



Up & Coming Lawyers

SARAH R. FRAZIER

Partner, WilmerHale, Boston

University of Pennsylvania Law School, 2011



Every day, Sarah R. Frazier is entrusted by her clients with tackling some of their toughest cases, working to create new law in the field of intellectual property. Elevated to partner earlier this year, her noteworthy cases include successful representation of Apple in “the smartphone wars,” a significant trial win for Intel Corporation in a \$2 billion patent infringement suit brought by AVM Technologies, and victory in the high-profile challenge to Harvard University’s use of race in its undergraduate admissions process. Frazier also works to pay it forward for young female attorneys through her firm’s women’s leadership initiative and donates her time to pro bono work in housing court and unemployment hearings.

Q. What’s the most satisfying case or matter you’ve worked on so far?

A. I had the honor of being part of the team representing Harvard in a case alleging discrimination against Asian Americans in Harvard’s admissions practices. Unlike many cases where the stakes are high for the client, this case posed implications not only for Harvard but for universities across the country and the students that will be applying to them. Following a three-week trial and lengthy post-trial submissions, U.S. District Court Judge Allison Burroughs found no wrongdoing by Harvard. It was an incredibly rewarding experience to have helped ensure that the individuals in Harvard’s admissions office were vindicated, and even more rewarding to know the results of the case will continue to enable universities around the country to remain diverse places where young adults can learn from each other’s differences and be better prepared to navigate an increasingly diverse society.

Q. What is the best piece of professional advice you ever received?

A. Always take the high road.

Q. Who is your professional role model?

A. My dad. He’s been a lawyer at the same firm for over 40 years and remains committed to his work and his clients at an age when many would be long retired. He practices a very different kind of law than I do (as he always says, if he finds himself in a courtroom it’s only because something has gone very wrong), but he has a work ethic that is unmatched and genuinely enjoys what he does as much as any person I know.

Q. What advice would you offer new law school graduates?

A. Bring solutions, not just problems. A lot of law school is focused on issue spotting, but in practice the key is not to simply spot the issue but to recommend a course of action to deal with it.

Q. What’s the toughest part of your job?

A. The toughest part is remembering not to take things personally.

Q. What’s one thing about you that might surprise people?

A. I am an excellent party planner.

Q. If you weren’t a lawyer, what job would you have?

A. I would be a psychiatrist. **MLW**

“It was an incredibly rewarding experience to have helped ensure that the individuals in Harvard’s admissions office were vindicated.”

Member, WilmerHale Women’s Leadership Initiative and ChIPS; pro bono work