

Debrán O'Neil

PARTNER

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Clients need more than a lawyer who can argue their case; they need an advisor they trust. I take the time to understand my clients' business objectives, explain issues in plain language, and help them make informed, practical decisions at every stage of a dispute. Whether a matter resolves through negotiation or proceeds to trial, my goal is for clients to feel confident, prepared, and supported throughout the process.

Debrán O'Neil is a trial lawyer who represents owners, developers, contractors, and manufacturers in complex disputes involving commercial construction projects, industrial facilities, and infrastructure projects. She is known for combining strategic advocacy with practical problem-solving to help clients protect their businesses and achieve successful outcomes.

Debrán handles all phases of disputes and litigation, from early claims processes or dispute resolution to case assessment and risk analysis through trial and arbitration. Her experience spans construction defect claims, contract disputes, products liability matters, catastrophic personal injury claims, and other complex business litigation. She has represented clients on projects ranging from highways and water treatment facilities to manufacturing plants and commercial developments.

Although she enjoys the courtroom and is always prepared to take a case to trial, Debrán understands that litigation is only one tool for solving a problem. She works closely with clients to identify their goals, evaluate risk, and pursue efficient resolutions whenever possible. Debrán advocates vigorously for her clients with poise and professionalism. She finds that building respect with all parties is the most effective way to accomplish her clients' goals. Debrán knows how to calibrate her communication style to her audience and scales her litigation tactics to fit the size and scope of each matter.

OUTSIDE OF WORK

Debrán and her husband have three girls and enjoy spending family time together, especially outside and near water. She likes traveling, cooking, and reading books on the front porch.

AREAS OF PRACTICE

- Litigation, Disputes, Appeals

- Real Estate, Construction, Infrastructure
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REPRESENTATIVE MATTERS

Construction and Manufacturing

- Successfully arbitrated a construction dispute involving relocation of manufacturing equipment for a global manufacturer of nutrition, health, beauty and household products.
- Represented a municipality in multiple disputes with general contractors involving liquidated damages, delay claims, change orders, and defects on the construction of water treatment facilities.
- Represented an engineering, procurement, and construction management company in dispute with subcontractors and supplies involving defective construction and materials.

Personal Injury and Products Liability

- Represented national beverage manufacturer and distributor in a wrongful death case arising out of a collision of a train and tractor trailer delivering materials to the facility.
- Represented commercial landowner in personal injury claim resulting from the fall of a subcontractor's employee.
- Successfully defended valve and electrical manufacturers in products liability cases, including toxic tort.
- Represented national restaurant chains in the defense of personal injury claims alleging food contamination and food-borne illnesses.
- Represented national supplier of construction materials in personal injury claim, including defending claims from other defendants for contractual indemnity.

Commercial Litigation

- Represented national bank in obtaining multi-million-dollar judgments against guarantors on commercial loans, including defending claims for fraudulent inducement and defeating other defenses.
- Represented a large regional firm against claims brought by the bankruptcy trustee of a former client alleging the firm aided and abetted the client's allegedly fraudulent business practices. The plaintiff sought over \$129 million in damages.

EDUCATION & ADMISSIONS

Education

- Baylor Law School, J.D., *summa cum laude*, 2012; Managing Senior Executive Editor, *Baylor Law Review*, 2010-12; Order of Barristers
- Southwestern University, B.A., *magna cum laude*, 2009; Hatton Sumners Fellow

Bar + Court Admissions

- Licensed in Texas
- U.S. District Court, Eastern District, Texas
- U.S. District Court, Northern District, Texas
- U.S. District Court, Southern District, Texas

- U.S. District Court, Western District, Texas
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HONORS & AWARDS

- Best Lawyers in Dallas, Construction Litigation, *D Magazine*, 2026
 - Best Lawyers: Ones to Watch, Commercial Litigation; Health Care Law; Medical Malpractice Law - Defendants, Professional Malpractice Law, 2022-2025
 - Leading Litigators in America, Accounting & Other Professional Liability, Product Liability, *Lawdragon 500*, 2023-2025
 - Best Lawyers Under 40, *D Magazine*, 2020, 2023-2025
 - Texas Super Lawyers, Business Litigation, *Super Lawyers* by Thomson Reuters, 2023-2026
 - Texas Rising Stars, *Super Lawyers* by Thomson Reuters, 2016-2022
 - Up-and-Coming 100: Texas Rising Stars, *Super Lawyers* by Thomson Reuters, 2021
 - Up-and-Coming 50: Women Texas Rising Stars, *Super Lawyers* by Thomson Reuters, 2021
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PROFESSIONAL & COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- Lead Chair, Attorneys Serving the Community, 2026; Co-Chair, 2025; Heart & Sole 5k Committee Chair, 2013-2024
 - Board of Directors, Dallas Women Lawyers Association, 2024
 - Editor, Division 1's *The Dispute Resolver*, ABA Forum on Construction Law
 - Associate, Patrick E. Higginbotham American Inn of Court, 2015-2016
 - Leadership Class, Dallas Association of Young Lawyers, 2014
 - Co-Chair, Trial Skills Boot Camp, Dallas Association of Young Lawyers, 2016-2019
 - Judiciary Committee, Dallas Association of Young Lawyers
 - Advisor, Transition to Law Program, Dallas Bar Association
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PUBLICATIONS & PRESENTATIONS

- Speaker, Dare to Share Your Failures?, American Bar Association Forum on Construction Law Midwinter Meeting, January 2025
- Speaker and Author, "Trust and Confidence: Pursuing and Defending the Informal Fiduciary," State Bar of Texas 18th Annual Fiduciary Litigation CLE, December 2023
- Speaker, The Ethics of Working with Witnesses and Experts, presented with trial consultant Jeff Dougherty, 2020
- Moderator, DAYL Skills Boot Camp Series, Direct Examination, Dallas, 2019
- Co-Author, "SMU Annual Texas Survey: Professional Liability," *2 SMU Ann. Tex. Surv.* 363, 2016
- Co-Author, "Professional Liability," *SMU L. Rev.*, 2015
- Co-Author, "Doing Business With Health Care Providers," *Carrington Coleman Capital Newsletter*, Spring 2013

- Co-Author, "Six Things Every Lawyer Should Know About Health Law," DBA *Headnotes*, March 2013
- Co-Author, "Professional Liability," 66 *SMU L. Rev.* 1055, 2013