

WILSON SONSINI

Deno Himonas

PARTNER

Litigation
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FOCUS AREAS

Corporate Governance
Litigation
Litigation
State Attorneys General
Supreme Court and
Appellate

HIGHLIGHTS

■ Leader in the Law

Former Utah Supreme Court Justice Constandinos "Deno" Himonas brings over three decades of experience to Wilson Sonsini's litigation and appellate practices. Deno joined the firm upon his retirement from the Utah Supreme Court in March 2022, where he served for seven years and participated in hundreds of appeals that spanned nearly all areas of the law. Prior to his appointment to the high court, Deno served as a trial court judge in Utah for nearly 11 years. In that capacity, he tried well over 100 cases and presided over thousands of matters, including a wide swath of complex civil litigation, numerous state and federal constitutional matters, and the most serious of criminal cases. During his many years in private practice, and during his years as a jurist, Deno has been involved in a broad manner of complex civil disputes, including antitrust, corporate governance, securities, government fraud, intellectual property, tax, mining, employment, and real estate litigation.

■ Legal Innovator & Educator

Deno has been at the forefront of the efforts to develop a regulatory framework for AI. In this regard he led the development and establishment of the Utah judiciary's regulatory "sandbox," which allows entities to explore new ways of delivering legal services, including through AI. He has also been in the vanguard of Utah's regulatory response to AI. In recognition of his work, Deno has received numerous accolades, including being awarded the Rebuilding Justice Award from the Institute for the Advancement of the American Legal System, receiving an American Legal Technology award, being named a "Legal Rebel" by the American Bar Association, serving as a Distinguished Adviser to the Pew Charitable Trusts, and being inducted into the Warren E. Burger Society. Deno has also given much of his time to law students, having guest lectured at law schools across the country and taught courses in judicial advocacy and civil process. Most recently, Deno served as Innovator-in-Residence at the University of Utah S.J. Quinney College of Law and taught a course in disrupting regulation.

EXPERIENCE

Justice Constandinos "Deno" Himonas is a partner in the Salt Lake City office of Wilson Sonsini Goodrich & Rosati, where he advises companies on complex governance and regulatory issues.

Deno joined the firm's litigation and appellate practices upon his retirement from the Utah Supreme Court, where he served for seven years and participated in hundreds of appeals that spanned nearly all areas of the law. Prior to his appointment to the high court, Deno served as a trial court judge in Utah for nearly 11 years. In that capacity, he tried well over 100 cases and presided over thousands of matters. These matters included the most serious of criminal cases; complex civil litigation involving, among other areas, corporate governance and tax; torts; and numerous state and federal constitutional issues. Before Deno was a judge, he spent 15 years working as a litigator for Jones Waldo Holbrook & McDonough, where he focused on complex civil litigation.

Throughout his legal career, Deno has concerned himself with issues relating to the access and affordability of civil justice in the U.S. court system. He has received widespread acclaim for his work in this arena, including distinction by the American Bar Association as a "Legal Rebel" and by the Institute for the Advancement of the American Legal System with the Rebuilding Justice Award (along with Utah attorney John Lund) for establishing Utah's Office of Legal Services Innovation and a regulatory "sandbox" allowing entities to explore new ways of delivering legal services. More than 25 innovations are currently being piloted in the sandbox.

Deno has taught trial advocacy as an adjunct professor at the University of Utah S.J. Quinney College of Law, been honored by the College of Law as an Honorary Alumnus of the Year, and served as the Innovator-in-Residence at the College. He also has been a recipient of the Judicial Excellence award from the Utah State Bar.

CREDENTIALS

Education

- J.D., University of Chicago Law School, 1989
- B.A., University of Utah, 1986
Magna Cum Laude, Phi Beta Kappa

Associations and Memberships

- Advisory Board, Institute for Justice
- Life Fellow, American Bar Foundation
- Former Chair, Supreme Court task force for Licensed Paralegal Practitioners
- Former Co-chair, Supreme Court task force for regulatory reform
- Former Chair, Utah Judicial Council task force on Online Dispute Resolution
- Former Member, Utah Judicial Council
- Former Chair, Litigation Section, Utah State Bar
- Former Co-chair, Pro Bono Committee, Third District Court
- Former Member, Judicial Conduct Commission

Honors

- Inducted as a member of the Warren E. Burger Society
- Recognized as a "Legal Rebel" by the American Bar Association
- Co-recipient of the Rebuilding Justice Award from the Institute for the Advancement of the American Legal System
- Honored with the President's Award from the Days of '47 Committee
- Winner in the Court category of the American Legal Technology Awards
- Honorary Alumnus of the Year, University of Utah S.J. Quinney College of Law
- Judicial Excellence Award, Utah State Bar

Admissions

- State Bar of Utah

INSIGHTS

Select Presentations and Publications

- Presenter, "Ethical Issues in Artificial Intelligence – What to Look Out For," Wilson Sonsini MCLE Program, January 23, 2025
- "Avoiding Founder Disputes and Employment Hiring Strategies," The University of Utah PIVOT Center, Biohive and BioUtah's Startup Bootcamp for Entrepreneurs, May 2022
- "CEO Panel: Achieving Success in the Life Sciences," BioUtah's BioHive Entrepreneur and Investor Life Sciences Summit, March 2022
- "The Changing Legal Market in Utah," S.J. Quinney College of Law, The University of Utah, March 2022
- Co-author with G. LaBonty, *Come Build in My Sandbox: Employing Regulation to Pilot Judicial Solutions that Apply Artificial Intelligence*, presented at the 2021 World Artificial Intelligence Congress, Rule of Law Forum, Shanghai, China
- Co-author with T. Hubbard, "Democratizing the Rule of Law," 16 *Stanford Journal of Civil Rights & Civil Liberties* 261, 2020
- Presenter, High-Level Meeting of the Global Judicial Integrity Network, Doha, Qatar, February 2020
- Keynote Address, 2019 International Online Dispute Resolution Forum, Williamsburg, Virginia, October 2019