

Latham Brings on Skilled IP Litigator Tara Elliott

She brings experience and connections from the busy District of Delaware and the Federal Circuit.

BY SCOTT GRAHAM

For the second time in two months, Latham & Watkins has added an accomplished IP trial attorney to its D.C. ranks.

Tara Elliott joined Latham from Wilmer Cutler Pickering Hale and Dorr on Tuesday. Though only 42, she is a veteran of Delaware district court litigation, having once clerked for U.S. District Judge Gregory Sleet of the District of Delaware and having served on the district's magistrate judge merit selection panel.

"I've been there long enough to remember when Delaware had the highest volume of patent litigation, before Texas," Elliott said Tuesday. "Now we're seeing the pendulum swing back, but Delaware has always been an important venue for patent litigation."

Since the Supreme Court's *TC Heartland v. Kraft Foods* decision last year, Delaware has eclipsed the Eastern District of Texas as the No. 1 spot for patent filings.

"She has a lot of experience in the District of Delaware, and we love that," Latham IP



Tara Elliott.

co-chair David Callahan said, noting that the firm doesn't have an office there. But the bigger attraction was Elliott's track record as a litigator and the way she connected personally with partners across the firm.

According to a search of RPX Corp.'s database, Elliott's clients have included Dell,

Microsoft Corp., Walmart Inc. and Bridgestone Americas Tire Operations.

Elliott studied computer engineering as an undergraduate and worked for the CIA before attending law school. Her job was to write and orally present intelligence analysis.

“Given the gravity of the work we were analyzing and the way our work was going to be used to inform and as a basis for policy decisions, it was critical that it was technically accurate, well written, clear, credible, precise and concise,” she said. “These are the very skills I use daily as a litigator.”

The difference is now she does it as an advocate, she added.

After graduating from the University of Pennsylvania Law School, she worked for 11 years at Fish & Richardson before joining Wilmer in 2014. She also did a one-year clerkship with Federal Circuit Judge Raymond Clevenger III during the mid-2000s, and currently sits on the Federal Circuit Advisory Council.

Latham’s IP group has been active the last eight months, hiring Kevin Wheeler from Fish & Richardson in October, then Jamie Underwood from Alston & Bird in February and now Elliott.

Recruiter Linda Ginsberg, who helped broker the Elliott hire and has assisted on others, said Latham has built its IP practice almost from scratch with 24 hires over the last 10 years. With some of those hires now in their 50s, the firm is actively recruiting the next generation of IP partners.

“A lot of firms will not invest the time in getting to know the next generation,” she said. “They only speak with the folks who have already been recognized as leaders for decades.”

Ginsberg and Callahan emphasized that Latham doesn’t operate on a star system, where the practice revolves around a couple of key players. Instead the firm has assembled more than a dozen first-chair trial lawyers in its IP group.

“I’m thrilled to be joining Latham’s nationally integrated IP litigation practice, which has steadily grown in stature in recent years and built its reputation as one of the top IP firms in the market,” Elliott said. “I look forward to being a part of this incredibly talented team that is helping clients navigate their most complex intellectual property disputes.”

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