



Jerina D. Phillips

Labor & Employment Practice Group Leader

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Jerina Phillips delivers strategic litigation and employment counsel, drawing on courtroom experience and a practical grasp of workplace dynamics and compliance.

Jerina serves as Practice Group Leader for the Labor & Employment Practice Group at Lewis Rice and has extensive experience representing employers in courts throughout the country.

In addition to her labor and employment practice, Jerina maintains a broad litigation portfolio, regularly handling matters in commercial, pharmaceutical, media, and product liability law. She has successfully represented clients across nearly every industry and in jurisdictions throughout the United States.

Before joining Lewis Rice, Jerina clerked for judges at every level of the Missouri state court system, including an internship with the Missouri Supreme Court and a one-year clerkship with the Missouri Court of Appeals. She also completed a federal clerkship in the Southern District of Illinois.

Jerina serves as Vice Chair of the Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Committee and is a member of the Firm's Recruiting Committee and the Lewis Rice Women to Women Forum (LRW2W). She received a Women's Justice Award in the Litigation Practitioner category in 2018 and has been selected for inclusion in *Missouri & Kansas Rising Stars*® (2018–2025) and *Best Lawyers*® *Ones to Watch* (2022–2025). In 2020, she was named to The National Black Lawyers Top 40 Under 40, an organization dedicated to recognizing and promoting African American legal excellence. Jerina is actively involved in the community and serves on several local boards.

Commercial Litigation

Representing clients in virtually every type of business-related dispute, Jerina understands the significant impact litigation can have on a company's ability to achieve its business objectives. To this end, Jerina works closely with clients to obtain a comprehensive understanding of their objectives for each matter and develop a successful strategy, which could include negotiating an early settlement or conducting extensive discovery and proceeding to trial.

Services

- Complex Litigation
- Labor & Employment
- Education
- Media & Communications
- Athletics
- Design & Luxury
- Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)

Jerina has successfully represented companies, including financial institutions, in defending against a wide variety of claims, including breach of contract claims, breach of fiduciary duty claims, and claims brought under the Missouri Merchandising Practices Act by individuals and as class actions. She was a member of a defense team engaged to defend a company in what might be one of the largest class action lawsuits ever filed in Missouri.

Employment Litigation

Jerina has significant experience in defending employers in all types of employment matters. From handling matters at the administrative phase to presenting evidence at trial, Jerina has successfully represented national retailers, public and private universities, and small, family-owned businesses in all of their employment litigation needs. She also counsels employers on matters relating to the Fair Labor Standards Act, Americans with Disabilities Act, and the Family and Medical Leave Act.

Employment Investigations

Jerina has significant experience conducting full-scale investigations covering a variety of employment-related issues, including, but not limited to, allegations of discrimination, harassment, pay disparity, and other issues that implicate internal policies and employment laws. She has led internal investigations in high-profile matters involving sensitive issues.

Education

- Saint Louis University School of Law (J.D., 2012)
 - Faculty Fellow to Professor Aaron Taylor, 2011-2012
 - Civil Litigation Clinic, appellate group member, 2012
 - Frederick Douglass Moot Court Competition Regional Champion, 2011-2012
 - ABA National Moot Court Competition, SLU Law representative
- Loyola University New Orleans (B.A., 2009)
 - Sociology
 - Dean's List; National Dean's List
 - Social Justice Scholarship Award
 - Outstanding Community Service Award

Legal Background

- Judicial law clerk to Judge Donald Wilkerson, U.S. District Court, Southern District of Illinois (2013-2014)
- Judicial law clerk to Judge Angela Turner Quigless, Missouri Court of Appeals, Eastern District (2012-2013)
- Judicial intern to Judge Lisa Van Amburg, 22nd Judicial Circuit Court of Missouri (2011)
- Judicial intern to Judge Michael A. Wolff, Missouri Supreme Court (2011)
- Legal intern, trial division, Missouri Public Defender System (2010)

Professional Affiliations

- American Bar Association

- Leadership Council on Legal Diversity
 - Fellow (2023)
 - Pathfinder (2021)
- Young Lawyers Division Board and Committee Chair, Bar Association of Metropolitan St. Louis (2020-2021)
- Former member, Women Lawyers' Association of St. Louis (2015-2019)
- Former member and lifetime member, Mound City Bar Association (2013-2014)
- Theodore McMillian American Inn of Court (2011-2012)

Admissions

- Missouri Bar
- Eastern District of Missouri, U.S. District Court
- Central District of Illinois, U.S. District Court
- Southern District of Illinois, U.S. District Court
- Western District of Missouri, U.S. District Court
- District of Kansas, U.S. District Court

Charitable & Civic Involvement

- Gateway Arch Park Foundation, Friends Advisory Board Member (2023-present)
- Greater East St. Louis Community Fund, Board Member and Treasurer (2014-present)
- Jackie Joyner Kersee Foundation, Board Member and Chair of Governance Committee (2014-present)
- Urban Sprouts Child Development Center, Board Member (2024-present)
- WEPOWER, Board Member (2024-present)

Special Honors

- Award of Merit, Young Lawyers Division, BAMSL (2022)
- Delux Power 100 (2022)
- Honorable Donald J. Gunn, Sr. Professionalism and Justice Award (2022)
- Regional Business Counsel, Leadership 100 (2020-2021 Cohort)
- National Black Lawyers Top 40 Under 40 (2020-2023)
- Missouri & Kansas Rising Star Award (2018-2024)
- Life Fellow, The Fellows of the American Bar Foundation (2018-present)
- Women's Justice Award, Litigation Practitioner Award (2018)

Firm Committees

- Recruiting Committee
- Vice Chair, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Committee