

THE AM LAW LITIGATION DAILY

Litigation Leaders: O'Melveny's Pamela Miller on Managing the 50 Trials and Arbitrations on the Firm's Docket This Year

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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.

Meet **Pamela Miller**, the co-chair of the litigation department at **O'Melveny & Myers**. Miller, who is based in New York and focuses her practice on the financial services industry, is also a member of the firm's management team and executive committee. She and Los Angeles partner **Steven Olson** were named co-chairs of the department in July 2024, joining prior co-chair **Richard Goetz**, who remained as co-chair through early 2025.

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

Pam Miller: Though many of my partners know me quite well, one thing they may not be aware of is that daily meditation has been part of my routine for well over a decade. I find it incredibly grounding and carve out time for it no matter my schedule.



Courtesy photo

Pamela A. Miller of O'Melveny & Myers.

Another thing that may surprise colleagues is that I'm part of the ownership of a Portuguese professional football (soccer) team. My family and I are football fanatics. We have spent a lot of time in Portugal in recent years, and my husband and I fell head over heels in love with Lisbon. While on long walks through the city, we regularly passed the stadium for Atlético Clube de Portugal—a Liga 3 team—which we learned had been struggling.

In 2023, as part of a consortium, we acquired a majority ownership stake in the club. It's been

a profoundly rewarding journey learning about the team's rich history and getting to know the phenomenal fans. We've worked hard to understand the needs of the community, recognizing how important the team is to local life. Our recent efforts have centered on revitalizing the stadium, upgrading both the infrastructure and incorporating a public art museum.

You and your partner Steve Olson were named co-chairs of O'Melveny's litigation department a couple of years back now. You served for a period alongside the previous co-chair Richard Goetz. Why did the firm decide to have two partners co-chair the practice? And how do you and Steve share the duties now?

O'Melveny has long embraced having co-chairs lead our litigation department because the job is enormous and best shared. Before Steve and I moved into these roles, our partners **Apalla Chopra** and Rich Goetz served as co-chairs and, before that, Rich co-lead the group with partner **Randy Oppenheimer**. Rich stayed on for a time during our transition, which was tremendously helpful given his long tenure in the role.

Having two of us also brings geographic balance to our leadership—with Steve in Los Angeles and me in New York. It has allowed us both to get to know our litigators better across all our offices.

Steve and I collaborate on all elements of the role, from department strategy and planning to growth and business development initiatives. And we work closely on broader cross-practice and firmwide initiatives with our colleagues **Brophy Christensen** and **Eric Richards**, who co-chair our corporate department.

How do you balance your time between your leadership and management duties and client work?

Being in this role has not changed my dedication to and passion for my practice, which continues to center on the financial services industry, and I remain extremely busy with client work. In fact, my practice has been expanding in recent years, including into industries like sports, which has been an increasingly active area of litigation for us.

And given O'Melveny's reputation as one of the country's premier trial and litigation practices, I typically try one case a year. But obviously, that takes considerable time and energy.

The demands of my practice make the collaboration with Steve that much more important and meaningful. When one of us is deep in client work, the other can jump in and take the lead on various management responsibilities. It works well for us and the team.

How big is the litigation department and where are most of your litigators concentrated geographically?

O'Melveny has more than 530 litigators firm-wide. We've developed a dynamic, well-rounded litigation presence that extends across our 17 offices. Our balance is an asset: We have a similar number of litigators in our five California offices as we do in our New York and D.C. offices. And since establishing our offices in Texas five years ago, we've also focused on growing our litigation presence there.

What do you see as the hallmarks of O'Melveny litigators? What makes you different?

At O'Melveny, we encourage our litigators to think like trial lawyers from day one. Other firms may treat a trial as a distant hypothetical, but from the start of each matter, we adopt a strategic trial mindset. We train our associates to think this way as well, which is why we prioritize giving them opportunities for trial access. They work directly with witnesses, argue motions and collaborate with experts to

hone their skills and build their confidence. We know that the best lawyers thrive in an environment with dedicated mentoring and hands-on experience, so that's what we provide. We also often invite our appellate specialists to embed with our litigation teams, which allows us early on to strategize for potential appeals and more fully prepare our clients for the path ahead.

O'Melveny's true differentiator—across litigation and corporate—is our distinctly collaborative culture. Our lawyers genuinely like working together to solve problems, and our clients appreciate how we go about it. Our partners are incentivized to find the right person within the firm to tackle the issue at hand, giving our clients frictionless access to the wide-ranging experience and expertise our colleagues have to offer. Clients trust us because they know we are constantly working to understand their business needs and proactively assembling the best team to deliver the best results.

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

It's difficult to choose three because we have such enormously talented litigators across industries, sectors, and jurisdictions—there's truly nothing my colleagues can't do. But the first area that really stands out to me is trials. Few firms are built to handle the increasingly busy trial dockets faced by our clients. The breadth and depth of our trial practice are unmatched. Just this past year, our trials have spanned patent, insurance, product liability and trademark cases, among others, in state and federal courts across the country.

I'd say the second area is our extensive litigation experience in the tech sector. Many of the world's largest tech companies entrust us with everything from high-stakes antitrust, IP and commercial cases to sprawling product

liability MDLs and class actions to government and internal investigations.

That brings me to a third area that I'll call consumer issues. This encompasses high-profile consumer class action and MDL matters across the financial services, consumer products, life sciences and tech industries, often occurring in parallel with enforcement actions and investigations. These matters require well-integrated, cross-disciplinary teams—an area where we really excel. Our best-in-class State AG team works seamlessly with our product liability group on these kinds of cases. We also have one of the longest-standing Washington, D.C.-based congressional investigations groups, led by former high-ranking government officials, to assist clients facing congressional inquiries.

When we spoke last year, you said you were focused on bolstering the firm's trial practice. How are you going about that?

Having more than 50 trials and arbitrations on the docket this year is one sure way to keep our trial lawyers at the top of their game! But again, our trial-ready approach to our matters is central to who we are at O'Melveny—which is why we invest in training and mentoring our associates to be trial lawyers from the outset.

We also have a dedicated trial group that centralizes and tracks our past experience before certain judges and in specific venues and jurisdictions so we can bring that knowledge to bear on current and future cases and help clients anticipate issues that may arise during the course of trials.

Beyond providing our lawyers hands-on, intentional training in trial work and learning from our vast trial experience, we leverage all the tools at our disposal—including AI-powered platforms—to develop our lawyers' skills and expand our teams' analysis on active matters.

For instance, during the preparation for a recent IP trial, our lawyers used AI to help anticipate questions that opposing counsel might ask our witnesses on cross-examination. For one witness, the questions our tools predicted were nearly identical to those actually posed.

We also partner closely with clients managing busy trial calendars in ways that are beneficial to everyone. For instance, clients often want to use us for smaller trials, and we collaborate to find effective approaches. That often means giving our second-chair trial lawyers first-chair roles, allowing them to gain invaluable experience while delivering efficiencies for clients. Our tremendous pro bono practice also handles a range of critical cases, providing our litigators with yet another avenue for meaningful trial experience.

Finally, we continue to strengthen our trial capabilities through a combination of organic and lateral growth. We've built our bench over the past year with the addition of former prosecutors **Diana Aguilar** and **Lindsey Greer Dotson**, as well as **Meghan McElvy** and **Lauren Weinstein**, who have exceptional trial credentials. We also added to our ranks with the recent promotion of homegrown partners **Brian Quinn**, **Annie Steinberg**, **Lauren Wagner** and **Heather Welles**, who have developed as trial lawyers in our training and mentoring system.

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?

Over the past year, we achieved significant victories for clients in ways that demonstrate the true breadth of our practice. In the life sciences space, we secured the complete reversal of a \$950 million punitive-damages

award against client Johnson & Johnson in a headline-making cosmetic talc action, and for Amgen, we succeeded in overturning a \$50 million jury verdict in a patent infringement case.

Our entertainment litigators continued to score wins for major studio clients, including a pair of successes for Warner Bros. in separate copyright and trademark disputes involving the hit show *Running Point* and the latest *Superman* film. For Paramount, we secured dismissal in a copyright infringement case relating to its blockbuster *Top Gun: Maverick*, and we won dismissal of a reverse discrimination lawsuit for CBS. We also succeeded in dismissing a copyright lawsuit against Netflix involving the film *Rez Ball*.

Higher-ed institutions have certainly been in the spotlight over the past year, and our lawyers stepped up to assist with high-profile matters, winning dismissal for Harvard University in a Title IX sex-discrimination lawsuit involving a transgender athlete's participation in an NCAA women's swimming event, and securing the dismissal of an antitrust class action accusing client NYU and 39 other private universities and colleges of illegally conspiring to raise net attendance prices.

What does the firm's coming trial docket look like?

Again, we have more than 50 trials and arbitrations scheduled this year, many well underway, including a series of bellwether trials for ByteDance/TikTok in sprawling federal multidistrict litigation. We can't predict what the future holds, of course, but we expect the pace of trial work to continue, and I'm confident we'll be ready to meet the moment, no matter what lies ahead.