

LAWDRAGON

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ARIANA TADLER

ARIANA TADLER WAS clearly on to something as a 13-year-old, when she decided she wanted to be a lawyer. The Milberg LLP partner is one of the nation's most talented plaintiff-side securities litigators. Among her successful cases, Tadler has served as plaintiffs' liaison counsel in the massive Initial Public Offering (IPO) Securities Litigation, which resulted in a \$586 million settlement last year. She also is one of the foremost experts on electronic discovery matters.

LAWDRAGON: How did you know you wanted to be a lawyer so early in life?

ARIANA TADLER: I had the opportunity at a very young age to travel to Haiti and was extremely touched by what I saw there. That definitive experience precipitated my interest in helping people who didn't have the resources to help or protect themselves. Working for consumers and investors who have suffered a financial loss or wrong has been very appealing to me. Doing what I can to rectify some of the inequities in the lives of individuals or groups of people is gratifying, particularly in very large complex cases.

I also enjoy cases that are not just about the recovery of monies lost but that also play a role in changing practices that companies engage in that are unfair to consumers and investors.

LD: What was some of your early work at Milberg that helped established your reputation?

AT: I joined Milberg in 1997 as an associate and quickly had the opportunity to work on complex cases. In fairly short order, I gained experience by litigating cases in the Eastern District of Virginia, which is known as the "Rocket Docket." For example, Microstrategy, which was a very fast-paced, challenging case, afforded me the experience of honing my legal and case-management skills. That case ended in the summer of 2000 with a successful resolution. Then, in 2001, our firm became involved in the IPO securities litigation matter. The firm certainly anticipated it to be a large litigation, but I don't think anybody in our industry anticipated just how big it would be.

The firm was looking for people to work on the IPO litigation. I thought long and hard about it and eventually volunteered, thinking, "I know I can do this." A critical prerequisite for this case was that it required somebody who could micromanage teams of people with lots of moving parts. Those requirements come naturally to me. (I was the goalie for a New York State champion lacrosse team, so I am very accustomed to

managing a field. That experience continues to serve me well today.) The case has been ongoing for nearly ten years – with a \$586 million settlement now pending appeal.

The IPO litigation opened up a new array of opportunities and exposure for me. Then, in 2004, I was asked to serve on Milberg's Management Committee, which was a tremendous honor at that stage of my career. In 2008, I was elected to serve as one of the five partners on the firm's Executive Committee.

LD: How did you develop an interest in e-discovery?

AT: I had an opportunity early on with some of my cases to develop a greater specialization in e-discovery. With the IPO case, which involves 55 investment banks, much of the discovery was electronically-based. I, along with a select team, had to come up with fairly unique tools and approaches for managing the discovery. That led me to establish a personal interest in the area and to become involved in a variety of entities. I serve on the Advisory Board of Georgetown University Law Center's Advanced e-Discovery Institute. I also joined The Sedona Conference in 2003 and am now Co-Chair of the Working Group on Electronic Document Retention and Production. I have also had the opportunity to educate members of the judiciary.

In addition to becoming more involved in public speaking and writing, I worked with the firm to develop two particular areas that work together hand-in-hand. First, the firm has established a Litigation Technology Support Department, which is distinct from our IT Department and focuses on the management of electronic data in litigation. In addition, we have established an e-Discovery Task Force comprised of lawyers, paralegals and Litigation Technology Specialists. Under my supervision, this Task Force serves as a resource to each litigation team at the firm, providing hands-on assistance and guidance as to how best to tackle and manage the issues associated with discovery today.

With this team, we also are equipped to serve in a specialized discovery counsel capacity – for example, we are currently Special Discovery Counsel in a civil RICO case pending in the Eastern District of New York on behalf of various departments within the Republic of Colombia, against several major liquor companies for, among other things, the illegal distribution of liquor in Colombia and elsewhere, as well as money laundering.

