NILAN JOHNSON LEWIS PA

Cortney G. Sylvester (Cort)

Attorney

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Biography

Cort's academic curiosity, analytical abilities, and experience on his feet allow him to easily communicate a complex legal or factual position clearly and concisely. He strives to create persuasive, well-researched arguments to win favorable results for his clients. His goal is to harness his lifelong love of intellectual combat to defend his clients' business interests against external threats.

When Cort is not working, you can find him coaching high school debate and speech, or playing golf.

Education

University of Michigan Law School, J.D., *cum laude*, 1992

Concordia College, B.A., *summa cum laude*

Bar Admissions

Minnesota State Courts

U.S. District Court for the District of Minnesota

U.S. Court of Appeals (8th Circuit, 10th Circuit)

Key Practice Experience

- Product liability litigation
- Toxic torts
- Appellate practice
- Commercial litigation
- Consumer class actions
- Professional ethics

Key Industry Experience

- Manufacturing
- Automotive
- Recreational Products
- Pharmaceuticals & Medical Devices
- Chemical Products

Representative Matters

- *Shores v. Komatsu*: Industrial equipment product liability, tried to defense verdict.
- *Ternus v. SPX Corp.*: Industrial equipment product liability, tried to defense verdict.
- *Nesladek v. Ford Motor Co.*: Automotive product liability, summary judgment obtained and affirmed on appeal.
- *Beckefeld v. Kelley Co.*: Industrial equipment product liability, summary judgment.
- *McDaniel v. Bieffe*: Motorcycle helmet product liability, partial summary judgment and settlement.
- *Cyberstar Computer v. Euler Solutions*: Contract dispute, tried to partial verdict for client.
- *Ginkel v. Babel, et al.*: Contract dispute, tried to verdict for client.
- *Rasmussen v. Yamaha*: Motorcycle product liability, favorable motions and settlement.
- *Dwelly v. Yamaha*: Watercraft product liability, favorable motions and settlement.
- *Hammes v. Yamaha*: Motorcycle product liability, favorable motions, partial trial and settlement.

- *Bolander v. Bolander*: Employment and shareholder dispute, tried to verdict for client, affirmed on appeal.
- *Anderson v. American Augers*: Industrial equipment, product liability, tried to verdict.
- *Brunsting v. Lutsen Mountains Corp.*: Ski accident, federal appellate argument.
- *Great Northern Insurance v. McMillan Elec.*: Electric equipment, product liability, Minnesota State Supreme Court argument.
- *Browe v. Evenflo Inc.*: Consumer class action, successfully dismissed on Rule 12 motion.
- *Domagala v. Ford Motor Co.*: Automotive friction, asbestos product liability, partial trial and favorable settlement.

Recognitions and Honors

- Editorial Board, *Michigan Law Review*
- Minnesota State High School League Hall of Fame

Publications and Presentations

- “Use of Regulations in Litigation,” MDLA Mid-Winter Conference, 2007.
- “Digital Defense Wins More than Virtual Super Bowls,” Defense Research Institute Electronic Discover SLG, 2007.
- “The Risk-Utility Test in Product Liability Litigation,” MDLA Mid-Winter Conference, 2005.
- “Choosing Statutes of Limitations: A Good Place for More Interest in Conflicts of Law,” *Minnesota Defense*, Summer 2003.
- “Economic Loss: Commercial Contract Law Lives,” 27 *William Mitchell Law Review* 417 (2000).
- *Products Liability for the Minnesota Paralegal*, November 1998, Institute for Paralegal Education.
- “Remarriage and Wrongful Death Damages: Long Separated but Ripe for Reconciliation,” *Minnesota Defense*, Winter 1994.

Professional Associations

- Chair, Minnesota Defense Lawyers Association Product Liability Committee
- American Bar Association, including Sections of Litigation, Product Liability and Appellate Practice
- Minnesota Bar Association
- Hennepin County Bar Association
- Minnesota Defense Lawyers Association
- Defense Research Institute
- Chair, Recreational Products Specialized Litigation Group of DRI Products Liability Committee
- Chair, Minnesota Defense Lawyers Association Law Practice Management Committee

Community Engagement

- Minnesota Astronomical Society
- Minnesota Debate Teachers Association
- National Forensics League