

APPELLATE HOT LIST

a special report

“Common sense beats a footnote every time,” writes Paul Clement, when detailing the practice advice he’d give his younger self. “Focus on what’s right and true, not what’s clever and shrewd,” writes Don Verrilli. The stars of the appellate bar featured in this year’s special report practice what they preach. Over the past year, they won key matters before the U.S. Supreme Court and federal courts of appeal that tackled everything from religious freedom in mass transit advertising to jurisdictional issues involving the Clean Water Act to the music of the mighty Marvin Gaye. For more on their stories, “Keep on [reading.]”

—Lisa Helem



Peter K. Stris

STRIS & MAHER

Ultimately, what I’m most proud of isn’t the wins themselves; it’s our incredible appellate team. Take Doug Geyser as just one example. In the last year, he was a principal drafter of two winning Supreme Court briefs. He briefed and argued significant Ninth Circuit antitrust (*VidAngel, Inc. v. Disney Enterprises, Inc.*) and bankruptcy (*Hunsaker v. United States*) appeals. And he’s currently leading the briefing on a copyright case I’m arguing later this Term: *Fourth Estate v. Wall-street.com*.

■ HOW DID YOUR FIRM APPROACH APPELLATE SUCCESS OVER THE PAST YEAR?

We leveraged our fourteen-attorney firm’s extremely deep bench. This year, eight different Stris & Maher lawyers argued, or are currently preparing to argue, at least one significant business appeal before the United States Supreme Court, a federal circuit court, or a state Supreme Court.

■ WHAT PRACTICE ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE YOUR YOUNGER SELF?

The old adage “there’s no ‘I’ in ‘team’” applies to lawyers too. Don’t try to do everything yourself. You’ll eventually figure this out, but you’ll save yourself a lot of trouble if you figure it out sooner. Oh, and remember to sleep before oral argument.

■ TELL US ABOUT YOUR TOP U.S. SUPREME COURT OR FEDERAL APPEALS COURT VICTORY OVER THE PAST YEAR AND HOW YOU AND YOUR TEAM ACHIEVED THE WIN.

Last term, we won two cases 9-0 at the U.S. Supreme Court: *U.S. Bank National Association v. Village at Lakeridge* and *Lagos v. United States*. These wins topped off a three-term run where three different Stris & Maher partners argued eight cases before the court, winning half of them.

Responses submitted by Peter K. Stris, a founding partner of Stris & Maher.