



MELISSA L. ROMERO

Partner

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Melissa Romero represents clients in complex commercial litigation, as well as in cases involving product and professional liability. She has substantial experience taking and defending depositions, participating in hearings, leading complex discovery and motions practice, and developing and implementing litigation and trial strategies.

EDUCATION

University of Denver Sturm College of Law, J.D., 2014, *Denver University Law Review*, Executive Board Articles Editor

University of Denver, 2014, Masters of Social Work

Colorado College, B.A., 2006, Philosophy; Minor, Spanish, *cum laude*

GOVERNMENT SERVICE

Law Clerk to The Honorable Christine M. Arguello of the U.S. District Court for the District of Colorado

Appellate Law Clerk to The Honorable Terry Fox of the Colorado Court of Appeals

Judicial Intern to The Honorable David Furman of the Colorado Court of Appeals

Judicial Intern to The Honorable Angela Arkin, 18th Judicial District (retired)

OTHER EXPERIENCE

Fluent Spanish speaker
Civil Litigation Clinic, Student Attorney

Rocky Mountain Children's Law Center
Bilingual Legal and Social Work Intern

Jefferson County Office of the Public Defender, Social Work Intern
Colorado Succeeds, Education Policy Intern

ADMISSIONS

Colorado

HIGHLIGHTS

- Won an arbitration for one of the nation's largest beauty and wellness franchisors.
- Won partial summary judgment and dismissal of a strict product liability claim brought against a national automobile manufacturer (WTO's client) based on unsupported allegations of a defect in the client's design of its vehicle's occupant restraint system.
- Won a directed verdict for a regional bank in a Colorado Wage Claim Act trial.
- Won complete summary judgment of all seven claims brought against our client in an employment matter involving unsupported allegations of wrongful termination, retaliation, and age discrimination.
- Won a preliminary injunction for one of the nation's largest health and wellness franchisors against three competing fitness and nutrition studios that had stolen our client's trade secrets, infringed on its trademarks, and breached non-compete obligations.
- Won complete administrative closure of removal proceedings, allowing WTO's asylum client and her minor son to remain in the United States with work authorization, indefinitely.
- Won two preliminary injunctions in arbitration proceedings involving theft of trade secrets and breach of contract.

INDUSTRIES

- Real Estate
- Professional Services
- Consumer Products & Services

PRACTICE AREAS

- Commercial Litigation
- Antitrust & Competition
- Franchise & Distribution
- Product Liability
- Employment
- Legal Professional Liability
- Appellate

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BIOGRAPHY

Melissa Romero represents clients in complex commercial litigation, as well as in cases involving product and professional liability. She has substantial experience developing and implementing litigation and trial strategies, taking and defending depositions, participating in hearings, and leading complex discovery and motions practice.

Before joining WTO, she worked as a law clerk to The Honorable Christine M. Arguello of the U.S. District Court for the District of Colorado and The Honorable Terry Fox of the Colorado Court of Appeals.

Melissa graduated from the University of Denver Sturm College of Law where she received a full-tuition Chancellor's Scholarship and served as the Executive Board Articles Editor of the Denver University Law Review. She also received numerous honors and awards during law school, including the Reese Persuasive Writing Award, the Hartje Objective Writing Award, and several Scholastic Excellence Awards, which are given to the top law student in each class.

CASES

- Won a complete victory following a four-day arbitration for one of the nation's largest beauty and wellness franchisors, which was accused of franchise disclosure violations, violations of unfair competition laws, and breach of contract. WTO also successfully countersued for breach of contract and trade secret misappropriation, obtained preliminary and permanent injunctions, recovered liquidated damages, and secured an award of attorneys' fees and costs.
- Won partial summary judgment and dismissal of a strict product liability claim brought against a national automobile manufacturer (WTO's client) based on unsupported allegations of a defect in the client's design of its vehicle's occupant restraint system.
- Won a directed verdict on a former senior bank executive's Colorado Wage Claim Act claim and voluntary dismissal of defamation and punitive damages claims for a large regional bank the night before closing arguments after four-plus years of litigation.
- Won complete summary judgment of all seven claims brought against our client in an employment matter involving unsupported allegations of wrongful termination, retaliation, and age discrimination.
- Won a preliminary injunction for one of the nation's largest health and wellness franchisors against three competing fitness and nutrition studios that had stolen our client's trade secrets, infringed on its trademarks, and breached non-compete obligations.

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- Won complete administrative closure of removal proceedings, allowing WTO's asylum client and her minor son to remain in the United States with work authorization, indefinitely.
- Won two preliminary injunctions in arbitration proceedings involving theft of trade secrets and breach of contract.
- Successfully defended a real estate professional and obtained a favorable settlement in breach of contract and fraudulent misrepresentation action involving over \$50 million in claimed damages.
- Settled a breach of contract case on favorable terms, reducing the client's payment to just 12% of the plaintiff's original demand.
- Obtained a favorable defense settlement in a medical malpractice case following the first few days of a jury trial. Handled numerous aspects of trial including witness prep, depositions, and jury instructions.
- Drafted pleadings, dispositive motions, and mediation statements for a professional malpractice case that resulted in a favorable settlement for WTO's clients.
- Represented an appliance manufacturer in a product liability class action that settled favorably.
- Represented clients pro bono in asylum and breach of contract proceedings.
- Serving as advisory counsel in numerous high-stakes commercial proceedings, including involving breach of contract, trade secret misappropriation, and patent litigation.

TEACHING POSITIONS

- DU Graduate School of Social Work
Adjunct Professor, The Law of Family and Child, 2015-2018
Allen Elementary School in Austin, TX
Bilingual Third Grade Teacher

BAR & COURT ADMISSIONS

- Colorado
U.S. District Court, D. Colorado
U.S. District Court, D. New Jersey
U.S. District Court, D. New Mexico

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LEGAL MEMBERSHIPS, ACTIVITIES & HONORS

- The Best Lawyers in America
 - Ones to Watch - Commercial Litigation, 2021-2024
 - Ones to Watch - Litigation - Labor and Employment, 2022-2024
 - Ones to Watch - Product Liability Litigation, 2023-2024
- Colorado Super Lawyers
 - Rising Stars, Business Litigation, 2023-2024
- Rocky Mountain Children's Law Center
 - Board Member, 2022 - Present
- Law School...Yes We Can!
 - Program Mentor
- Leadership Council on Legal Diversity
 - Fellow, 2023
- Spanish Speaking Lawyers' Committee of the Colorado Bar Association
 - Past Vice Chair, Member
- Colorado General Counsel Mentor Program, 2022 - 2023
- Colorado Women's Bar Association, Member
- Colorado Hispanic Bar Association, Member
- Our Courts Hispanic Outreach Committee
 - Member and Volunteer Presenter
- Project Safeguard Legal Clinics, Former Interpreter
- Legal Nights at Mi Casa Legal Resource Center, Former Interpreter

ARTICLES & PRESENTATIONS

- Co-Author, "The Use of Court Appointed Experts and Masters in Civil Cases," 46 Colo. Law. 1, (January 2017).
- "Making Space for Cultural Differences in Child Welfare," 38 NACC: Guardian 6, (August 2016).
- "Connick v. Thompson: Forsaking Constitutional Due Process for Fear of Flooding Litigation and Loss of Municipal Autonomy," 89 DENV. U.L. REV. 771, (December 2012).