

PRACTICE

Melissa Yemma concentrates her practice in the areas of product liability and retail liability litigation. In addition, she defends independent and public schools in a variety of matters involving student safety, school policy and civil rights.

Ms. Yemma's experience covers all aspects of discovery and trial preparation. She has successfully arbitrated many cases in both federal and state courts throughout Pennsylvania and New Jersey.

Ms. Yemma was recognized as a Rising Star in the 2010 edition of Pennsylvania Super Lawyers magazine, a distinction that recognizes the top 2.5 percent of Pennsylvania lawyers in practice for 10 years or less.

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

- Representation of manufacturers and servicers in product liability litigation involving a range of residential and commercial products including appliances, recreational products and vehicles, snow making equipment and heating products.
- Representation of a global leader in the manufacture of home products in product litigation involving refrigerators, freezers, ranges, washers, dryers, dishwashers, dehumidifiers and vacuum cleaners.
- Representation of leading global automotive supplier in product litigation.
- Representation of a diversified manufacturer of industrial components serving the railroad, vehicular and construction markets.
- Experience in the representation of independent schools in matters involving discrimination, admission practices, policies, procedures and student safety.
- Experience in the representation of public schools in matters involving student safety, dismissal procedures, student supervision, threat assessments, civil rights, premises liability and school policies.
- Representation of national retailers in matters involving premises liability, product sale, product installation and service.
- Representation of commercial entities in litigation involving their employees and their properties.
- Representation of servicers and installers of residential and commercial products in matters where it is alleged that their work resulted in property damage and personal injury.

SIGNIFICANT REPRESENTATIVE MATTERS INCLUDE:

- Defense verdict for a private day and boarding school in a lawsuit brought by a student for personal injury sustained by the student when he was hit by a vehicle at a pedestrian cross-walk on a campus roadway. The defense successfully proved through expert engineering testimony that the injuries sustained by the student were the result of his inattention and not the result of defective roadway engineering or the lack of proper pedestrian warning devices.



Super Lawyers Rising Star, 2010.

EDUCATION

- Judicial Clerkship, The Honorable William C. Carpenter, Superior Court of Delaware, 2003-2004
- J.D., Villanova University School of Law, 2003
Symposium Editor, VILLANOVA SPORTS AND ENTERTAINMENT LAW JOURNAL
- Student-Attorney, Villanova Farmworker Legal Aid Clinic
- B.A., Villanova University, 2000

ADMISSIONS

- Pennsylvania
- New Jersey
- U.S. District Court, Eastern District of Pennsylvania
- U.S. District Court, Middle District of Pennsylvania
- U.S. District Court, District of New Jersey

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SIGNIFICANT REPRESENTATIVE MATTERS (cont'd):

- Defense arbitration decision in Pennsylvania federal court action where it was alleged that a dehumidifier caused a fire and resulting property damage. The defense successfully proved that the dehumidifier was not in the area of fire origin and that the dehumidifier did not contain any evidence of abnormal electrical activity.
- Obtained a voluntary dismissal of a Pennsylvania federal court action where it was alleged that a defective dryer caused a fire and resulting property damage. The defense was successful in establishing through expert opinion that the fire originated to the exterior of the dryer and that the dryer was attacked by the fire.
- Obtained Summary Judgement in favor of appliance manufacturer in a lawsuit brought by homeowners for damages sustained as a result of a fire. The defense successfully established that the dishwasher at issue was not an unreasonably dangerous product as a matter of law.
- Obtained summary judgment in favor of a property owner in a lawsuit brought by a business invitee for personal injuries sustained by the individual when she fell from a loading dock on the property. Through fact discovery, the defense successfully established that the property owner was a landlord out of possession and therefore, owed no duty to the business invitee.
- Successfully litigated matter on behalf of school district where teacher alleged wrongful termination was the result of her disability. School district defended action by establishing termination was based upon poor performance and not teacher's disability.
- Achieved cost-effective settlement on behalf of HVAC installer and servicer where it was alleged that improper installation and service was the cause of a fire which destroyed a commercial building resulting in significant property damage and business income loss.

ACTIVITIES

- Arbitrator, Delaware County Court of Common Pleas
- Volunteer, Camp Dost, A Pediatric Oncology Camp, Millville, Pennsylvania, 1996 – present.
- Marathon Runner, completing seven marathons in Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia.

MEMBERSHIP

- NAMWOLF (National Association of Minority and Women Owned Law Firms)
- WBENC (National Women's Business Enterprise Certification)
- Pennsylvania Bar Association
- New Jersey Bar Association
- Defense Research Institute, Young Lawyers Committee