

## THE 2020 D.C. LITIGATION DEPARTMENTS OF THE YEAR

General Litigation Winner

### Zuckerman Spaeder

■ **DESCRIBE YOUR FIRM'S APPROACH TO LITIGATION AND YOUR STRATEGY FOR BUILDING SUCCESSFUL TEAMS FOR TRIALS OR OTHER MATTERS.**

Zuckerman Spaeder is a litigation firm that handles a wide range of matters. Our case staffing is designed to achieve favorable outcomes whether we're representing 50,000 people against an insurance company or one person facing government prosecution. Rather than relying on large teams and a top-down reporting structure, we staff cases leanly with a few partners with significant trial experience aided by a small number of active and integrated associates. Our lawyers work across practice areas, handling criminal and civil cases representing plaintiffs and defendants, individuals and companies. This gives us the experience to thrive in a variety of settings.

■ **DISCUSS THE TWO BIGGEST LITIGATION CASES YOUR FIRM WORKED ON IN 2019 AND HOW YOU REACHED SUCCESSFUL OUTCOMES.**

After taking the nation's largest health insurer to trial for widespread mental health claim denials, a federal court delivered a landmark ruling that The New York Times called "scathing." That class action win against United Healthcare will provide relief for over 50,000 plaintiffs and has been hailed as the *Brown v. Board of Education* for mental health parity.

This same year, our firm achieved arguably the nation's most significant criminal defense victory—a full acquittal of President's [Barack] Obama's former White House counsel, Gregory Craig. After investigating Craig, special counsel [Robert] Mueller's office referred his case to [the Southern District of New York]. Our team convinced those prosecutors to decline the case. However, the government indicted Craig in Washington, D.C., touting the case as a centerpiece of [Foreign Agents Registration Act] enforcement. After a lengthy trial, the jury deliberated only three hours before delivering a not-guilty verdict.

■ **WHAT ARE THE MOST CHALLENGING AND SATISFYING ASPECTS OF YOUR WORK IN LITIGATION?**

It is satisfying to see our younger lawyers and other staff members develop and play leadership roles on cases and within the firm. The intense, shared experience of litigation inevitably creates strong bonds and great loyalty within our relatively small office setting. Being part of this culture is tremendously gratifying.

One challenge is maintaining work-life balance. Inevitably, litigation requires significant periods of intense preparation and work. This removes people from their families and other personal



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priorities. It's imperative, but difficult, to maintain commitment to one's work and to balance this with one's personal life.

■ **WHAT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT PIECE OF ADVICE YOU'D SHARE WITH YOUNG LAWYERS?**

Most young lawyers are high achievers. They seek the next credential. I urge young lawyers to seriously reflect on what they want to accomplish in this profession and how to marry that goal with a healthy and fulfilling personal life.

*Responses submitted by Dwight Bostwick, a partner at Zuckerman Spaeder and chairman of the firm's executive committee and partnership board. His practice focuses on complex commercial litigation and white-collar defense.*

#### firm facts

Number of Partners in Firm's Litigation Department in D.C.:	28
Number of Associates in Litigation Department in D.C.:	10
Number of Other Attorneys in Litigation Department in D.C.:	14
Number of Partners in Litigation Department Firmwide:	43
Number of Associates in Litigation Department Firmwide:	16
Number of Other Attorneys in Litigation Department Firmwide:	23
Percentage of Firm Represented by Litigation Department:	100%