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Trace Schmeltz

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As co-chair of the Financial and Regulatory Litigation group, Trace Schmeltz has refined his approach to financial matters while representing corporations and financial services firms in high-profile matters before forums such as the Delaware Court of Chancery and the Securities and Exchange Commission.

Trace's practice is broad and deep. He advises on virtually all areas of commodities, securities, mergers and acquisitions and white collar criminal litigation. When clients face financial misfortune, Trace's decades of experience in financial malfeasance actions include serious claims of fraud, breach of fiduciary duty, misappropriation and false representation of assets, criminal and civil claims, and regulatory investigations and enforcement.

Trace has successfully pursued and defended complex claims on behalf of auditors, investment banks, futures commission merchants, commodity trading advisors and pool operators, hedge funds, corporate boards, broker-dealers, investment advisers and corporations. His current clients include Fortune 500 companies ranging from financial institutions to communications and accounting firms. In addition, he has worked with the government – including the Department of Justice (DOJ) and the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) – as counsel to receivers and monitors.

Notably, Trace has served as the primary counsel on the attorney team responsible for addressing Foreign Corrupt Practices Act issues pursuant to a company's deferred prosecution agreements with the U.S. government. When given the opportunity to solve difficult problems, Trace is dedicated to figuring out a productive solution.

Trace has handled a wide variety of federal and state securities cases and commodities matters, and has represented clients in audits, investigations and enforcement proceedings brought by the SEC, the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, the National Future Associations, the Chicago Mercantile Exchange and other self-regulatory organizations.

Trace is valued for his ability to tell his client's story in the most persuasive

EDUCATION

University of Kansas School of Law, (J.D.), University of Kansas Law Review, 1997

Principia College, (B.A.), 1992

BAR ADMISSIONS

District of Columbia

Illinois

COURT ADMISSIONS

U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit

U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois

U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Illinois

U.S. Supreme Court

LANGUAGES

English

PRACTICES

Commercial Litigation

Compliance and Monitorships

Consumer Class Action Defense

Contract Litigation

Corporate

way possible. Trace understands what judges and juries care about.

Trace’s passion for dispute resolution is manifest in his energetic work ethic. After decades of practice, Trace has proven that he is able to calmly analyze and consolidate the complicated facts contained within a dispute, and convert complex information into an effective plan of action and cogent, compelling position.

Professional and Community Involvement

Co-chair, Crypto-Currency/Blockchain Subcommittee, SEC Enforcement Subcommittee, American Bar Association Securities Litigation Committee

Pro bono volunteer, Hibbler Help Desk for the United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois

Pro bono volunteer, Lawyers for the Creative Arts

Honors

Illinois Super Lawyers, 2012-2019

Financial and Regulatory Litigation

Greater China and South East Asia

Litigation

Private Funds and Asset Management

Securities and Capital Markets

White Collar and Investigations

INDUSTRIES

Colleges and Universities

Education

Entertainment

Financial Services

Fintech

Media

Sports