

Hon. Stephen Larson



Judge Stephen Larson brings over 30 years of litigation experience, including serving as Assistant U.S. Attorney in the Criminal Division in Los Angeles. A respected and accomplished jurist, he served as a U.S. Magistrate Judge and then, upon elevation, as a U.S. District Judge in the Central District.

During his time on the bench, Judge Stephen Larson presided over a number of high-profile cases, including *United States v. Nazario*, a landmark Military Extraterritoriality Jurisdiction Act case involving U.S. Marines accused of manslaughter during the Battle of Fallujah in Iraq; and *United States v. Duros*, in which he blocked the U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs' decade long effort to close down and expel a major migrant worker camp on the Torres Martinez Indian Reservation in the Coachella Valley, home to thousands of migrant farm workers, and turned the operation of the settlement over to a court-appointed receiver.

Judge Stephen Larson also negotiated, approved, and supervised the consent decree entered into by the County of San Bernardino in *John Doe v. County of San Bernardino*, which resulted in systematic reform of educational and therapeutic services for disabled youths within the county juvenile hall system, as well as determined the ownership of the copyrights to the iconic comic strip Superman in *Siegel v. Warner Bros. Entertainment, Inc.* While serving on the federal bench, Judge Larson also sat by designation on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, participating in approximately 40 decisions.

Judge Stephen Larson shares an active involvement in international investigations and establishment of the rule of law in developing countries. In October 2020, Judge Stephen Larson was elected to the Inter-American Juridical Committee, one of the principal organs of the Organization of American States (OAS), which brings together all 35 independent states of the Americas. The Inter-American Juridical Committee serves as an advisory body to the OAS on juridical matters to promote the progressive development and codification of international law. He was a founding member of the executive board of the U.S. Department of State's Public-Private Partnership for Justice Reform in Afghanistan, traveling to that war-torn nation to meet judges, prosecutors, and other government officials. While serving as chief of the organized crime section of the U.S. Attorney's Office in Los Angeles, Judge Larson worked with foreign law enforcement agencies conducting joint investigations that took him to Russia, Kazakhstan, Estonia, Latvia, Poland, Ukraine, and South Korea. As a federal judge he was actively involved in promoting the rule of law and combating corruption in developing countries, including Uzbekistan, Croatia, and Rwanda.

Areas of Expertise:

- COMPLEX CONTRACTS/BUSINESS TORTS
- CIVIL RIGHTS
- EMPLOYMENT/LABOR
- REAL PROPERTY/LAND USE
- ENVIRONMENTAL/BASIC MATERIALS



- INSURANCE/REINSURANCE
- IP (TRADEMARK & COPYRIGHT)
- PATENT
- PHARMACEUTICALS
- SECURITIES/FINANCIAL SERVICES

Representative Matters:

- Obtained complete acquittal at general court-martial trial of a military officer charged with multiple felony violations of the Uniform Code of Military Justice.
- Secured a complete defense verdict for the managing partner of Colonies Partners, LP, a real estate development partnership, defeating allegations that three county officials took bribes from the managing partner in exchange for their approval for a \$102 million settlement of a land dispute.
- Obtained multimillion-dollar settlements for the Quapaw Nation and tribe members in a lawsuit spanning 17 years regarding claims that the mismanaged tribal assets.
- Obtained a favorable sole-tax-count, no-custody, no-restitution disposition, and the dismissal of all remaining charges for an aerospace economic development expert charged with embezzling millions of dollars in NASA funds in the highly publicized *People v. Shaw*.
- Obtained a complete dismissal of the City of Irvine in two high-profile class action lawsuits regarding the enforcement of anti-camping policies and adequacy of shelters within Orange County. Obtained a complete dismissal of 14 felony counts against a client alleging he had engaged in the sale of securities without qualification or exemption.
- In *United States v. Aguilar*, one of only a few FCPA cases to go to trial in the past decade, successfully defeated FCPA and money-laundering charges by securing an order vacating the convictions of Ms. Aguilar.
- Obtained a \$10 million jury verdict and judgment against the Rose Bowl Aquatic Center and in favor of a minor child abused at the defendant's facilities.
- Successfully represented the states of Arizona and Oklahoma in connection with their efforts to seek recovery following the Volkswagen AG emissions "Diesel Dupe" scandal, obtaining settlements totaling more than \$40 million.
- Won summary judgment in favor of Taco Bell Corp. in a putative class action alleging \$51 million in violations of the Telephone Consumer Protection Act (TCPA).
- Secured a mid-trial dismissal of a federal grand jury's nine-count indictment against a former special agent of the Drug Enforcement Agency accused of conspiring to commit fraud and making false statements to federal law enforcement officers.
- Affirmed on appeal the dismissal of substantive RICO violation claims against client.
- Represented the senior executive of an international mining company in FCPA joint investigation by the Justice Department and Eastern District of New York, resulting in no charges being filed.
- Secured dismissal of criminal charges and a civil compromise for an industry-leading industrial materials manufacturer, following an industrial homicide investigation.

- Represented a financial technology company during criminal and civil investigations by several District Attorneys' offices and the U.S. Attorney, resulting in no charges being filed.
- Represented the relator in a qui tam civil FCA matter alleging healthcare fraud, resulting in more than \$60 million in recovery.
- Won a seven-figure judgment for an attorney in a fee dispute arising from the Indian Trust litigation and settlement, following a trial before the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia. Succeeded in having no charges filed against a doctor following months-long investigation of alleged \$30 million in FCA violations.
- Won three appeals overturning orders granting terminating sanctions in a high-profile wrongful death action against a celebrity drug interventionist, and defeated defendants' motion for summary judgment after remand.
- Represented Arizona voters challenging the constitutionality of unequally populated voting districts created by a state commission before the U.S. Supreme Court in *Harris v. Arizona Independent Redistricting Commission*.
- Obtained summary judgment for a non-profit organization alleged to have aided and abetted fraud and financial crimes.
- Conducted internal investigations of a retirement pension regarding allegations of executive misconduct.
- Served as the Independent Monitor of the Orange County District Attorney's office, following appointment to that role by the Orange County Board of Supervisors.

Professional Activities:

Judge Stephen Larson is a frequent lecturer on law and international affairs. He was the Distinguished Jurist in Residence and a member of the Board of Visitors at the University of La Verne College of Law, where he has taught classes on federal courts, conflicts of law, civil rights, international law, criminal procedure, and professional responsibility since 2002. Judge Larson was appointed by founding Dean Erwin Chemerinsky to serve on the Dean's Advisory Council for the newly chartered law school at the University of California at Irvine. He previously served as chair of the Los Angeles County Blue Ribbon Commission on Public Safety.

Professional Affiliations Include:

- National Community Renaissance®, Board of Directors
- Catholic Charities of Los Angeles, Board of Trustees
- Los Angeles County Blue Ribbon Commission on Public Safety, Former Chairman
- University of La Verne College of Law, Board of Visitors
- University of California, Irvine School of Law, Dean's Advisory Council Member
- Disability Rights Legal Center, Board of Directors
- Federal Bar Association, Los Angeles, Board of Directors
- Judge Paul R. Michel Intellectual Property American Inn of Court, Advisory Board
- Pacific Council on International Policy, Member
- Volunteer Center of Riverside County, Advisory Board
- Leo A. Deegan American Inn of Court, Judicial Master

Publications/Presentations/Recognitions:

- “Southern California Webinar on Best Practices for Video Mediation,” FedArb; September 2020, panelist
- “Being an American,” Riverside County Lawyer, Riverside Co. Bar Association; June 2007
- “Labor Law,” The Guide to Acquisition and Management of a U.S. Business, Eurostudy Publishing Co. Ltd.; 1991, co-author

Judge Stephen Larson Awards:

- *The Best Lawyers in America*® for Commercial Litigation and Criminal Defense: White Collar (2015-2021)
- *Benchmark Litigation*, “Litigation Star” (2019-2021) *Los Angeles Business Journal*, “LA500: The Most Influential People in L.A.” (2016-2020)
- *Los Angeles Business Journal*, “Leaders of Influence: Litigators & Trial Lawyers” (2020)
- *Los Angeles Business Journal*, “Top Litigators & Trial Lawyers” (2018-2019)
- *Daily Journal*, “California Lawyer Attorney of the Year (CLAY) Award” (2018)
- Amar Es Entregarse Award, Diocese of San Bernardino (2011)
- “Lawdragon 500” (2010- 2011)
- *Irish America Magazine*, “Legal 100” (2009-2020)
- Erwin Chemerinsky Defender of the Constitution Award, Federal Bar Association (2009)
- *Daily Journal*, “Top 20 Lawyers Under 40” (2004)
- Director’s Award for Superior Performance as an Assistant U.S. Attorney, U.S. Department of Justice (1996)

Bar and Court Admissions:

- California Bar
- District of Columbia Bar
- U.S. Court of Federal Claims
- U.S. Court of Appeals, Ninth Circuit
- U.S. Court of Appeals, Federal Circuit
- U.S. District Court, Central District of California
- U.S. District Court, Northern District of California
- U.S. District Court, Southern District of California
- U.S. District Court, Eastern District of California
- U.S. District Court, District of Columbia

Education:

- University of Southern California Gould School of Law, JD; 1989
- Georgetown University, BSFS (School of Foreign Service); 1986