

Leander A. Dolphin

Managing Partner

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Hartford

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Leander A. Dolphin is managing partner of the firm.

Leander is a partner in the School Law Practice Group. In private practice and as former vice president of human resources and general counsel for the Girl Scouts of Connecticut, Leander has dedicated her career to advising educational institutions and organizations that foster the development of children, youth and young adults. An effective litigator and counselor, she draws on her dispute-resolution experience to help clients identify shared goals and find common ground with staff, parents, students and community stakeholders.

Leander advises universities, colleges, public school districts, independent schools, and other public- and private-sector clients on the full range of education and employment matters. She also works with clients to develop and implement effective non-discrimination policies and to address teacher, staff and student discipline concerns, confidentiality and privacy issues in education, and special education disputes, among other areas.

Leander understands the unique challenges facing parties in education-related litigation, not the least of which is that administrators, teachers, parents and students involved in a dispute will often continue to work together for years after the issue has been resolved. When disputes arise, Leander represents clients in all phases of investigations, negotiations, pre-trial discovery, trials and appeals. She has successfully defended and pursued claims in state and federal courts, before administrative agencies, and in alternative-dispute resolution forums across the state.

A skilled educator in her own right, Leander has been an adjunct professor of education law at Quinnipiac University School of Law. She also conducts a wide range of workshops for public- and

private-sector clients on topics such as sexual harassment, bullying, special education, disability and other forms of discrimination, and confidentiality.

Leander is a trusted advisor to many of her clients and is regularly sought out for her guidance and access to resources in areas beyond education and employment law.

A gifted leader, Leander was named by Governor Ned Lamont as a Commissioner of the Connecticut Judicial Selection Committee, and was elected to Chair the Commission, which is responsible for seeking and recommending to the governor qualified candidates for nomination as judges in Connecticut courts. She is a member of the Board of Directors of the CBIA. In 2022, the Connecticut Law Tribune recognized Leander as the 2022 Attorney of the Year, a prestigious annual award given to one Connecticut lawyer who has had outstanding success and has made significant impact on Connecticut's legal community. Leander was recently named to the Hartford Business Journal's Power 50 List and Top 25 Women in Business.

Distinctions

- Listed in The Best Lawyers in America®: *Employment Law - Management* (2023-2026); *Education Law* (2026)
- Listed as a Connecticut Super Lawyer®: *Schools & Education* (2024)
- *Hartford Business Journal*, "Power 50 List" (2022-2025)
- *Corporate Counsel Business Journal's 50 Women to Watch* (2023)
- Attorney of the Year, *Connecticut Law Tribune* (2022)
- *Savoy Magazine*, "Most Influential Black Lawyers" (2022)
- *New Haven Biz*, Power 25-Class of 2022
- *Hartford Business Journal*, "Top 25 Women in Business" (2022)
- National Bar Association: "40 Under 40 Nation's Best Advocates" Award (2017)
- Listed as a Connecticut Super Lawyer Rising Star®: *Schools & Education* (2013-2017)
- *Connecticut Law Tribune*, New Leader in the Law (2014)
- *Connecticut Law Tribune*, Lawyers of Color - High Achievers (2011)
- American Bar Foundation: Fellow
- Connecticut Bar Foundation: James W. Cooper Fellow

Teaching Positions

- Quinnipiac University School of Law: former Adjunct Professor, Education Law

Professional Affiliations

- American Bar Association, Section of Litigation and Section of Labor and Employment Law

- National Bar Association
- Connecticut Business & Industry Association (CBIA): Board of Directors (current)
- The Connecticut Forum: Board of Directors (current)
- Connecticut Bar Association, Labor & Employment Section
- National Association of College and University Attorneys: Member, Web Page Legal Resources Committee (2019–2020)
- National School Boards Association, Council of School Attorneys
- Connecticut School Attorneys Council
- George W. Crawford Black Bar Association: Member, Board of Directors (2007–2008), Secretary (2005–2007), Advisory Board
- International Women's Forum of Connecticut

Community Involvement

- Connecticut Judicial Selection Committee: Commissioner and Chair
- Connecticut Commission on Judicial Compensation: Commissioner (2020)
- The Ethel Walker School: Board of Trustees, Executive Committee
- The Governor's Prevention Partnership: Board Member (2012-2018)
- The Lawyer's Collaborative for Diversity, Inc. (LCD): Associates Advisory Committee
- Hartt School for Performing Arts: Board of Trustees (2010-2013)
- Girl Scouts of Connecticut: Fund Development Committee (2009-2010); Girl Scouts of the USA: National Delegate (Girl Scouts of Connecticut Delegation) (2008)

Credentials

Education

- Howard University School of Law, J.D., 2004
- Wesleyan University, B.A., 1999, high honors

Bar Admissions

- Connecticut, 2004

Court Admissions

- U.S. District Court, District of CT
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit