

W. Ray Persons (Ray)

Partner

Trial and Global Disputes

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W. Ray Persons is a senior litigation partner at King & Spalding, an international law firm that represents a broad array of clients, including half of the Fortune Global 100, with 900 lawyers in 23 offices in the United States, Europe, the Middle East and Asia. Ray has a national practice focused on product liability, mass tort, class action and complex litigation.

Ray has represented more than 50 of the Fortune 500 as counsel or national coordinating counsel for clients in the pharmaceutical, automotive, chemical and energy industries; he has served as lead counsel in 92 jury trials, 90 percent of which went to verdict. He has served as lead counsel in over 25 Engle progeny tobacco jury trials. He serves as national counsel in *In re* UST Litigation for one of the world's largest petroleum companies in claims brought by dozens of states alleging fraudulent overpayment of claims for reimbursement of costs associated with cleanup of underground storage tanks. He served as national coordinating counsel and lead trial counsel for Union Carbide Corporation in the successful defense against claims of an alleged industry-wide conspiracy to subject workers to cancer-causing chemicals. He represented one of the world's largest pharmaceutical companies in a 442-plaintiff case involving claims of exposure to arsenic and chromium stemming from the 60- year operation of a manufacturing facility in New Jersey. Ray successfully defended against claims brought by 1,200 homeowners and residents who lived in the vicinity of a fertilizer plant; the chemicals of concern were arsenic, lead, mercury and sulfur dioxide.

Ray is regarded as one of the best trial lawyers in the country, as evidenced by his election as a Fellow of the American College of Trial Lawyers, the International Society of Barristers and the Litigation Counsel of America. He holds the rank of Advocate in the American Board of Trial Advocates. He is listed in *The Best Lawyers in America* in four categories: Commercial Litigation, Bet-the-Company Litigation, Mass Torts, and Product Liability; *Chambers USA: America's Leading Lawyers for Business*; *Lawdragon 500*; *The Legal 500*; *Georgia Trend* magazine's "Legal Elite," and *Atlanta Magazine's Georgia Super Lawyers* (Top 10 for eight consecutive years). He is a member of the Defense Research Institute, Federation of Defense and Corporate Counsel, International Association of Defense Counsel, and American Health Lawyers Association.

Ray received his undergraduate degree in 1975 from Armstrong State College and his law degree in 1978 from The Ohio State University. He was awarded the Armstrong State University

Distinguished Alumnus Award in 2000, the Moritz College of Law 2005 Distinguished Alumnus Award, The Ohio State University 2006 Distinguished Service Award, and The Ohio State University 2012 John B. Gerlach, Sr., Development Volunteer Award.

Matters

Lead counsel in over 25 **Engle progeny tobacco trials**.

Served as national coordinating counsel for **one of the world's leading chemical companies** in toxic tort litigation covering 23 states.

Defense liaison counsel in a **nationwide antitrust class action**.

Lead counsel for **a major pharmaceutical company** in a high-profile lawsuit that was covered on *Dateline*, *Oprah*, and *60 Minutes*.

Credentials

EDUCATION

J.D., The Ohio State University

B.S., Armstrong State College, cum laude

ADMISSIONS

Florida

Georgia

Recognition

Band 1: Litigation

CHAMBERS USA

Top 10 Trial Lawyers in Georgia

SUPER LAWYERS, 2017

BENCHMARK LITIGATION, 2017

Product Liability, Mass Tort and Class Action: Consumer Products, including Tobacco

LEGAL 500 U.S., 2015, 2016

Bet-the-Company Litigation

THE BEST LAWYERS IN AMERICA

Mass Tort/Class Actions: Defendants

THE BEST LAWYERS IN AMERICA

Commercial Litigation

THE BEST LAWYERS IN AMERICA

Product Liability Litigation: Defendants
THE BEST LAWYERS IN AMERICA

2016 Professional Excellence Lifetime Achievement Award
DAILY REPORT

Local Litigation Star/Top Trial Lawyer
BENCHMARK LITIGATION, 2015

Georgia Super Lawyer and Top 100 Lawyers in the State
SUPER LAWYERS, 2015

Tradition of Excellence Award, Trial Practice Section
STATE BAR OF GEORGIA

Insights

ARTICLE

March 28, 2017 • Source: The Brief

The Preparation and Effective Delivery of a Closing Argument

NEWSLETTER

November 1, 2017

Tokyo Dispute Resolution & Crisis Management Newsletter – November 2017

News

RECOGNITION

October 3, 2019

Latest Benchmark Litigation Guides Recognize King & Spalding as a Leading Litigation Firm

August 16, 2019

The Best Lawyers in America Recognizes 115 King & Spalding Lawyers in its 2020 Guide

King & Spalding Earns Top Rankings in Chambers USA 2019 Guide

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