



DARREN K. SHARP

PARTNER

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Darren Sharp co-chairs the firm's Franchising and Distribution practice area.

He has successfully tried jury trials to verdict in state and federal courts, and he has handled arbitrations involving business and employment disputes. Because of his achievements, Darren is recognized as a *Missouri/Kansas Super Lawyer*® and received an "AV-Preeminent" peer review rating from *Martindale-Hubbell*. Darren is professional and civil when resolving contentious disputes with results-oriented decision making for his clients.

EDUCATION

- Drake University Law School (J.D., *high honors*, 1997)
 - Drake Law Review (Projects Editor)
 - CALI Award for Constitutional Litigation
- Colorado State University (B.A., *magna cum laude*, 1994)

PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

- The Missouri Bar
- Johnson County Bar Association

CHARITABLE AND CIVIC INVOLVEMENT

- Harvester's Food Bank
- CSU Alumni Member-Kansas City
- Volunteer Attorney Project

ACCOLADES

- BTI Client Service All-Star (2023)
- [*Missouri/Kansas Super Lawyers*](#)® (2014-2018); *Super Lawyers*®, Rising Star (2010-2012); *Super Lawyers*®, Business Edition (2014)
- Missouri Bar Foundation W. Oliver Rasch Award for the outstanding article published during 2010 in the *Journal of the Missouri Bar* (2011)
- Named an "Up and Coming Lawyer" by *Missouri Lawyers Weekly* (2011)
- AV® Peer Review Rated, *Martindale-Hubbell*

SERVICES AND INDUSTRIES

Franchising and Distribution
Franchise Business
Acquisitions
Litigation
Education
Employment and Labor
Noncompete and Trade
Secrets

ADMISSIONS

Missouri
Kansas
Nebraska
Colorado
U.S. District Court, Eastern
District of Missouri
U.S. District Court, Western
District of Missouri
U.S. District Court, District of
Kansas
U.S. District Court, District of
Colorado
U.S. District Court, District of
Nebraska

EXPERIENCE

Helped Client in Abusive Situation Break Lease

Assisted a client who advised her landlord that she would be breaking the lease on her apartment to escape her abusive live-in boyfriend. After raising defenses to the lease, and pointing out Missouri law allows victims of abuse to break leases without penalty, and asking for extensive written discovery, the landlord's counsel ultimately agreed to dismiss the client and pursue only her former boyfriend. The client was being held accountable for several thousand dollars over the remaining term of the lease, and she was thankful she ultimately owed nothing.

Bylaw Amendments for Private University Relating to Governance Restructuring

Drafted extensive bylaw amendments for a private university regarding fundamental governance restructuring.

Contract Review for Liberal Arts College

Reviewed vendor contracts for private liberal arts college, including food service agreements, cable television agreements, campus maintenance agreements and telephone systems agreements.

Counsel on Early Retirement Offers for Professors, Staff

Counseled private liberal arts college regarding early retirement offers for professors and staff.

Ongoing Title IX Counsel for Liberal Arts College

Provided ongoing counsel to liberal arts college in Title IX investigations and issues.

Restructuring, Reclassifying Endowment Funds for Liberal Arts College

Counseled private liberal arts college regarding restructuring and reclassifying endowment funds.

Outside Corporate Counsel for Organ Procurement Organization

Served as outside corporate counsel for a federally certified organ procurement organization covering Kansas and western Missouri.

Provided Outside Corporate Counsel Services for National Charity

Serves as outside corporate counsel for national public charity serving children and adults with disabilities.

Successfully Enforced Franchise Agreement Terms

Successfully enforced terms of franchise agreement for franchisor to dismiss franchisee's claims and require filing according to contract's venue clause.

Summary Judgment for Fortune 500 Logistics Company in Title VII Case

Obtained summary judgment ruling in favor of a Fortune 500 client in a case where the plaintiff alleged Title VII national origin discrimination.

Lead Counsel in Pipeline Condemnation Cases

Served as lead counsel in Kansas pipeline condemnation cases tried to jury to determine fair market value for easements.

Successfully Defended College in Discrimination Case Before the EEOC

Successfully defended EEOC charges alleging race and gender discrimination on behalf

of private liberal arts college.

Successfully Defended Franchisor's Trademarks and Trade Names

Served as lead counsel in various holdover franchisee disputes, successfully restraining former franchisees from using franchisor's trademarks and trade names.

Judgment for Fortune 500 Logistics Company in Title VII, ADEA Trial

Obtained judgment as a matter of law in jury trial for a Fortune 500 client accused of age discrimination and retaliation under Title VII and ADEA.

Obtained Injunctive Relief for Distribution Company

Argued and obtained injunctive relief for local distributor to prevent termination of distributorship agreement with supplier of wine and spirits in Missouri.

Successfully Defended Client Against Injunctive Relief in Noncompete Matter

Successfully defended against injunctive relief for corporate client accused of attempting to enforce an unlawful covenant not to compete brought by former employee.

Summary Judgment Affirmed on Appeal for Hotel Franchisor

Obtained summary judgment and affirmation on appeal for national hotel franchisor accused of negligence for franchisee's alleged conduct.

Defense Verdict for Fortune 500 Logistics Company in Race Discrimination Case

Served as lead counsel in jury trial where the jury returned a defense verdict for Fortune 500 client in Title VII race discrimination case.

Summary Judgment in Breach of Distributorship Agreement

Won summary judgment on behalf of national manufacturer client against a former distributor who sued claiming breach of exclusive distributorship agreement.