

# Michael Sheetz

Partner



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Boston

Trade Secret Litigation and Dispute Counseling  
Commercial Litigation  
Labor and Employment  
Sports and Entertainment  
Private Equity  
Workplace Investigations

Mike Sheetz has over 30 years of experience handling trade secret and business litigation in federal and state courts throughout the US. He has acted as lead trial counsel in many complex commercial and employment-related matters. Among the many varied cases Mike has handled, he has prosecuted or defended dozens of trade secret and non-competition cases in Massachusetts and in more than 15 other states, for technology and life sciences companies, among others. Mike has also led complex internal investigations on a wide variety of issues for both for profit and not-for-profit clients. He routinely advises boards of directors and CEOs in high profile, bet-the-company matters. His diverse practice also includes representing many senior business executives. For much of his career, Mike has negotiated employment agreements (either company-side or on behalf of management) involving senior management teams, CEOs and other C-level executives. He also leads Cooley's national sports practice.

Mike has been recognized as a leader in commercial litigation by Chambers USA, where a client is quoted as saying, "he recognizes that achieving a successful resolution of a matter must take into account his client's commercial position and goals." He is also recognized as a key lawyer in Cooley's trade secret practice by Legal 500.

Mike is the chair of Cooley's sports law practice. He has represented some of the top sports organizations and athletes in the US in a wide variety of matters.

## Recent litigation experience includes:

- **Anoush v. Uber (along with seven companion cases) (D. Mass.).** Co-lead trial counsel for Uber in case brought by 34 taxi medallion-owning corporations that alleged unfair competition and conspiracy and sought over \$400M in damages at trial. Complete defense verdict for Uber across the board, on both liability and damages (verdict upheld on appeal). En route to the trial victory, managed three years of complex discovery and intensive motion practice in the case, along with six other consolidated cases brought by a total of over 750 taxi companies.
- **Phoenix Navigation Components LLC v. EMCORE** (AAA arbitration in NYC, and companion court cases in CA and NY). Won significant plaintiff's verdict and attorneys fee award for cutting edge navigation company, after trial as first chair, in hotly contested breach of contract and trade secret case.
- **Theissen et al. v. Chegg** (Santa Clara (CA) Sup. Ct. and related AAA action). Lead counsel for Chegg in successful resolution and dismissal of 16,000+ individual arbitrations filed following a massive data breach.
- **EMC v. Williams, EMC v. Alexis, EMC v. Baker and EMC v. Ferreira** (D. Mass.). Successfully defended California-based data storage innovator Rubrik, Inc. employees in four separate cases alleging theft of Dell EMC trade secrets and violations of non-solicitation agreements. Each action requested injunctive

relief, no court orders ever issued, and each of the cases was ultimately dismissed.

- **Paterno v. NCAA and Ray** (PA Court of Common Pleas). Successfully represented Chair of the NCAA Executive Committee in long-running case brought by the Paterno family in the shadow of the Penn State/Jerry Sandusky scandal. After nearly four years of active litigation, and on the eve of summary judgment, the plaintiffs dismissed the case with zero consideration.
- **SimpliVity v. Bondranko** (D. Mass.). Obtained judgment for data infrastructure company SimpliVity in trade secrets and non-competition case enforcing agreement with former manager in North Carolina who went to a chief competitor based in California.
- **EMC v. Pure Storage** (D. Mass.). Successfully defended data storage company Pure Storage in seven highly publicized trade secrets cases brought by EMC challenging the hiring of over 200 EMC employees and allegations of unfair competition and disclosure of trade secrets.

**Recent Internal Investigations include:**

- Retained by special board committee of technology company to investigate “whistleblower” claims of illegal market conduct.
- Retained by top US university to advise on crisis management and conduct an internal investigation into alleged misconduct by a senior executive as reported in major national news stories.
- Retained by special board committee of nationally renowned non-profit institution to investigate #MeToo claims raised by senior member of management.
- Retained by Board of Directors of venture funded technology company to investigate alleged lack of financial and operational controls.
- Retained by special board committee of major healthcare organization to investigate alleged non-compliance with best practices and federal reimbursement regulations.
- Retained by private equity owned technology company to investigate alleged “whistleblower” complaints about alleged financial and other impropriety.

**Recent employment experience includes:**

- Represented management team of public life sciences company in connection with a \$4 billion acquisition by a private equity firm.
- Represented CEO and other senior management of a \$2 billion private equity owned medical device company in connection with a recapitalization and the sale of a major subsidiary.
- Represented major collegiate athletic conference in connection with the hiring of a new Commissioner.
- Represented incoming president of major university in contract negotiations.
- Represented incoming CEO of venture-backed life sciences startup in connection with his contract and building of management team.
- Represented incoming CEO of major division of Fortune 100 company in connection with her contract.

**Representative sports clients include:**

- Pac-12 Conference and Pac-12 Networks
- WTA Tour
- Fritz Pollard Alliance
- Annika Sorenstam (and her affiliates including the Annika Foundation)

**Giving Back:**

Mike has been actively involved in the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) for 30+ years. He is the former chair of ADL's New England regional board and has held many national roles with ADL, currently serving as President of the ADL Foundation. Mike has won numerous awards from ADL for his leadership.

## Education

Georgetown University Law Center  
JD, 1986

Tufts University  
BA, 1981

## Admissions & Credentials

Massachusetts

## Court Admissions

US Supreme Court

US Court of Appeals for the First Circuit

US District Court for the District of Massachusetts

## Rankings & Accolades

Chambers USA: Litigation: General Commercial – Massachusetts (2021 – 2023)

Legal 500: Trade Secrets (Litigation and Non-contentious Matters)

Massachusetts Super Lawyer

Excellence in Pro Bono – Mass Lawyers Weekly