

Sara A. McDermott

OF COUNSEL

Litigation
Los Angeles

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FOCUS AREAS

Class Action Litigation
Commercial Litigation
Digital Media and
Entertainment
Litigation
Trade Secret Litigation
Trademark and Copyright
Litigation
Trial

EXPERIENCE

Sara McDermott is a litigation Of Counsel in the Los Angeles office of Wilson Sonsini Goodrich & Rosati, where her practice focuses on complex civil litigation. She has experience litigating cases at all stages, including taking and defending depositions, writing dispositive motions, managing all aspects of discovery, examining witnesses at trial, and representing clients on appeal. She has argued motions and tried cases in state courts, federal courts, and arbitration tribunals.

For example, Sara represented Netflix in obtaining a favorable jury verdict in an invasion of privacy case arising out of its streaming series *Stranger Things*; Berkshire Hathaway in a billion-dollar dispute with Pilot Corporation regarding the Pilot Flying J truck stop chain; and FIGS, a medical apparel company, and its co-founders against Lanham Act false advertising and state law intentional interference and unfair competition claims brought by the main industry incumbent. That matter resulted in a full and complete defense verdict following a three-week federal jury trial in the Central District of California, which achieved *American Lawyer* Litigator of the Week Runner-Up recognition and designation by the *Daily Journal* as a Top Defense Verdict of 2022.

Sara maintains an active pro bono practice and presence in the community, with a focus on securing and protecting the constitutional rights of incarcerated youth and adults. In December 2024, Sara argued in the California Supreme Court on behalf of a prisoner challenging the constitutionality of California Penal Code 3051. She is the chair of the Pacific Juvenile Defender Center's Executive Board of Directors. She was also honored in 2020 with the ACLU's Humanitarian Award for her work bringing writs of mandamus in the California Supreme Court concerning conditions of confinement in detention facilities during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Prior to joining the firm, Sara was a litigation associate at Munger, Tolles & Olson LLP in Los Angeles. Before that, Sara clerked for Judge Michael W. Fitzgerald of the U.S. District Court for the Central District of California and Judge A. Wallace Tashima of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit.

CREDENTIALS

Education

- J.D., UCLA School of Law, 2015
Order of the Coif, Michael T. Masin Scholar, John Paul Stevens Public Interest Fellow
- B.A., Comparative Women's Literature, Cornell University, 2010
Summa Cum Laude

Honors

- Member of legal team honored for securing *Daily Journal's* "Top Defense Verdict of 2022" and "Top Defense Verdict of 2018"
- Member of legal team named *American Lawyer's* Litigator of the Week Runner-Up in 2022
- Recognized with the ACLU's Humanitarian Award in 2020

Admissions

- State Bar of California

MATTERS

Select Matters

- Obtained a defense verdict against one plaintiff and minimal damages against another on behalf of Netflix in an invasion of privacy case arising from the documentary *Our Father*.*
- Represented Berkshire Hathaway, in a billion-dollar dispute with Pilot Corporation regarding the Pilot Flying J truck stop chain. Two days before trial was set to begin in Delaware Chancery Court, the parties reached a settlement under which Berkshire acquired 100 percent of the company.*
- Represented Netflix in favorably settling and obtaining dismissal of a \$1 billion copyright infringement lawsuit brought by Irish Rover Entertainment over Netflix's streaming series, *Stranger Things*.*
- Obtained a full and complete defense verdict for FIGS, Inc., and its co-founders against \$100 million in false advertising, intentional interference with prospective economic relations, and unfair competition claims brought by industry incumbent Careismatic Brands (formerly Strategic Partners, Inc.).*
- Represented First Student, Inc., the nation's largest school bus company, in achieving a confidential settlement in trade secret litigation with Zum Services, Inc., after First Student alleged that Zum hired a First Student employee to help Zum compete for a San Francisco Unified School District contract.*
- Represented Block (fka Square, Inc.) in *Ruark v. Square*, a privacy class action alleging that Square violated various state and federal privacy laws, including California's Confidentiality of Medical Information Act (CMIA) and HIPAA. After a motion to dismiss the claims, the case settled favorably on an individual, non-class basis.*
- Represented a security services provider in a complex employment class action, obtaining a victory that was recognized as a Top Defense Verdict of the Year by the *Daily Journal*.*

*Denotes experience at another firm prior to joining Wilson Sonsini in 2025.

INSIGHTS

Select Publications

- "Calibrating the Eighth Amendment: *Graham, Miller*, and the Right to Mental Healthcare in Juvenile Prison," 63 *UCLA Law Review* 712, 2016