



Justin N. Leonelli

Associate

Pittsburgh
+1.412.355.6370

Justin.Leonelli@klgates.com

OVERVIEW

Justin Leonelli's legal practice focuses on dispute resolution and strategic counseling in the areas of construction and engineering, manufacturing/supply, commercial disputes, energy (renewable and conventional), and international arbitration.

As a part of his construction practice, Justin represents owners and contractors on public and private construction projects globally. He services his clients through all project phases as both project counsel and litigation counsel. Representative projects include wind farms (offshore and onshore), battery storage facilities, solar fields, power plants, coal mines, oil refineries, wastewater treatment facilities, rail and road infrastructure, telecommunications infrastructure, manufacturing facilities, and commercial office buildings, among many others.

Justin also has a strong energy practice, and has successfully represented and advised clients throughout the energy industry. Specifically, Justin has represented renewable energy companies (wind, solar, battery), mid-stream entities, natural gas exploration companies, coal burning facilities, and oil refineries - in a variety of lawsuits arising from their operations.

Justin also represents parties involved in manufacturing related disputes. In this regard, Justin has represented entities on the supply or receiving end of disputes involving steel and other construction materials, butyl and rubber products, precision metal components, chemicals and plastics, and energy units, among others.

In addition, Justin regularly represents clients in complex commercial litigation and international arbitration disputes involving breach of contract, UCC claims, fraud, and business tort claims.

Justin is a member of both the Hiring Committee and the Associates' Committee for the Pittsburgh office.

PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND

Prior to joining the firm, Justin was an associate at a Pittsburgh-based law firm and an international law firm where he focused on construction, energy, commercial litigation, and international arbitration. During law school, Justin worked as a legal intern for the nation's largest provider of shared communications infrastructure.

ACHIEVEMENTS

- Allegheny County Council Proclamation
- CALI Excellence for the Future Award, Legal Research & Writing
- CALI Excellence for the Future Award, Advanced Legal Writing: Writing in Law Practice
- Best Appellate Brief in Academic Mock Appeal

PROFESSIONAL / CIVIC ACTIVITIES

- Society of Construction Law - North America, Regional Director – Delaware Valley Region
- Allegheny County Bar Association - Construction Section, Member
- Allegheny County Bar Association - Young Lawyers Division, Member
- New Century Careers, Director (2017-2021)

SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

- Speaker, “Design-Build Projects: Key Issues; Drafting to Mitigate Risk for Contractors, Design Professionals, and Owners,” Strafford, 13 February 2024
- Instant Communication and Advances in Technology: Exchanging Ethical Dilemmas and Increased Expectations for Convenience and Efficiency, Dean John J. Sciallo Fundamentals of Law Continuing Education Series, 25 April 2015.

ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND

Justin grew up in Youngstown, Ohio, where he attended Cardinal Mooney High School. He now resides in a northern suburb of Pittsburgh. In his spare time, Justin likes to golf and visit with family and friends.

EDUCATION

- J.D., Duquesne University School of Law
- B.A., Duquesne University

ADMISSIONS

- Bar of Pennsylvania
- United States District Court for the Middle District of Pennsylvania
- United States District Court for the Western District of Pennsylvania

THOUGHT LEADERSHIP POWERED BY HUB

- 19 September 2022, AAA Amendments to the Commercial Arbitration Rules and Mediation Procedures
- 6 April 2020, COVID-19: Pennsylvania Construction Amid COVID-19

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

- K&L Gates, AAA Amendments to the Commercial Arbitration Rules and Mediation Procedures (September 2022)
- Reed Smith, Global Construction Update: The Sustainability Issue, *European Contracting Practices Present Challenges to U.S.-based Offshore Wind* (June 2022)
- K&L Gates, COVID-19: Pennsylvania Construction Amid COVID-19 (April 2020)
- K&L Gates, An Overview of Pennsylvania's New Arbitration Law (August 2019)
- "Amendments to Federal Rule of Evidence 902," *The Legal Intelligencer*, 1 November 2017
- *Dormant Commerce Clause Review of a Lifecycle Analysis Regulation: Rocky Mountain Farmers Union v. Corey*, 3 JOULE ENERGY & ENVTL. L.J. 2, 11 November 2014

NEWS & EVENTS

- 25 April 2024, "Under the Wire" CLE Seminar-Navigating International Waters: Cross-Border M&A, International Arbitration, and Construction Disputes

AREAS OF FOCUS

- Construction and Infrastructure
- Commercial Disputes
- Construction and Infrastructure Dispute Resolution
- Energy Storage and Distributed Resources
- ESG - Sustainability and Renewable Energy
- Government and Public Procurement
- International Arbitration
- Liquefied Natural Gas
- Major Infrastructure: Projects and Public-Private Partnerships
- Mining and Metals

- Offshore Construction
- Offshore Wind Energy
- Oil and Gas
- Power
- Product Liability
- Rail and Roads
- Renewables
- Water and Wastewater

INDUSTRIES

- Energy

REPRESENTATIVE EXPERIENCE

- Represent global wind turbine manufacturer and supplier in relation to construction of several different wind farm projects involving claims for delay, defect, force majeure, changes, and defending against liquidated damages.
- Defend general contractor specializing in pipeline construction for the oil and gas industry in lawsuit involved claims by owner for delayed and defective construction.
- Defend University in dispute involving claims from multiple general contractors in relation to COVID-19 and related force majeure delays.
- Represent civil works subcontractor in multi-million dollar arbitration before the Hong Kong International Arbitration Centre involving claims for delay.
- Represent German manufacturer in multi-million dollar dispute related to the construction of its carbon black manufacturing facility in the United States. This matter is currently being litigated in two separate forums and involves a significant mechanic's lien claim in addition to claims for breach of contract, unjust enrichment, and misappropriation of trade secrets and intellectual property.
- Represent national energy provider in ongoing breach of coal lease dispute related to client's underground mining operations.
- Represent international contractor and supplier in ongoing construction delay dispute related to the construction of five power plants throughout the Republic of Chile.
- Represented national meal delivery start-up in multi-million dollar dispute related to the construction of its east coast food processing facility. This matter implicated numerous mechanic's lien claims, nearly a dozen change order disputes, and various defective construction claims.

- Represent international manufacturer of advanced thermal technology in multi-million dollar dispute alleging claims of defective supply related to the construction of a natural gas-fueled generating facility.
- Represents global EPC contractor in multi-billion dollar ICC arbitration involving the design and construction of one of the largest refineries in Latin America.
- Serve as outside general counsel for manufacturing corporation throughout duration of construction project.
- Represent international engineering firm and design-build contractor in multi-million dollar lawsuit alleging claims of negligent misrepresentation related to its design of a municipal ash recycling and processing facility.
- Defended municipality in multi-million dollar lawsuit involving claims for defective construction and differing site conditions related to the construction of a township's subsurface sewer system.
- Defended national petroleum and natural gas exploration company in multi-million dollar lawsuit involving various claims related to the subsurface contamination of protected forestland.
- Defended owner of a nuclear and coal-fired power plant in lawsuit brought by coal mine alleging, among other claims, breach of a long-term coal supply agreement and claiming damages in the hundreds of millions.
- Defended owner of nation's most efficient and cleanest coal-fired power plant in lawsuit brought by coal mine alleging breach of a long-term coal supply agreement.
- Represented regional energy and infrastructure maintenance provider in lawsuit against competing business alleging claims for trade secret infringement and unfair competition.
- Represented conglomerate of entities in intracompany deadlock over financing for a multi-million dollar luxury apartment complex.