

## Rising Star: King & Spalding's Ariana Fuller

By **Gianna Ferrarin**

*Law360 (July 22, 2025, 4:00 PM EDT)* -- Ariana Fuller of King & Spalding LLP helped a California hospital win a \$105 million jury verdict against Kaiser Foundation Health Plan over its reimbursement for out-of-network emergency care, earning her a spot among healthcare attorneys under age 40 honored by Law360 as Rising Stars.

### Her Biggest Case:

The 2023 verdict against Kaiser took the Los Angeles jury two hours to deliver and represented the exact amount Pomona Valley Hospital Medical Center, Fuller's client, argued it deserved for those services: \$105,887,963.

That result came after five years of hard work, Fuller said. Now a partner at King & Spalding, she served as the firm's lead associate on the case ahead of trial. Kaiser is contesting its loss in a California appeals court.

"The jury saw our case and believed our witnesses and believed that Kaiser was not paying our hospital appropriately for the trauma care that Pomona Valley provided to Kaiser's members," Fuller said, noting that verdict consisted of the roughly \$39.8 million Kaiser already paid for those services and the additional \$66 million Pomona argued it was owed.

The case is one of several Fuller has pursued against Kaiser over its reimbursement practices, including one resulting in a 2021 jury verdict for Kaweah Delta Health Care District. In both the Kaweah and Pomona cases, Fuller's clients claimed Kaiser paid them less than they were owed for emergency services despite being the only trauma care option for Kaiser health plan members in their respective areas.

"I think by and large people really underestimate juries," Fuller said, explaining that she was able to help translate contractual issues for the jury in the Pomona Valley Hospital case by comparing the market value of hospital care to the cost of a cellphone contract.

2025



**Ariana Fuller**  
King & Spalding

**Age:** 35

**Home base:** Los Angeles

**Position:** Partner

**Law school:** UCLA School of Law

**First job after law school:** Clerk for  
U.S. District Judge Jesus G. Bernal of  
the Central District of California

"In our case, Kaiser is trying to pay what other health plans pay the hospital, like Anthem, Cigna and United. But the main difference with those health plans is that they've come to the table, and they've negotiated a contract," Fuller said.

For the jury, the cost difference between an off-the-rack phone versus a phone that comes with a 12-month or 24-month contract proved to be an effective metaphor.

"It's the same phone, but it's a different price because you're giving something else in addition to just getting it," Fuller said. "So we use metaphors, and juries understand it."

#### **Another notable case she's worked on:**

Fuller helped an HCA Healthcare Inc. subsidiary win a California Supreme Court decision finding that hospitals do not have duties beyond what is required by the state to inform patients of the cost of their emergency services before treating them.

For hospitals, Fuller said, the potential of an adverse decision posed concerns that patients would be deterred from receiving necessary care upon entering the emergency room. Delays in care were also a concern, she added, because physicians don't always know what care a patient will need at the outset of an ER visit.

One argument Fuller developed in the case concerns filings on average service charges that healthcare providers are required to submit to California's Department of Health Care Access and Information, which then lists those charges publicly. By keeping up with those and other requirements, Fuller argued, the HCA subsidiary already fulfilled its disclosure duties.

In a December 2024 ruling, the California Supreme Court agreed, finding it had "no basis to conclude that the public will likely be deceived" by the form and extent of the hospital's disclosures.

"It was so cool to see how this thing that I had done several years ago on this case wound its way up to the Supreme Court," Fuller said.

#### **Her proudest moment:**

Fuller recalled her time working on a pro bono case where her client, a man who had been living in a rent-controlled apartment for 20 years, faced the prospect of eviction for installing an air conditioning unit in his bedroom window.

As she prepared to take the case to trial in Los Angeles state court, she said, the stakes began to sink in.

"In the week before the trial, I was like, 'Oh my God. I don't know if I can do this. This is so much,'" Fuller said. "If I lose a healthcare case, it's bad for my clients. But they still get to go home."

Once the trial began, however, Fuller's trepidation quickly dissolved.

"It was like I was on fire. I was like — I can do this. I'm good at this. I love trial, I can't wait to do it again," she said.

The jury deliberated for 13 minutes and found in favor of her client, Fuller recalled.

"I found out that I can do a trial by myself, and I do it well, and I love it," she said. "And I got to keep this wonderful man in his home, and he didn't get kicked out."

#### **How healthcare litigation will change in the next 10 years:**

Hospitals and healthcare providers are starting to understand the extent of their leverage in negotiations with big payers, contracts and litigation, Fuller said, a trend she anticipates will continue over the next decade.

"Historically in the industry, there's been this view that the health plans and health insurance companies are these behemoths ... [that] they really hold all the leverage," she said.

"That's really changing," Fuller added. "Healthcare providers and health systems are really starting to understand that they have a lot more leverage."

*--As told to Gianna Ferrarin. Editing by Kristen Becker.*

*Law360's Rising Stars are attorneys under 40 whose legal accomplishments belie their age. A team of Law360 editors selected the 2025 Rising Stars winners after reviewing more than 1,100 submissions. Attorneys had to be under 40 as of April 30, 2025, to be eligible for this year's award.*