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Law Practice

LAW PRACTICE:

Legal Work for Clients

Thom Brown joined Cosgrave Vergeer Kester LLP in 1981. He was its managing partner from 1994 to 2010. Thom's practice focuses on civil appeals in state and federal courts, insurance coverage opinions and litigation, and professional liability defense.

Work as Arbitrator and Mediator

Thom has worked as an arbitrator and mediator for over 20 years. In addition to being available for private retention as an arbitrator, Thom is an approved arbitrator for the American Arbitration Association, the Arbitration Service of Portland, the Oregon State Bar, and circuit courts in Multnomah and Washington County. Thom is also an approved arbitrator and hearings officer for the American Health Lawyers Association. In addition to being available for private retention as a mediator, Thom is an approved mediator for the American Health Lawyers Association, the Oregon Court of Appeals, the Oregon State Bar, the State of Oregon Environmental Claims Mediation Program, and the United States District Court for the District of Oregon. For more information on Thom's work as an arbitrator, hearings officer, and mediator, [click here](#).

INDUSTRIES

- Healthcare
- Insurance
- Professional Services
- Railroad

PRACTICE AREAS

- Appellate & Litigation Support
- Arbitration & Mediation
- Coverage Opinions & Litigation
- Employment Litigation
- Professional Liability

Education & Bar Admissions

EDUCATION & BAR ADMISSIONS:

Thom received his bachelor's degree in radio/television/film from the University of Texas in 1974, and his law degree from the night school program at Northwestern School of Law of Lewis & Clark College in 1980. Before joining Cosgrave, Thom clerked for the Honorable William Richardson of the Oregon Court of Appeals (1980-1981).

Thom was admitted to the Oregon State Bar, the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, and United States District Court for the District of Oregon in 1980. He was admitted to the United States Supreme Court in 1989, the Washington State Bar in 2002, the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Washington in 2007, and the United States District Court for the Western District of Washington in 2011.

Activities

PROFESSIONAL:

Thom is a fellow of the American Academy of Appellate Lawyers and the Litigation Counsel of America (emeritus) and a master in the Owen M. Panner American Inn of Court (emeritus). Thom has been involved extensively in both the Oregon State Bar (OSB) and the Multnomah Bar Association (MBA), including the boards of the OSB Appellate Practice Section Executive Committee (CLE Subcommittee Chair, 1997-1998; Secretary, 1998-1999; Chair-Elect, 2000-2001; Chair, 2001-2002), the OSB ADR Section Executive Committee (Member, 2013-2017), and the MBA (Secretary, 2005-2006; President-Elect, 2006-2007; President, 2007-2008; and Past President, 2008-2009).

Thom is a former member of the Board of Directors of ALFA International (ALFA), the oldest and largest network of domestic and international law firms. He is a past member of the ALFA Finance Committee, and Insurance Law Practice Group (Vice-Chair, 2011-2013, Chair 2013-2015, Chair Emeritus 2015-2017), and a current member of ALFA's Strategic Planning Committee.

On appointment by the Oregon Supreme Court, Thom serves as a pro tem judge in Multnomah County Circuit Court handling summary judgment motions.

CIVIC:

Thom is the Past-Chair of the Classroom Law Project (CLP) Board of Directors, on which he served from 1999-2016. CLP helps students at all grade levels learn to be informed and active citizens who can foster, sustain, and preserve a free democratic society. Among his other volunteer activities, Thom has served on the Board of Directors for Columbia Edgewater Country Club and the Multnomah Bar Foundation and on the Lewis and Clark Law School Board of Visitors. In 2012-2013, he was an adjunct professor at Lewis and Clark Law School in its legal writing department.

PERSONAL:

Thom's personal interests include photography, playing the guitar, cooking, golf, walking, and his family (two adult children and a wife who is a "recovering attorney").

Media

PRESENTATIONS:

"Implications of Recent Oregon Supreme Court Decisions"

Speaker, Oregon State Bar Alternative Dispute Resolution Section, October, 2016

"Popular Strategies and Tactics in Mediation: Which Work and Why?"

Panelist, ALFA International, International Client Seminar, March, 2013

"Collaborative Law and the Vanishing Jury Trial"

Panelist, Multnomah Bar Association debate, April, 2010

"Exiting the Partnership"

Speaker, ALFA Annual Business Meeting, October, 2010

“Punitive Damages”

Panelist, Chartis Insurance Company Defense Panel Program, June, 2010

“Bridging the Generations”

Speaker, Oregon State Bar Future of the Profession Symposium, September, 2008

“Attorney Liability for Client’s Breach of Fiduciary Duty after Reynolds v. Schrock”

Speaker, Professional Liability Fund Panel Conference, 2007

“E-Discovery Strategies and Document Retention- Panel”

Speaker, ALFA NW Regional Seminar, 2007

“Learning the Ropes”

Panelist, Professionalism for the Professional Liability Fund’s annual 3-day program for new lawyers, 2007

“Appellate Update”

Speaker, Oregon Association of Defense Counsel (OADC) Fall Seminar, 2006

“Attorney Liability”

Speaker, Oregon Law Institute (OLI), 2006

“Bridging the Gap Between Boomers and Gen-Xrs”

Speaker, ALFA Annual Business Meeting, October, 2006

“Williams v. Philip Morris”

Interview by CBS radio regarding punitive damages case pending in the U.S. Supreme Court to be argued October 31, 2006

“Recent Appellate Cases”

Speaker, Oregon State Bar Products Liability Section, 2005

“Retaining Gen X Attorneys”

Speaker, ALFA Annual Business Meeting, 2005

“Appellate Update”

Speaker, Oregon Association of Defense Counsel, 2004

“Effective Delegation”

Speaker, Multnomah Bar Association, 2004

“The Auto Liability Policy/Excess and Umbrella Coverage”

Speaker, OSB, Auto Coverage and Litigation Program, 2004

“What the Court Wants in Briefs”

Speaker, Oregon Law Institute, Appellate Courts Program, 2003

“Appellate Update”

OADC Annual Program, 2002

“Acquisition, Retention and Disclosure of Claim Information”

Speaker, Oregon Casualty Adjusters Association Program, 2001

“Court of Appeals Review Standards”

Speaker, OLI Future of Oregon Appellate Courts Program, 2001

“New Appellate Procedure Rules”

Speaker, OSB Appellate Practice Section Program, 2000

“1999 Legislative and Case Update”

Speaker, OCAA Spring Symposium, 1999

“Appellate Court Settlement Program”

Speaker, Oregon Association of Legal Secretaries, 1999

“Appellate Update”

Speaker, OADC Annual Program, 1999

“Wrongful Initiation of Civil Proceedings Cases”

Speaker, PLF Defense Panel Conference, 1999

PUBLICATIONS:

“Oregon’s Duty to Defend Rules: Proper Application in the Summary Judgment Context and the Proper Role of Casey v. N.W. Security Ins. Co.”

Client Update, ALFA International, Insurance Practice Group Property and Casualty Insurance Sub-Group, June 2013

“Oregon’s Unique Approach to Punitive Damages Awards”

Client Update, ALFA International, Insurance Practice Group Property and Casualty Insurance Sub-Group, August, 2012

“My 15 Minutes of Fame, So Many to Thank, the Year Ahead and a Link in a Chain”

Multnomah Lawyer, June, 2008

“May it Please the Court and Measure 51”

Multnomah Lawyer, May, 2008

“Law Day at 50, The Rule of Law and A Plug for CourtCare”

Multnomah Lawyer, April, 2008

“Mentoring: It’s More Important Now Than Ever”

Multnomah Lawyer, March, 2008

“The Vanishing Civil Jury Trial and Experienced Judge”

Multnomah Lawyer, February, 2008

“Pro Bono (and a Well-Deserved Recognition)”

Multnomah Lawyer, January, 2008

“Potpourri”

Multnomah Lawyer, December, 2007

“Bridging the Gap to the Future”

Multnomah Lawyer, November, 2007

“A Crumbling Courthouse Puts the Entire Community in Jeopardy”

Multnomah Lawyer, October, 2007

“The Satisfaction and Benefits from Giving to the Profession and the Community”

Multnomah Lawyer, September, 2007

“Civil Litigation Practice Guides”

Reviewed, edited and supplemented various civil litigation practice guides for the Professional Liability Fund, 2007

“Bridging the Generations”

Co-author Multnomah Bar Association Task Force, 2006

“Case Summaries”

Oregon Association of Defense Counsel (OADC) Fall Seminar, 2006

“Civil Litigation Timelines”

Professional Liability Fund Loss Prevention Materials, 2003, 2005, 2007, 2009

“Standard Definitions”

Oregon State Bar Insurance Law, 2003

“Briefing Merits in Court of Appeals”

Oregon State Bar Appeal & Review, 2002

“Appeal Timelines/Attorney Fees”

Professional Liability Fund Loss Prevention Materials, 1999

“Briefing Merits in Court of Appeals”

Oregon State Bar Appeal & Review, 1998

“Appeals”

Professional Liability Fund In Brief, 1997

“Statute of Limitations/Appeal Timelines”

Professional Liability Fund Loss Prevention Materials, 1997

“Comparative Fault”

Oregon State Bar Damages, 1995

Recognition

AWARDS:

Thom has been selected by his peers for inclusion in Benchmark: Appellate, a part of Benchmark: Litigation, The Guide to America’s Leading Litigation Firms and Attorneys, for the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals (2011-2013), Best Lawyers in America, Appellate Law (2006-2019) and Insurance Law (2010-2019), and Oregon Super Lawyers, Appellate Practice/Alternative Dispute Resolution (2006-2018). Thom was selected by Best Lawyers in America as the 2014 “Portland, Oregon Lawyer of the Year” in the field of appellate practice, and as the 2015, 2017, and 2019 “Portland, Oregon Lawyer of the Year” in the field of insurance law.

In 2013, Thom received the MBA Professionalism Award which recognizes an attorney who exhibits “The highest ethical standards and exemplifies conduct in the practice of law.”

CLIENT COMMENTS:

“Although a long journey, medical knowledge of today is amazing. I probably feel better than I have in 3+ years. Maybe even longer.....I am truly blessed and thankful to have been referred to you! Your help made all of this possible!”