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On September 1, 2021, Merrill Hirsh of HirshADR PLLC and the Law Office of Merrill Hirsh PLLC in Washington, D.C. became the first Executive Director of the Academy of Court-Appointed Masters. He is also the Chair of the ABA Judicial Division Lawyers Conference Committee on Special Masters; and a member of both the Lawyers Conference's Executive Committee and the ABA Dispute Resolution Section Council. He was the Convener of the Working Group that Drafted the ABA Guidelines on the Appointment and Use of Special Masters in Federal and State Civil Litigation adopted by the ABA's House of Delegates in January 2019.

Merril graduated from Oberlin College with High Honors in Government and from Harvard Law School *magna cum laude*, where he was also a student counsel in the Harvard Legal Aid Bureau.

Over nearly 40 years, Merrill has litigated cases on behalf of both plaintiffs and defendants and the United States in federal or state courts in over 40 states. For 7 years, Merrill was a Trial Attorney in the Civil Division of the US Department of Justice, where among other cases involving administrative and constitutional issues, he was a trial attorney in the 8-month Kansas City School Desegregation case, and a 2-month federal trial involving the constitutionality of an act of Congress.

He then worked first as an associate and then a partner at Ross, Dixon & Masback, LLP (later Ross, Dixon & Bell, LLP and Troutman Sanders, LLP). There, among many other cases, Merrill structured the defendant class action mechanism used to settle \$3 billion of asbestos liabilities; litigated antitrust cases under both Sections 1 and 2 of the Sherman Act; represented relators in a novel False Claims Act case that obtained \$76.25 million in recoveries based upon allegations of price fixing for carbon fiber and additional recoveries in companion antitrust litigation; obtained an \$85 million recovery on behalf of resellers of 800 telephone service; represented D&O, General Liability and other insurers in numerous cases including what was at the time the nation's largest healthcare bankruptcy and a number of asbestos bankruptcies; represented the Financial Planning Association in a successful challenge to an SEC regulation; and represented two adult eagle scouts in a challenge to the Boy Scouts' policy of excluding gays.

In 2017, he left Troutman to form his own ADR and law practices and continues to work, among other things, as a Hearing Committee Chair for the DC Board of Professional Responsibility, and a member of the Commercial Arbitration Panel of the American Arbitration Association. He is a Fellow of both ACAM and the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators, a hearing examiner for the Architect of the Capitol and part of the DC Multidoor Family Mediation program. He was a member of a Task Force formed by the Straus Institute, the International Mediation Institute and the College of Commercial Arbitrators to examine mixed mode dispute resolution, and is a 2-time recipient of ACAM's Civil Justice Award.

Merril has written dozens of articles on special masters, alternative dispute resolution, case management, antitrust, insurance and other issues. He has also spoken on dozens of programs about these issues, including presentations for the American Bar Association as a whole, as well as at Conferences of the ABA's Judicial Division and the ABA's Dispute Resolution, Business Law, Antitrust and Administrative Law Sections.