ArentFox Schiff LLP
Attorneys

Adam Diederich

PARTNER AND FAMILY OFFICE INDUSTRY GROUP CO-LEADER

Adam is a problem-solver. He focuses his practice on resolving disputes involving ownership and control of privately held businesses, restrictive covenants, business torts, and complex contract claims.



Industries

AI & Emerging Technologies
— ArentFox Schiff Industry Guide to the Metaverse
Family Office
Media & Entertainment
Private Companies
Sports

Practices

Complex Litigation
— Commercial
— Solving Disputes Among Business Partners and Owners
Private Clients, Trusts & Estates
Trade Secrets, Noncompetes & Employee Mobility
— Trust & Estate Disputes
Pro Bono

Education

University of California, Berkeley, School of Law, JD, California Law Review, Member Order of the Coif, 2011

University of Wisconsin-Madison, BA, Political Science and History, with comprehensive honors, 2006

Offices

Chicago

Phone

312.258.5686

Email

adam.diederich@afslaw.com

Adam is a problem-solver. He focuses his practice on resolving disputes involving ownership and control of privately held businesses, fiduciary relationships, restrictive covenants, business torts, and complex contract claims.

Adam helps clients prevent and resolve disputes involving:

- ownership and control of privately held businesses on behalf of companies, majority owners, and minority owners (“business divorce”), including derivative and direct claims, shareholder oppression, requests to inspect books and records, and breach of shareholder agreements and LLC agreements;
- fiduciary duties, often involving corporate officers, directors, and controlling owners and trustee/beneficiary relationships;
- sports, media, and entertainment law, including defamation claims and other First Amendment issues;
- restrictive covenants (noncompete and nonsolicitation agreements), trade secrets, and confidential information; and
- business torts and complex contract claims.

Adam strives to understand each client’s business to help advance their legal and business interests. He helps his clients solve problems through advice and counseling, mediation, arbitration, and litigation in state and federal courts. He has experience representing plaintiffs and defendants at all stages of litigation, from temporary restraining orders and preliminary injunctions to summary judgment, arbitration hearings, bench and jury trials, and appeal.

Before beginning his law career, Adam taught fourth grade as a Teach For America corps member.

Solving Disputes Series

Our content series, “Solving Disputes Among Business Partners and Owners,” helps owners anticipate potential problems when structuring their businesses and find solutions to common issues among owners of privately held businesses, both before and during litigation. Adam is a leading contributor to the series.

View Solving Disputes Series

Client Work

- Obtained dismissal with prejudice of defamation claims against an author.
- Responded to requests to inspect books and records on behalf of closely held business and negotiated buyout of a minority owner threatening claims against company.
- Challenging the constitutionality under the First Amendment of an Iowa law requiring the removal of books from school and classroom libraries on behalf of Penguin Random House, Hachette Book Group, HarperCollins, MacMillan, Simon & Schuster, Sourcebooks, four award-winning authors, the Authors Guild, the Iowa State Education Association, a teacher, a librarian, and a high school student.
- Challenging the constitutionality under the First Amendment of a Florida law requiring the removal of books from school and classroom libraries on behalf of Penguin Random House, Hachette Book Group, HarperCollins, MacMillan, Simon & Schuster, Sourcebooks, five award-winning authors, The Authors Guild, and high school students.
- Obtained a $95 million settlement after a four-week jury trial and on the morning of closing arguments for claims for wrongful removal as an owner and manager by the co-founder of a proprietary trading firm.
- Drafted and argued successful motion for summary judgment to invalidate restrictive covenants in shareholder agreement.
- Successfully prosecuted arbitration against marketing agency on behalf of professional athlete.
- Successfully defended Michael Jordan against intellectual property claims.
- Examined fact witnesses and cross-examined a forensic accountant in successful arbitration concerning assets worth tens of millions of dollars in an ownership dispute.
- *Front Range Equine Rescue v. Vilsack*, 844 F.3d 1230 (10th Cir. 2017). Successfully argued against an appeal of an order denying the opposing party’s request to collect on injunction bond.
- Deposed former officers and directors of a failed bank in connection with an investigation for negligence and breach of fiduciary duty.
- Deposed lead inventor in Hatch-Waxman patent infringement case.
- Deposed forensic psychologist in contested bankruptcy proceeding brought to dismiss the bankruptcy based on alleged bankruptcy fraud.
- Briefed successful motions for a temporary restraining order and preliminary injunction in trade secret and post-employment restrictive covenant cases.
- Briefed successful motions to dismiss business tort claims on behalf of a professional service firm. *See, e.g.*, *Abrams v. McGuireWoods LLP*, 518 B.R. 491, 504 (N.D. Ind. 2014).
- Briefed successful application for preliminary relief in state court litigation, resulting in the return of the dog to the client.
- Defended multiple Chicago-area students in *pro bono* representations against attempted expulsion, both at expulsion hearings and through negotiated settlements.

Publications, Presentations & Recognitions

Publications

- *Crain’s Chicago Business’* Notable Rising Stars in Law (2021)
- “A (Broad?) New NJ Encryption Requirement,” *Schiff Hardin Insight* (Feb. 27, 2015)
- “Seventh Circuit Reverses Decision for Reliance on Flawed Expert Testimony,” *Expert*

Witnesses: News & Developments, American Bar Association Section of Litigation (Feb. 18, 2014)

- "Trial Court's Duty to Rule on Emergency Motions When Presented," (co-author) *CBA Record* (Sep. 2011)

Presentations

- "Loose Lips Sink Ships," (co-presenter) NYCPA 2026 Annual Estate Planning Conference, New York (May 21, 2026)
- "Don't Let Your Privilege Turn Into a Pumpkin" ArentFox Schiff Family Office University, Conference (Oct. 29, 2025)
- "Fighting Fiduciary Fires: Causes and Cures for Trust and Estate Disputes," NYSSCPA 2024 Annual Private Wealth Conference, New York (Dec. 12, 2024)
- "Family Office Investments: What Information Should Beneficiaries Be Provided?" ArentFox Schiff Family Office University, Conference (Nov. 13, 2024)
- "Family Matters: Plan to Avoid and Limit Family Business Disputes," Hawaii Tax Institute, Conference (Nov. 8, 2023)
- "Keeping Controversy at Bay: Litigators' Lessons for Family Offices," ArentFox Schiff Family Office 101 Conference, Washington, DC (Jul. 26, 2023)

Recognitions

- *The Legal 500 United States* (2022-2023)

Boards, Memberships & Certifications

- Treasurer and Executive Committee Member, Board of Directors of Chicago Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under the Law
- American Bar Association
- Chicago Bar Association

Professional Activities

Adam is actively involved in pro bono legal work, including representation of students who face expulsion from school through the Chicago Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law's Educational Equity Project, which named him the 2015 Educational Equity Project Advocate of the Year. In 2016, the Chicago Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law presented him with the Young Lawyer Pro Bono Award.

Adam also has represented clients in divorce, custody, and child support matters through ArentFox Schiff's Chicago Volunteer Legal Services Clinic, as well as criminal defendants and individuals seeking post-conviction relief.

Bar Admissions

Illinois

Court Admissions

US Court of Appeals, 10th Circuit
US District Court, Northern District of Illinois
US District Court, Northern District of Ohio
US District Court, Eastern District of Wisconsin