

HUESTON HENNIGAN



Alison L. Plessman
Partner

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Education

Columbia Law School (J.D., 2003)

University of Minnesota (B.A., 1999, Political Science) *summa cum laude*

Admissions

California

New York

Repeatedly recognized as one of the Top 100 Women Lawyers in California by the *Daily Journal*, Alison Plessman consistently delivers successful outcomes for her clients in high-stakes litigation and business matters across a variety of areas, including copyright infringement, breaches of contract and fiduciary duties, wildland fires and debris flows, employment, securities, health care and insurance fraud, trade secrets misappropriation, RICO violations, accounting irregularities and market manipulation, and professional negligence. She has successfully defended companies, boards of directors, and individuals facing regulatory investigations and criminal enforcement actions, securing pre- and post-indictment dismissals. She also regularly advises clients on their most sensitive and confidential internal matters, including on matters relating to whistleblowing, discrimination, breach of fiduciary duty, trade secrets misappropriation, termination, and unfair competition.

Ms. Plessman began her legal career as a litigation associate at Wachtell, Lipton, Rosen & Katz in New York City before joining Irell & Manella, where she was elected partner.

During law school, Ms. Plessman was named a Harlan Fiske Stone Scholar and won the Frederick H. Weisberg Award in Constitutional Law. As an undergraduate, she graduated *summa cum laude* and was a member of Phi Beta Kappa and Phi Kappa Phi.

Testimonials

“This securities litigator wins big, particularly when her clients are the biggest on earth.” —*“Lawyers on the Fast Track,” The Recorder*

“She’s highly regarded as a real up-and-comer.” —*Chambers*

Experience

Secured a preliminary injunction on behalf of **shareholders of SweeGen, Inc.** in a derivative lawsuit alleging breaches of fiduciary duties, self-dealing, securities fraud, conversion, and conspiracy; subsequently prevailed at the California Court of Appeal, which upheld the trial court’s ruling granting the preliminary injunction.

Defending **PacifiCorp** in dozens of lawsuits filed in multiple jurisdictions across Oregon and California arising out of the 2020 Labor Day Fires. The fires burned over 500,000 acres across at least five counties in Oregon and California and allegedly destroyed over 2,000 structures. Our roles include defense of all civil litigation and consultation and engagement with regulatory and investigatory agencies.

Secured dismissal of all claims in favor of **Broadcom** against TomTom International, B.V. in a breach of warranty action involving Broadcom’s semiconductors.

Served as trial counsel for **T-Mobile** in a successful trade secrets lawsuit against the Chinese smartphone maker Huawei Technologies alleging the manufacturer stole T-Mobile’s smartphone testing robot.

Defending **Broadcom** in a lawsuit seeking “hundreds of millions of dollars” in damages arising from alleged copyright infringement and breach of a software license agreement.

Represented **InterDent, Inc.** in breach of contract dispute with Levine Leichtman Capital Partners, II, L.P. leading to a full dismissal of the case following a successful summary judgment motion.

Defended a **senior executive** at an international gaming company in whistleblower suit investigated by the SEC, resulting in no charges or fines.

Represented a **Hong Kong investment company** in multiparty RICO and breach of contract action alleging violations of U.S. export control laws leading to a successful motion to compel arbitration between third parties and stay of the litigation with respect to the client.

Represented **Western Digital** and its **SanDisk** subsidiaries in their widely publicized dispute with Toshiba over anti-transfer provisions in joint venture agreements governing the manufacture and development of NAND flash memory. The dispute encompasses multiple ICC arbitrations and litigation in the California trial and appellate courts, where SanDisk secured injunctive relief in aid of the arbitrations.

Defended a leading **global professional services company** against an \$830 million actuarial malpractice lawsuit brought by the city of Houston in connection with the city’s \$6.2 billion pension crisis and obtained a favorable settlement.

Obtained \$20 million for **Pacific Life** against Bank of New York Mellon at the summary judgment stage in a breach of contract and breach of fiduciary duty matter in investment mismanagement litigation, later obtaining an additional \$30 million for Pacific Life in a settlement on the eve of trial.

Representing **Southern California Edison** and **Edison International** in litigation arising out of the 2017 Thomas Fire and 2018 Montecito mudslides.

Obtained a settlement for only attorneys’ fees, after filing a motion for summary judgment, in a professional liability matter against a **security assessment firm** facing alleged damages of over \$150 million.

Represented **Universal Music Group** in a nine-figure negligence and breach of contract lawsuit concerning media assets that were destroyed in a fire at NBC Universal’s studio lot. Reached a favorable settlement shortly before the start of trial and after successfully adding a punitive damages claim.

Represented **Broadcom** in copyright and breach of contract disputes against Walmart and Alight, Inc. leading to expedient and favorable resolutions.

Successfully defended an **investment bank professional** in a U.S. Treasuries probe conducted by the SEC and the Commodities Future Trading Commission, resulting in no charges or fines.

Successfully defended a **senior executive at a global investment firm** in a multiyear investigation being conducted by the SEC, resulting in no charges or fines.

Represented **Glaukos** against a claim of inequitable conduct in a complex patent matter in Delaware federal court. The case was settled three days before trial on favorable terms for our client.

Won a dismissal of a **criminal mortgage fraud** indictment after evidentiary hearings for prosecutorial misconduct.

Served on the winning trial team in the \$2.2 billion insurance dispute between **Silverstein Properties** and several insurance companies concerning the collapse of the World Trade Center in the aftermath of the September 11 attacks.

Successfully defended **Kenneth Langone's Invemed Associates** in a disciplinary proceeding before the National Association of Securities Dealers (NASD, now FINRA) that resulted in what *The New York Times* called a "withering" and "high-profile defeat" for the regulators.

Represented the **New York Stock Exchange** (NYSE) in litigation with dissident seatholders following the announcement of the NYSE's historic merger with Archipelago. During the preliminary injunction hearing, the parties reached a settlement that allowed the vote on the merger to proceed as scheduled.

Recognitions

Women of Influence: Attorneys, Los Angeles Business Journal (2020-present)

Top Women Lawyers in California, Daily Journal (2015, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021)

Top 100 Lawyers, Los Angeles Business Journal (2022)

Named to the Southern California Super Lawyers list (2016-present)

Named to the Super Lawyers Rising Stars list (2013-2014)

50 "California Lawyers on the Fast Track," The Recorder (2013)

The Best Lawyers in America (2023)

500 Leading Litigators in America, Lawdragon

Activities

Board Member, Western Center on Law & Poverty

Member, Women's White Collar Defense Association

Insights

6/1/2006 "Electronic Discovery and the Proposed Amendments to the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure," Securities Litigation Reporter

3/1/2006 "Lessons from Moussaoui: The Ethics of Witness Prep," New York Law Journal