



CHRISTOPHER J. HARNEY, *Senior Attorney*

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Christopher J. Harney is a senior attorney at Theodora Oringher PC. His practice focuses on complex civil litigation, including mass tort defense, product liability, and commercial disputes in state and federal courts.

Mr. Harney has extensive experience representing corporate clients in high-stakes, multi-party litigation, including coordinated mass tort proceedings involving allegations of occupational exposure to respirable crystalline silica. His practice encompasses all phases of litigation, including case strategy, discovery, depositions, expert witness matters, dispositive motions, and jury trials.

In addition to his mass tort practice, Mr. Harney represents businesses and individuals in a broad range of complex commercial disputes, including breach of contract, shareholder and partnership disputes, breach of fiduciary duty, fraudulent transfers, and business torts.

Mr. Harney also has substantial experience in bankruptcy-related litigation and creditors' rights matters, having represented secured and unsecured creditors, financial institutions, trustees, and other parties in complex insolvency proceedings and related litigation.

Mr. Harney was selected to the Super Lawyers Rising Stars list from 2014 through 2020 and was recognized as an Emerging Lawyer by Leading Lawyers in 2017. He also received the Award of Excellence in Pro Bono Service from the United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois in conjunction with the Chicago Chapter of the Federal Bar Association.

Prior to joining Theodora Oringher, Mr. Harney practiced at Seyfarth Shaw LLP.

Practice Areas

Product Liability

Business and Commercial Litigation
Bankruptcy, Restructuring and Creditors' Rights
Toxic Tort and Environmental Litigation

Admissions

Bar Admissions

Arizona (inactive)
California
Illinois (inactive)

Court Admissions

Illinois Supreme Court
U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit
U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California
U.S. District Court for the Central District of California
U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois

Education

University of Mississippi

2008 J.D.
cum laude

University of Chicago

2004 BA

Representative Matters

Mass Tort and Product Liability Litigation

- Represents a national distributor of stone and surfacing products in California's coordinated silica litigation (JCCP 5378), involving hundreds of personal injury and wrongful death claims alleging occupational exposure to respirable crystalline silica from engineered stone products. Handles complex discovery, depositions, expert witness matters, dispositive motions, and litigation strategy in this statewide coordinated proceeding.

Complex Commercial and Business Litigation

- Secured a complete defense verdict following a multi-week jury trial in consolidated litigation involving claims of fraud, aiding and abetting fraud, intentional infliction of emotional distress, defamation, and violations of federal tax law. The opposing party sought more than \$11 million in compensatory damages, plus punitive damages. The jury found no liability and awarded zero damages on all claims.
- Represented an owner in complex, multi-party litigation involving a \$36 million high-rise hotel construction project in downtown San Francisco.
- Represented a construction company in prosecuting claims exceeding \$26 million against a prime contractor arising from work performed on a major U.S. government-funded construction project.
- Represented a chief executive officer and other corporate officers and directors in shareholder derivative litigation involving alleged breaches of fiduciary duty and related claims.
- Represented a former chief executive officer and president of a nonprofit organization in litigation involving claims for breach of fiduciary duty and related allegations.
- Represented a financial institution in a dispute involving a \$4.7 million demand by the United States Department of Agriculture arising from a loan guaranty and loss-sharing agreement involving a failed bank and the FDIC. Successfully negotiated withdrawal of the demand.
- Obtained a favorable judgment in litigation concerning the priority of competing interests in funds held in receivership.

Bankruptcy Litigation and Creditors' Rights

- Represented a Chapter 7 trustee in litigation arising from a technology-company Ponzi scheme involving more than \$100 million in claims, assisting in recoveries exceeding \$80 million through litigation, settlements, and asset dispositions.
- Represented one of the largest unsecured creditors in the PG&E Chapter 11 bankruptcy proceedings.
- Represented a major commercial bank in a Chapter 11 proceeding involving more than \$100 million in real estate-related claims, securing the appointment of a Chapter 11 trustee and a favorable settlement concerning more than \$16.5 million in disputed tax refunds
- Obtained favorable settlements in related bankruptcy proceedings resulting in recoveries exceeding \$15 million on creditors' claims against debtor entities and insiders.

Accomplishments



Professional Recognition

- Super Lawyers (Rising Star 2014 - 2020)

Speaking Engagements

- Moderator, "What Every Bankruptcy Practitioner Should Know About Exceptions to Discharge (§ 523) and Denial of Discharge (§ 727) (June 2012)
- Co-presenter, "Practice Pointers in Preference Litigation," Chicago Bar Association (April 2011)
- Presenter, "Underwater Stock Options," Legal Seminar sponsored by the Illinois Paralegal Association, Chicago, IL (May 2009)

Memberships and Associations

- Chicago Bar Association (Co-Chair, Young Lawyers Section Bankruptcy Committee (2011-2014))
- Chicago Bar Foundation (Member, Young Professionals Board (2011-2017))
- University of Chicago's Order of the C (Wrestling Team Representative (2011-2016))