



John M. Farrell

Of Counsel
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Overview

John Farrell has tried over 120 trials and has been recognized as a top trial lawyer in intellectual property matters. In recent years, John has focused on pharma practice, where he has worked as trial counsel for clients in some of their biggest cases.

John is valued for his trial skills, as well as his strength in working with witnesses, guiding other lawyers at trial, and taking depositions of key witnesses. John's colleagues routinely ask him to work with their trial witnesses and prepare witnesses for deposition.

One client, who worked with John on several cases, described John as "a world class trial lawyer" and added that "John is unassuming and the jury clearly loves him." Clients have remarked on his skill in presenting expert witness testimony in ways that the trier of fact can understand and his extraordinary ability to cross examine key experts on the other side.

John teaches trial advocacy and deposition skills to firms across the country, including at the Microsoft Advocacy Academy. He is a long-time member of the faculty of the National Institute for Trial Advocacy and has done national webcasts for NITA on topics like direct examination and closing argument. His webcasts rank as some of the most watched. He lectures frequently on trial skills and soon will publish a book entitled *Tools for the Trial Lawyer*.

Before joining Fish & Richardson, John was an assistant district attorney in the San Francisco District Attorney's Office, rising to Head Attorney working in the Homicide Unit. In addition to his trial work as an ADA, John became a sought-after lecturer for the California District Attorneys Association, giving three-hour talks throughout the state on the use of uncharged acts and the law of hearsay. He was given the CDAA Instructor of the Year Award.

John attended Indiana University, where he graduated with highest honors, obtaining a Bachelor of Arts in history and political science. He was named the top student in both departments. John received his law degree from the University of Chicago, where he served as President of the Law Students Association. He clerked for the Honorable S. Hugh Dillin of the United States District Court for the Southern District of Indiana.

Recognitions & awards

California Lawyer Attorneys of the Year (CLAY) Award

Daily Journal 2018

Super Lawyers

Super Lawyers 2011-2013, 2016-2020

Testimonials

Client Name Confidential. A major pharmaceutical client said of John's work handling worldwide litigation over its key patented treatment: "John has a very unique set of skills that make him an enormously powerful asset in each case and one of my favorite tasks is figuring out exactly how to deploy that for each case." The client illustrated this point by noting that John had performed at a top level in trial over and over; he took "a brilliant and pivotal deposition" of an in house lawyer that resulted in a complete victory based on unclear hands; and he regularly worked with witnesses to render them effective on the stand.

Insights

Article | May 14, 2025

Taking a Good Deposition, Part III: Conversations, Exhibits, Whether to Hold Your Fire at Deposition, and Dealing with Obstreperous Counsel

Article | September 12, 2024

Taking a Good Deposition, Part II: Asking the Right Kind of Questions and Asking Them in the Right Way

Article | July 15, 2024

How Attorneys Can Reduce Bad Behavior at Deposition

Article | June 17, 2024

Refreshing Recollection and Impeachment

News

July 12, 2023

Medical Device Verdict Secured by Fish & Richardson Team Ranked in the Top 25 in *ALM's* List of 2022 Northeast Top Verdicts & Settlements

May 23, 2023

Twenty-Three People From Fish & Richardson Honored by California Lawyers Association With Wiley W. Manuel Certificate for Pro Bono Legal Services

August 27, 2021

Fish & Richardson Part of Gilead Legal Team That Secures Reversal of \$1.2 Billion Judgment Against Kite Pharma for Cancer Therapy

Services

Litigation

Patent Litigation

Industries

Academic Research & Medical Centers

Admissions

California (1981)

Clerkships

U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Indiana, The Honorable S. Hugh Dillin (1979-1981)

Education

J.D., University of Chicago Law School (1979)
B.A. with highest distinction, Indiana University (1976)