

A SPECIAL REPORT

APPELLATE HOT LIST

We are proud to present the 2020 Appellate Hot List honorees. These firms tackled novel issues and undoubtedly overcame unprecedented challenges over the past year, boasting high-profile and high-stakes wins in the nation's highest appellate courts across a number of practice areas—from Constitutional rights to immigration law to pharmaceutical and intellectual property disputes. Here, these winning firm leaders share their appellate successes, insights and lessons learned along the way. —Sarah Tincher, managing editor

WILLIAMS & CONNOLLY

■ **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.**

U.S. Patent and Trademark Office v. Booking.com. It was the first-ever U.S. Supreme Court telephonic argument; Lisa's 40th Supreme Court argument; and the first-ever argument where Lisa's children sat at counsel table (which was Lisa's dining-room table). And it was ultimately Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg's final majority opinion. The key to that win was writing a fun brief that turned otherwise-dry trademark principles into an appeal to common sense as well as the common law.

■ **WHAT WAS YOUR FIRM'S KEY TO APPELLATE SUCCESS OVER THE PAST YEAR?** Play to win. Williams & Connolly has a well-earned reputation for ferocious litigators. The job

is to convince the justices to find a way to vote for our clients. They have a lot to read, and they can tell when the tone of briefing or argument feels inauthentic.

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

Helping my younger colleagues get argument opportunities and watching them knock it out of the park. We devote a lot of time to getting our associates argument opportunities and spreading the wealth of Supreme Court arguments.

■ **WHAT'S THE MOST VALUABLE LESSON YOU LEARNED AS A YOUNG LAWYER?** Own your own style. Being an effective advocate—as well as



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someone who enjoys the job long-term—requires sincerity and a thick skin.

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