

A SPECIAL REPORT

APPELLATE HOT LIST

The appellate luminaries featured in our 2019 special report won key matters before the U.S. Supreme Court and federal courts of appeal, staying true to their practice philosophies along the way. Here, they recount how they tackled appeals involving everything from racial gerrymandering to RICO. For more on their stories, read on. —*Lisa Helem*

WILLIAMS & CONNOLLY

Lisa Blatt discusses the firm's top U.S. Supreme Court win.

■ **TELL US ABOUT YOUR TOP U.S. SUPREME COURT OR FEDERAL APPEALS COURT VICTORY OVER THE PAST YEAR AND HOW YOU AND YOUR TEAM ACHIEVED THE WIN.** Lisa Blatt secured victory for her client in one of the most important federal preemption cases of the past year, *Dolin v. GlaxoSmithKline LLC*, where the Seventh Circuit reversed a \$3 million jury verdict in favor of the widow of a Reed Smith partner who killed himself while taking a generic version of GSK's anti-epressant Paxil.

In May 2019, the [U.S.] Supreme Court declined to review the decision, and upon remand, Lisa and her team defeated the plaintiff's bid to reopen the judgment based on the Supreme Court's intervening decision in *Merck v. Albrecht*.

*2017-2018 representation occurred prior to Lisa Blatt's return to Williams & Connolly.

■ **HOW DID YOUR FIRM APPROACH APPELLATE SUCCESS OVER THE PAST YEAR?** Our women-led appellate practice approaches appellate work just like Williams & Connolly approaches litigation in general: be aggressive and creative, protect and defend your client, and out-think and outwork the other side.

■ **WHAT IS THE MOST SATISFYING ELEMENT OF APPELLATE PRACTICE IN YOUR OPINION?** Winning.

■ **WHAT'S THE MOST VALUABLE LESSON YOU LEARNED AS A YOUNG LAWYER?** Don't let other people's perception of you define you. Be fearless. Trust your instincts but



Lisa Blatt

recognize and learn from any mistakes along the way.

Submitted by Lisa Blatt, a partner at Williams & Connolly and chair of the firm's Supreme Court and appellate practice.