

Connor S. Sullivan

Partner

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New York

Connor Sullivan is a partner in the New York office of Gibson Dunn. He is a member of the firm's Media, Entertainment, and Technology; Technology Litigation; Tech and Innovation; and Appellate and Constitutional Law practice groups, among others.

He represents technology and media companies in high-stakes complex litigation in state and federal court, including multiple jury trials involving billions of dollars in potential damages. His experience includes founders' disputes, breach of contract litigation, tort claims, and copyright and trademark issues, involving products ranging from social media platforms to artificial intelligence and fintech applications.

Connor also has significant experience in litigation involving the First Amendment, especially defamation defense. He has been involved in some of the firm's major recent First Amendment victories, including winning a complete victory at summary judgment in defeating the first-ever defamation claim arising from generative artificial intelligence output. He has also played a key role on teams that successfully represented members of the White House press corps suing to secure the return of suspended press credentials and represented Mary Trump, the niece of President Donald Trump, in successfully opposing the Trump family's attempt to enjoin the publication of her bestselling family memoir. Before joining the firm, Connor served as a member of the trial team in one of the largest defamation suits ever tried. He is a co-author of "Defamation and Reputation Management in the United States" for the global research platform Lexology and co-hosts the firm's regular webinar on developments in First Amendment jurisprudence. Connor has also worked on behalf of pro bono clients in connection with immigration and First Amendment rights.

The American Lawyer has recognized Connor in its "Litigators of the Week" feature. *Best Lawyers: Ones to Watch® in America* has repeatedly recognized Connor in Entertainment and Sports Law and Appellate Practice. He has also been recognized in the *Super Lawyers* New York Metro "Rising Stars" list in the area of litigation since 2020. Connor has conducted and defended witness examinations in depositions and at trial, successfully argued dispositive and evidentiary motions, and filed merits, amicus, and certiorari-stage briefs before the federal courts of appeals, state appellate and supreme courts, and the United States Supreme Court.

Significant representations include:*

- Secured a complete defense victory at summary judgment against the first-ever defamation claim arising from generative artificial intelligence output.
- Represented the founders, early executives, and employees of the online dating application Tinder in a four-year multibillion-dollar litigation, which settled at the conclusion of a month-long jury trial with the defendants paying Gibson Dunn's clients \$441 million.



Capabilities

Litigation
Appellate and Constitutional Law
Artificial Intelligence
Intellectual Property
Media, Entertainment, and Technology
Privacy, Cybersecurity, and Data
Innovation
Tech and Innovation
Technology Litigation
Trials

Credentials

Education

Yale University - 2013 Juris Doctor
University of Virginia - 2008 Bachelor of Arts

Admissions

New York Bar
District of Columbia Bar

Clerkships

US Court of Appeals, DC Circuit, Hon.
Thomas B. Griffith, 2014 - 2015
USDC, Southern District of New York, Hon.
Katherine Polk Failla, 2013 - 2014

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- Defending NBCUniversal Media and its production company partner against a defamation claim brought by the music industry executive Sean Combs arising from a streaming documentary.
- Represented an AI developer in successfully enforcing a non-competition and non-solicitation agreement against a former employee.
- Represented a major grocery retailer and wholesaler in a \$125 million breach of contract lawsuit arising from a failed merger.
- Defending two global media companies against a defamation claim brought by a prominent television producer arising from a streaming documentary.
- Defended multiple consumer products manufacturers against trademark infringement litigation.
- Defending a global entertainment company against a breach of contract claim arising from production of an Emmy-winning streaming drama.
- Representing the MSNBC host Joy Reid in defending against a defamation claim.
- Defended a national news network against multibillion-dollar defamation and product disparagement claims seeking billions of dollars in damages, including a month-long jury trial.
- Successfully represented White House in First Amendment and Due Process Clause challenges to obtain the return of their press credentials after they were suspended by the White House Press Office.
- Defended a global news agency against defamation claims involving international financial fraud.
- Represented Mary Trump, the niece of President Donald Trump, in successfully defeating an attempt by the Trump family to prevent the publication of her bestselling family memoir Too Much and Never Enough.

Prior to joining Gibson Dunn, Connor was an associate at a prominent firm in Washington, D.C., where he focused on defending news organizations in defamation actions. He was also involved in significant copyright, product liability, and breach of contract actions.

He clerked for the Honorable Thomas B. Griffith of the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit and the Honorable Katherine Polk Failla of the United States District Court for the Southern District of New York. In the summer after law school, he served as what is now called a Phillips Fellow in the Office of the Solicitor General at the Department of Justice.

Connor graduated from Yale Law School in 2013, where he was a director of the law school's Supreme Court clinic, an editor of the Yale Law Journal, the Executive Editor of the Yale Journal on Regulation, and a winner of the Morris Tyler Moot Court competition. He published an academic comment entitled A First Amendment Approach to Generic Drug Manufacturer Tort Liability, 123 Yale L.J. 495 (2013). Prior to law school, Connor was a strategy and operations consultant for McKinsey & Company. He graduated with distinction from the University of Virginia in 2008, where he was elected to Phi Beta Kappa.

Connor is admitted to practice in New York and the District of Columbia, and before the United States Supreme Court, the United States Courts of Appeals for the Second, Third, Fourth, Sixth, Ninth, and District of Columbia Circuits, and the United States District Courts for the Southern and Eastern Districts of New York and the District of Columbia.

** Includes matters Connor handled prior to joining Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher.*