

**About Damn Time:
Women Leading Complex Cases**



This session will address the benefits and challenges in advancing women in lead roles in complex litigation. Lead counsel in the Juul MDL – Plaintiff and Defense—and the Court-appointed Settlement Special Master will share their experiences and perspectives on having women at the helm in a high-profile, high stakes complex case. Panelists will also discuss obstacles to appointing women in leadership, including the impact of the “repeat player” problem that confers unfair advantages and limits opportunity. Highlights of what judges can do to accelerate DEI in leadership will be presented and resources provided.

Speakers:



Sarah London, Attorney, Lief Cabraser Heimann & Bernstein

Lief Cabraser partner Sarah London is a true leader in the plaintiffs’ bar and a determined, skilled, and experienced advocate for the injured, employees, and consumers. Sarah has risen to national prominence as a result of appointments to and success in leadership roles in multiple pivotal lawsuits, including as Co-Lead & Liaison Counsel for plaintiffs in the Juul injury/predatory marketing MDL, where her work led to four historic settlements announced in late 2022 with defendant Juul as well as a comprehensive and historic \$235 million settlement that was reached between additional defendant Altria and plaintiffs in the midst of a subsequent JUUL bellwether trial. In 2020, Sarah was appointed to the Plaintiffs’ Executive Committee in the Gilead HIV Drug Kidney & Bone Injuries Litigation, and in 2019, Sarah was named Subclass Settlement Counsel in In re Flint Water Cases. Sarah also serves in lead roles in multiple women’s health cases, including as Liaison Counsel in the state court coordinated proceedings involving the destruction of hundreds of frozen eggs and embryos at San Francisco’s Pacific Fertility Center.



Thomas Perrelli, Firm Chair, Jenner & Block

As a strategic advisor, accomplished litigator, crisis manager and one of Washington’s most respected counselors, Jenner & Block Firm Chair Tom Perrelli guides companies and their senior leadership through their most complex legal, regulatory, and business challenges. Whether the issues involve government investigations, congressional inquiries, interest from state regulators, public policy changes, or media scrutiny, clients turn to Tom for his ability to advance and defend their interests in complicated landscapes. Tom is a problem-solver, capable of developing and deploying a wide range of tools to move the company past significant problems or substantially mitigate their impact.

Tom’s wide field of vision is informed by his deep experience with the US Department of Justice, numerous other federal regulators, Congress, and the state Attorney General community. Tom’s work often involves negotiation of complex multi-party settlements, development of legislative or regulatory initiatives, and responding to congressional investigations, including preparing CEOs and senior executives to testify before Congress and state legislatures. Tom created Jenner’s Government Controversies and Public Policy Litigation Practice to bring a multi-disciplinary approach to clients’ most complex problems. As former Associate Attorney General of the United States, Tom was responsible for the Department’s Civil, Antitrust, Civil Rights, Environment and Natural Resources, and Tax Divisions.



Shana Simmons, Chief Legal Officer, Everlaw

Shana Simmons is the Chief Legal Officer at Everlaw, a cloud-based e-discovery platform that unlocks the collaborative power of litigation and investigative teams. As the company’s legal strategist, Shana advises Everlaw’s executive leaders and Board of Directors to drive business growth while mitigating risk. She leads the legal department and is responsible for all legal, regulatory, privacy and governance, risk and compliance issues across the company. A recognized thought leader, Shana appears frequently in industry and national news publications and podcasts, and is a sought-after, inspirational guest speaker at a wide range of conferences and events.

Previously, Shana was Head of Go-To-Market Legal at Google Cloud, where she guided its explosive growth in markets around the world, including the U.S., Canada and Europe, and entry into many other countries. She started her legal career as an associate at Cleary Gottlieb Stein & Hamilton LLP in New York and London.

Shana received a JD degree from the University of California, Berkeley, School of Law, where she served on the managing boards of the *California Law Review* and *Berkeley Journal of African American Law & Policy*. She was additionally Co-President of Law Students of African Descent. Shana earned her BA degree with honors from Wesleyan University, where she recently served as a Trustee. Shana currently serves on the boards of Lawyers for One America and the Oakland Zoo, and lives in Oakland, California, with her family.



Renee Smith, Attorney, Kirkland & Ellis

Renee Smith is Chambers-ranked litigation partner at Kirkland & Ellis LLP. Renee Smith represents clients facing high-profile mass tort MDLs and other complex products liability litigation across multiple sectors, including pharmaceutical products, medical devices, asbestos, automobiles, tobacco products, and military equipment. Renee has won jury trials in multiple federal MDLs, and other state and federal courts across the country.

Drawing on experience in high-profile product liability cases involving biologic autoimmune condition treatments, weight-loss drugs, drug-contamination issues and automobile recalls, Renee currently defends products-liability cases involving vehicle safety, next-generation biologics, diabetes treatments, and PFAS (“forever chemicals”). Renee lives in Chicago and is the mother of three boys (who think she spends a ridiculous amount of time writing emails) and one adorable mini goldendoodle named George Washington (who always listens to her and agrees with whatever she says).