi-jurisdictional matters in over 40 countries.

My roots in litigation run deep. Prior to joining Paul Hastings, I served as an Assistant U.S. Attorney and Deputy Chief for the District

of Maryland, where I prosecuted over 150 cases, ranging from corporate fraud and money laundering to violent crime. I handled both *The Wire* and *Billions*. And yes, they made a cable TV series episode on one of my trial matters! I had much more hair during that filming.

How do you split your time between your own investigations and white-collar defense practice and serving as global chair of the firm's litigation department?

It feels like I spend 100% of my workday serving clients and 100% of my workday leading the firm's global department. Not sure how that adds up most days. Seriously, I love the work. It is incredibly rewarding.

Because my clients are in multiple time zones, I have my Europe calls early, followed by my U.S. work with Asia at night. I work with incredible colleagues who make both sides of the job possible. The work energizes me, and honestly, I



Kwame Manley of Paul Hastings.

Courtesy photo

wouldn't have it any other way.

In a practice like yours, where often your best work involves the matters you're working on not becoming public, how do you market yourself and make sure that potential clients know what you're capable of?

In my line of work, the best outcomes are often the ones no one hears about. The DOJ declination. SEC agreement to close the matter. A silent and slow walk away from another federal agency. That is success for us.

Whether on the criminal work or the civil litigation side, I tell the team, "We have to be the very best lawyers our client has ever seen. Every day. Every matter." That means mastering the law, yes, but also knowing our client's business, understanding their goals, communicating with them at the pace and frequency they need and delivering results. The outcome must be outstanding, and the client experience must be equally good.

We have to make our clients look good and focus on what matters most to them.

How big is the firm's litigation team and where are most of your litigators concentrated geographically?

We have more than 450 litigators across our global team, from New York and Washington, D.C., to Los Angeles, San Francisco, London, Paris and Hong Kong. Paul Hastings doesn't have a "headquarters"—we are a global firm. New York has become our firm's center of gravity. We have the highest concentration of litigators in Washington, D.C.

That said, our lawyers manage cases wherever our clients need us. We actually counted the number of matters in various countries. Last year, we were engaged in 60-plus countries.

In what three areas of litigation does the firm have the deepest bench? (I know it's hard, but please name just three.)

IP litigation, antitrust and white collar/investigations.

We represent dozens of life sciences, health-care and tech companies in the IP/patent space and have been involved in trials literally every month on those matters. **Eric Dittmann**, **Naveen Modi** and **Bruce Wexler** are superstars.

On the antitrust side, we handle significant DOJ matters for major companies. **Mike Murray** (former Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General, DOJ Antitrust Division), along with **Ryan Phair** and others, excel in this area.

On the white-collar side, Paul Hastings has handled more DOJ anti-corruption work than any other law firm, with 26 total compliance monitorships, resolutions and declinations. We also have the No. 1 DOJ declination rate, surpassing our peers. **Bob Luskin**, **Brad Bondi**, **Jay Darden**, **Gary Giampetruzzi** and others are the very best.

The firm has a reputation for being aggressive on the lateral market and the department has added more than 40 litigators since 2022. How do you make sure those lateral hires are integrated into the broader litigation practice at the firm?

And that 40-plus figure is just for our lateral partner hires! But it goes deeper than that. More than 120 litigation attorneys have joined the firm in the last two years alone.

For our litigation practice, our talent acquisitions create real momentum. And momentum matters. It signals to top talent that there's a vibrant, dynamic and exciting culture here. When new hires come on board, they feed that momentum further. For clients, it is a big win. We introduce new partners in new areas to clients. Clients gain access to expanded resources and increased depth in litigation markets worldwide.

As our leaders, **Frank Lopez** and **Sherrese Smith**, say all the time, we're selling intellectual capital. Having great talent is essential. This applies at all levels, from our senior-most partners to our incoming associates.

What do you see as hallmarks of Paul Hastings litigators? What makes you different?

Well, according to our clients and *Chambers*, “Paul Hastings is a litigation powerhouse.” And look at how regularly you’ve graciously selected us for your weekly “Litigators of the Week” columns, a recognition that reflects the depth, skill and impact of our team.

Our range is vast: In the past 12 months alone, we’ve secured a massive victory for client BioNTech when the PTAB invalidated two Moderna patents in March covering its Spikevax COVID-19 vaccine; notched a win for client Allied Gaming in what is likely the first preliminary injunction in nearly 30 years for a company bringing litigation under Section 13(d) of the Exchange Act; served as court-appointed lead defense counsel in a mass action with more than 25,000 named plaintiffs, and related enforcement actions brought by government agencies, including the California Attorney General, in a high-profile litigation in California on behalf of one of the largest industrial REITs in the world; and finalized a long-standing representation of client ABB when the DOJ filed a motion with the court to close out a self-reporting matter early, to name a few.

But what truly differentiates us is that we don’t just litigate cases. We strive to genuinely understand our clients’ businesses. That perspective, that focus on the substantive issues of what drives them, allows us to deliver advice and strategy that’s not only legally sound, but also practical and aligned with their broader goals. It’s this blend of legal excellence and business savvy that defines a Paul Hastings litigator.

What were two or three of the firm’s biggest in-court wins in the past year, and can you cite tactics that exemplify your firm’s approach to success?

How do I choose just three? You are going to get me in trouble. But a few recent victories really stand out.

First, a major antitrust win by Mike Murray, **Craig Lee** and Ryan Phair, who represented CWT, a business travel management company. They got the DOJ to dismiss its antitrust lawsuit, which was blocking a \$570 million acquisition with Amex GBT, right before the trial was set to start. That dismissal cleared the way for the merger to close last month.

Second, Brad Bondi and **Ronnie Anguas** spearheaded a team that secured a complete dismissal of civil RICO claims totaling \$10 billion on behalf of Deel, an HR technology platform, in the Southern District of Florida.

Third, an IP litigation team led by Eric Dittmann, **Melanie Rupert** and **Isaac Ashkenazi** secured a \$56 million jury verdict for Allergan and its product Botox in a patent litigation against Revance Therapeutics and its competing product. The verdict came after a five-day trial in the District of Delaware and represents a 27% reasonable royalty damages award.

A common thread among these cases and all our client successes is teamwork, focus and a dogged dedication to the client and the end result.

What does the firm’s coming trial calendar look like?

We are in trial every month: jury trial, bench trial, federal court, state court and international arbitration.

This fall, we’re gearing up for two patent trials: one in the Eastern District of Texas and another matter before the Federal Circuit Court of Appeals. We have jury trials in the Southern District of New York, the Eastern District of Pennsylvania and the District of New Jersey, along with several bench trials in Delaware.

We will close 2025 strong!