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December 2022

As we approach the end of 2022, I am overjoyed as I reflect upon our firm's hard work, significant contributions, and growth throughout this year. In that spirit, I want to share some highlights from our alums and firm attorneys over recent months. We optimistically look forward to 2023 and hope it brings more opportunities to connect.

Wishing you a joyful holiday season,

Rog



Alumna Spotlight: Elizabeth G. Taylor

Firm Background: Partner, 1996-2011



Throughout her career, **Elizabeth Taylor** has used her legal training in a variety of different roles, all aimed in some way at trying to do some good. She started her career at the DC Public Defender Service and is now back in the nonprofit world, serving as the Executive Director of the **National Health Law Program (NHeLP)**, a nationally recognized legal nonprofit dedicated to protecting and advancing the health rights of low-income and underserved individuals.

Prior to NHeLP, Elizabeth spent fifteen years as a partner at Zuckerman Spaeder, where she litigated civil and criminal cases in federal and state courts across the country. After leaving the firm, she moved to the U.S. Department of Justice, where she served as Principal Deputy Associate Attorney General during the Obama Administration and helped develop federal policy and litigation strategy regarding several federal health care initiatives, including the Affordable Care Act and emergency contraceptives.

We asked Elizabeth to reflect on her career, including her time at Zuckerman Spaeder. Her responses are below.

How did your work at Zuckerman Spaeder prepare you for your current role?

Although being an executive director doesn't require legal training, it helps. I am able to draw on the breadth of experience gained at Zuckerman Spaeder, from leading teams to knowing enough about contract law, legal ethics, and employment law to spot challenges and call for expert help when it is needed.

I've worked at NHeLP for nearly a decade, and it feels like a wonderful arc to a career. Fighting for low-income people charged with crimes is crucial to the fairness of our justice system. Getting resources to families and children so that they don't find themselves in the criminal justice system is crucial to our country's future. Many friends from Zuckerman Spaeder support NHeLP through service on the board, pro bono assistance, and financial support. All are greatly valued.

What drew you to join Zuckerman Spaeder?

I came to the firm initially because of the flexible work schedule that allowed me to work and raise three boys. I stayed because the work was challenging, and the Zuckerman Spaeder lawyers and staff became great friends.

What is your most memorable moment and the biggest takeaway from your time at Zuckerman Spaeder?

There were many adventures in the fifteen years. A high point was the A+ Bill [Taylor] handed me after a cross-examination in the criminal RICO case we tried together in the E.D.PA. My takeaway from my time at Zuckerman Spaeder is that you should never settle for anything but the best from yourself and your colleagues. That's what makes practicing law fun.

AlumZS News

In June 2022, alumna **Nora Rigby** joined Akerman's Consumer Financial Services, Data, and Technology practice group as a partner in the Washington, DC office. Prior to joining Akerman, Nora spent ten years at the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau's Office of Regulations, most recently serving as Senior Counsel and Chief of Staff. Nora's practice now focuses on defending financial services providers against individual and class claims brought pursuant to the Real Estate Settlement Procedures Act, Truth in Lending Act, Fair Credit Reporting Act, Fair Debt Collection Practices Act, and Telephone Consumer Protection Act. **[Read more.](#)**

What We've Been Up To

Welcoming Back – Partner, Caroline Judge Mehta



In October 2022, we welcomed **Caroline Mehta** back to our Washington, DC office. Caroline, who previously spent twenty years at the firm, returned after serving as General Counsel and Chief Legal Officer for a rapidly growing global technology company. In this role, she managed strategic risk in over 20 countries as the company experienced a period of rapid growth, restructuring the legal team to address increasing compliance and data privacy demands. Caroline's valuable perspective from having served as in-house counsel further strengthens her representation of individuals, business organizations, and other entities in criminal, regulatory, and administrative investigations. As a partner at the firm, she continues to focus her practice on complex criminal cases involving mail and wire fraud, tax controversies, health care fraud, public corruption, insider trading, and securities violations. **[Read more.](#)**

To connect with Caroline, contact her **[here.](#)**

In addition to Caroline, we have many new faces around the firm. We are pleased to introduce the ten new associates we welcomed throughout the year: **Almas Abdulla**, **Trillium Chang**, **Jade Chong-Smith**, **Ben Jernigan**, **Josh Mathew**, **Samantha Miller**, **M Moore**, **Antoinette Pick-Jones**, **Bryan Thomson**, and **Michael Waxman**. To learn more about our great new team members, please click their names above.



An Active and Rewarding Year

We were pleased to expand our recognition in traditional rankings outlets, but we are especially proud to celebrate the awards recognizing individuals throughout the firm.

- Devon Galloway – Young Lawyer of the Year Finalist, *The American Lawyer*
- Marcos Hasbun – Trailblazer, *The American Lawyer*
- Paula Junghans – Bruce I. Hochman Award, UCLA Extension’s 38th Annual Tax Controversy Conference; Lifetime Lawyer, *Washingtonian Magazine*
- Carl Kravitz – Litigation Trailblazer, *The National Law Journal*
- Bill Murphy – Criminal Law Power List, *The Daily Record*
- Cy Smith – Benefits MVP, *Law360*
- Bill Taylor – Lifetime Lawyer, *Washingtonian Magazine*
- Roger Zuckerman – Lifetime Lawyer, *Washingtonian Magazine*



Recent Case Highlights



Win Restores Federal Drug Discount Program Savings

On behalf of the American Hospital Association, the American Association of Medical Colleges, America's Essential Hospital, and member hospitals, we achieved a significant win in its fight against the Department of Health and Human Services' policy of reducing Medicare payments for drugs acquired under the 340B drug discount program, which provides important benefits for certain nonprofit hospitals and community health centers and other federally funded clinics that serve vulnerable communities. On September 28, Judge Rudolph Contreras of the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia granted our motion to vacate HHS's 340B payment policy for the remainder of 2022.

Team Members: Bill Schultz, Peggy Dotzel, Ezra Marcus



California Courts Rule in Favor of Our Clients in \$102 Million Insurance Coverage Dispute Over Public Nuisance Liability

The First District of the California Court of Appeal held in a 31-page published opinion that our clients—Certain Underwriters at Lloyd's, London and three other insurers—do not have to indemnify ConAgra for its liability in, and subsequent settlement of, a lead paint-related public nuisance claim brought by California municipalities. ConAgra was seeking approximately \$102 million from our clients and its other insurers.

Team Members: Carl Kravitz, Jason Knott, Caroline Reynolds, Nick DiCarlo



Zuckerman Spaeder and Berger Montague File Suit Against UnitedHealth Claiming Hundreds of Millions Illegally Taken from Health Plans

In a class action lawsuit filed by Zuckerman Spaeder and Berger Montague, plaintiff Rebecca Smith alleges that the administrator of her health insurance plan, UnitedHealth Group, has illegally taken hundreds of millions annually from employer-sponsored, self-funded health plans like the one that covers Ms. Smith. More specifically, she alleges that in recent years United has doubled-down on a practice called "cross-plan offsetting," in which United uses self-funded plan benefit payments that are owed to that plan's members and,

instead of paying them, redirects those funds into its own pocket to recover an alleged overpayment it caused one of its fully insured plans to make to the same provider.

Team Members: **Brian Hufford** and **Jason Cowart** of Zuckerman Spaeder and **Karen Handorf** and **Julie Selesnick** (Zuckerman Spaeder Alumna) of **Berger Montague PC**



Court Grants Final Approval of “Historic” \$2.67 Billion Settlement

In a case where our attorneys played a lead role, an Alabama federal court has granted final approval to a Blue Cross Blue Shield (BCBS) settlement that will pay \$2.67 billion to plaintiffs – the largest settlement in history for a private antitrust case with no government involvement – and bring sweeping changes to the way Blue Cross entities compete in the national health insurance market.

Cy Smith was court-appointed to serve on the five-person Plaintiffs’ Steering Committee and **Carl Kravitz** served as co-chair of the Experts’ Committee.



Zuckerman Spaeder Wins \$9 Million for Insurers After Trial on Subrogation Claims

We prevailed at trial for our clients, Certain Underwriters at Lloyd’s, London, and other insurers, in a subrogation dispute over millions of dollars in lead paint-related defense costs. In an opinion dated May 3, 2022, the Commercial Division of the New York Supreme Court held that our clients were entitled to recover \$8.076 million, plus additional prejudgment interest, in subrogation from PPG Architectural Finishes, a third-party contractual indemnitor of their insured. On June 27, 2022, the court entered judgment for the insurers for \$9.116 million. That judgment has been satisfied, and the case is concluded.

Team Members: **Carl Kravitz**, **Jason Knott**, **Adam Abelson**

Pro Bono Updates

As a firm, we are deeply focused on our communities, the importance of public service, and a shared commitment to delivering justice – regardless of personal circumstances or resources. As we reflect upon 2022, we are heartened by the firm’s continued pro bono legal efforts. Over the course of the last year, more than 60 of our lawyers and other staff have dedicated their time and resources to issues ranging from civil rights matters, immigration law, compassionate release, child welfare, health care, and discrimination. Through this work and our partnerships with other organizations in the community, we have helped our pro bono clients advance important and meaningful issues, protect their rights and interests, and promote justice and equity.

We look forward to carrying on this tradition in the years ahead and invite you to join us in celebrating some of this year’s wonderful accomplishments, detailed below.

—**Steve Herman and Maggie O'Donnell, Partners and Pro Bono Program Co-Chairs**

Recent Case Highlights

- September 2022 – The plaintiffs in a long-running housing discrimination case are seeking to overturn a district court ruling that would allow the Waples Mobile Home Park in Fairfax, Virginia, to evict tenants based on a family member's immigration status. The appeal, which is being led by the **Legal Aid Justice Center** and pro bono counsel Zuckerman Spaeder, has gained support from the DOJ and numerous fair housing and civil rights organizations, all of which have filed amicus briefs stating that the district court ruling, if upheld, would have dramatic consequences for both landlords and immigrants nationwide. **Read more.**

Team members: Adam Abelson and Nick DiCarlo

- October 2022 – A Baltimore City ordinance that deems abandoned all personal property left at the time of an eviction, violated tenants' constitutional right to due process, according to a district court ruling. The decision is the result of a pro bono lawsuit brought by Zuckerman Spaeder on behalf of two former tenants of a Baltimore rental home. **Read more.**

Team members: Conor O'Croinin and Ariella Muller

Recognitions & Board Appointments

- Associate **Alyssa Howard** was featured during **Rising for Justice's** annual Celebration of Service event and shared her experience with RFJ's Civil Protection Order program and the valuable impact it has had on her ability to advocate for clients. **Watch here.**
- Zuckerman Spaeder was named a 2022 **National Legal Aid & Defender Association (NLADA)** Beacon of Justice Award Winner. **Learn more and watch.**
- **Maggie O'Donnell** was appointed to the **Committee on Pro Bono Legal Services of the District of Columbia Circuit Judicial Conference.**
- **Steve Herman** was appointed to the Board of the **Legal Aid Society of the District of Columbia.** **Read more.**

2022 National Pro Bono Week

During Pro Bono Week, we proudly celebrated the firm's recent pro bono commitments with this video. We appreciate our team members' steadfast dedication to our pro bono program and our clients. Zuckerman Spaeder believes that everyone deserves the opportunity for justice and that our creativity, commitment, and skills allow us to be zealous advocates for our pro bono clients. We celebrate those in the legal community, at the firm and elsewhere, who provide pro bono representation or support pro bono efforts.



Alumni Resources

- Did you know that in-house alumni of Zuckerman Spaeder can secure a six-month individual membership to the Association of Corporate Counsel? This resource provides access to research, online education, thought leadership, and extensive networking communities. [Register](#) and [learn more about this program](#).
- Are you looking for ways to fulfill your mandated CLE requirements? Throughout the year, we host webinars on various topics. If you are interested in a specific topic, we would love to hear from you; please contact [Kalie Hardos](#).
- Stay Connected – For timely updates, [join our private alumni group on LinkedIn](#) and make sure we have [your updated contact details](#).

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