

Vanessa Ajagu

Associate Attorney

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New York

Vanessa Ajagu is an associate in the New York office of Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher LLP. She is a member of the firm's Litigation Practice Group.

Vanessa has broad experience in high-stakes complex litigation before federal and state courts, representing clients in the technology, labor and employment, and finance sectors. These matters include defending a major technology company in a securities class action, representing clients in multiple shareholder litigation matters before the Delaware Court of Chancery, achieving victory on behalf of a leading beverage company in arbitration, and reversing a lower court ruling in favor of a streaming company in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit.

Vanessa has a robust pro bono practice centered on appellate advocacy and women's rights. She has argued and briefed matters before appellate courts, including successfully challenging a decision that reduced attorneys' fees awarded to The Legal Aid Society based solely on its nonprofit status. She is a member of the Third Circuit's Pro Bono Panel and has contributed to multiple amicus briefs before the U.S. Supreme Court. Beyond her appellate work, Vanessa advocates for survivors of domestic violence—obtaining a restraining order on behalf of one client following an evidentiary hearing and successfully achieving a reduced sentence for another under New York's Domestic Violence Survivors Justice Act (DVSJA). Vanessa currently serves on the African Affairs Committee of the New York City Bar Association and is a Board Member of Empowered Network, a nonprofit that supports human trafficking survivors.

Before joining the firm, Vanessa served as a law clerk to the Honorable Gerard E. Lynch of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit and the Honorable Margo K. Brodie of the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of New York.

Vanessa received her Juris Doctor in 2020 from Columbia Law School, where she was named a Harlan Fiske Stone Scholar and served as a Senior Editor of the Columbia Law Review. At Columbia Law, she was awarded a Parker School Recognition of Achievement in International and Comparative Law and selected as a fellow for the Salzburg Lloyd N. Cutler Fellows Program in International Law. She received a Master's in International Criminal Law from the University of Amsterdam in 2020 and a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology with high distinction from Queen's University in 2017.

Vanessa is admitted to practice before the United States Courts of Appeals for the Second, Third, and Ninth Circuits; the United States District Courts for the Southern and Eastern Districts of New York; and New York state courts.

Publications

- Co-Author, A Second Look, With Limits: Court of Appeals Defines Scope of the Domestic Violence Survivors Justice Act, New York Law Journal (Oct. 20, 2025).



Capabilities

Litigation
Appellate and Constitutional Law
Judgment and Arbitral Award Enforcement
Labor and Employment
Technology Litigation
Trials

Credentials

Education

University of Amsterdam - 2020 Master of Laws (LL.M.)
Columbia University - 2020 Juris Doctor
Queen's University - 2017 Bachelor of Arts

Admissions

New York Bar

Clerkships

US Court of Appeals, 2nd Circuit, Hon. Gerard E. Lynch, 2022 - 2023
USDC, Eastern District of New York, Hon. Margo K. Brodie, 2020 - 2021

• Author, Bypassing #MeToo: A Blueprint for Sexual Harassment Protections in Nigeria, 4 UNILAG L. Rev. 1, 26–71 (2020).

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