PARTNER

JOHN STOKES

Yale, J.D. (2014)
Harvard, A.B. (2011)

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John Stokes is "one of the leading trial lawyers of his generation," with a practice "defined by taking on matters that are existential" to his clients.

Most recently, John first-chaired a high-profile trial in the Delaware Court of Chancery involving a significant post-acquisition governance dispute and an earnout worth up to $250 million. John's cross-examination of the defendant's CEO generated global headlines and inspired YouTube recaps with millions of views. After what the Vice Chancellor called "one of the best presented trials that I've presided over," John secured a sweeping victory on behalf of his clients. *Law360* subsequently named him one of five "Rising Stars" in the country for trials.

Last year, John served as lead counsel for an industrial-scale bitcoin mining company in a make-or-break dispute with its landlord over the alleged termination of hosting contracts valued in the hundreds of millions. In a case spanning multiple forums—state court, arbitration, and ultimately bankruptcy court—John prevailed after a week-long trial in the Southern District of Texas, leading to a $186 million settlement for his client. This victory led the *Daily Journal* to name John to its Top 40 Under 40 list.

Meanwhile, *Chambers USA* ranks John among the top ERISA attorneys in the nation for his plaintiff-side class action prowess. John's work in this space has helped his clients recover over $285 million in the last two years (including

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matters pending court approval).

John obtains equally significant results on the defense side. For example, after helping a client defeat a $180 million suit from a disgruntled competitor, the firm's victory was named a Top Defense Verdict of 2021. John then won a complete defense victory at summary judgment in a follow-on case brought by the same competitor.

John is also an accomplished appellate lawyer. He has been ranked by *Chambers USA* in appellate litigation for five years running. *Chambers* has described him as "truly gifted," noting that his "writing is superb" and that "he is an absolutely stellar oral advocate."

John regularly goes toe-to-toe with the largest and most-feared AmLaw firms and wins—big. In recent years, he has secured victories against Kirkland & Ellis (complete trial victory in earnout and governance dispute), Quinn Emanuel (complete defense victory in case originally asserting $180 million), Gibson Dunn ($184 million pre-trial settlement), Foley & Lardner (complete trial victory and $186 million settlement), Morrison & Foerster (US Supreme Court), Goodwin (US Supreme Court), Steptoe & Johnson (defense victory named Top 20 Defense Verdict), and more.

In addition to personal accolades, John's work has helped the firm become a mainstay on *The National Law Journal*'s Appellate Hot List (four awards in six years), as well as the shortlist for *The American Lawyer*'s National Boutique of the Year (2019, 2022, 2026).

John received his J.D. from Yale Law School. After law school, he served as a law clerk to the Honorable Raymond C. Fisher on the Ninth Circuit and the Honorable Paul G. Gardephe in the Southern District of New York.

John received his undergraduate degree in linguistics from Harvard University, where he graduated summa cum laude and Phi Beta Kappa.

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Awards

Recent Individual Honors

- **Rising Star: Trials** (5 lawyers in America), *Law360* (2026)
- **500 Leading Global Litigators,** *Lawdragon* (2026)
- **500 Leading Global Plaintiff Lawyers,** *Lawdragon* (2026)
- **500 Leading Plaintiff Financial Lawyers,** *Lawdragon* (2026)
- **500 Leading Special Situations Lawyers,** *Lawdragon* (2026)
- **500 Leading Litigators in America,** *Lawdragon* (2027)
- **500 X – The Next Generation,** *Lawdragon* (2026)
- **Leaders of Influence: Litigators & Trial Attorneys,** *Los Angeles Business Journal* (2026)
- **Top 40 Under 40,** *Daily Journal* (2025)
- **Litigator of the Week,** runner up, *Am Law Litigation Daily* (2023, 2024, 2026)
- **Band 3, ERISA Plaintiffs Litigation (Nationwide),** *Chambers USA* (current)
- **Band 4, Appellate Litigation (California),** *Chambers USA* (current)
- **Top Defense Verdict** (20 firms in California), *Los Angeles* and *San Francisco Daily Journal* (2021)

Recent Firm Honors

- **National Boutique of the Year,** finalist (7 firms in America), *The American Lawyer* (2019, 2022, 2026)
- **Appellate Hot List** (20 firms in America), *National Law Journal* (2016, 2018, 2019, 2021)
- **Band 1, ERISA Plaintiffs Litigation** (four firms in America), *Chambers USA* (current)
- **Band 1, Appellate Litigation** (five firms in California), *Chambers USA* (current)