



CHRISTOPHER P. MONTVILLE

Partner

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Christopher Montville represents clients in professional liability and complex commercial matters. Chris has served on several successful trial teams defending lawyers and law firms against malpractice and negligence claims, and he has also won at trial for business owners in commercial disputes.

EDUCATION

Duke University School of Law, J.D., 2007, *magna cum laude*, Order of the Coif
Duke Law Journal, Executive Editor

Rutgers College, Rutgers University, B.S., 2000, Computer Science
National Merit Scholar and Rutgers Merit Scholar

GOVERNMENT SERVICE

Law Clerk to the Honorable Carlos F. Lucero, United States Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit

OTHER EXPERIENCE

Goldman Sachs & Co.

ADMISSIONS

Colorado

HIGHLIGHTS

- Won a trial in El Paso County District Court for two estate creditors accused of colluding with an estate representative to defraud the primary beneficiary.
- Won a landmark federal case in Illinois defining the obligations of lead and liaison counsel in multidistrict litigation.
- Obtained Rule 12 dismissal for a Midwest-based, AmLaw 200 firm facing claims exceeding \$500 million in state court in Kentucky.
- Won a complete defense jury verdict in a complex legal malpractice case.
- Won defense verdict for a large international law firm accused of malpractice.
- Won a complete jury verdict for a contractor who claimed a Canadian software company failed to pay him amounts due under a contract.
- Successfully briefed and argued in opposition to an appeal by two Las Vegas automobile dealerships arising from WTO's successful defense of the establishment of a new dealership approved by WTO's client, Chrysler Group.

INDUSTRIES

- Legal Services
- Professional Services
- Financial Services
- Real Estate

PRACTICE AREAS

- Professional Liability
- Legal Professional Liability
- Appellate
- Commercial Litigation

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BIOGRAPHY

Christopher Montville represents clients in professional liability and complex commercial matters. Chris has served on several successful trial teams defending lawyers and law firms against malpractice and negligence claims, and he has also won at trial for business owners in commercial disputes.

Chris's nationwide practice focuses on legal malpractice defense and complex commercial litigation at both the trial and appellate levels. He has successfully defended law firm clients, including large regional and international firms, against claims of malpractice, negligence, and breach of fiduciary duty relating to complex underlying cases. His strong history of effectively handling complex commercial disputes for large clients informs his awareness of exactly the types of issues law firms and lawyers may face when dealing with professional liability lawsuits. Chris has first- and second-chaired several jury trials, arbitrations, and administrative hearings.

Prior to becoming a lawyer, Chris designed and developed financial software systems supporting the international trading and brokerage business for a leading investment bank. He uses this analytical background to plan at the outset the right strategy for each individual matter, from the initial pleadings to trial themes, long before cases reach the courtroom.

CASES

- Won a trial in El Paso County District Court for two estate creditors accused of colluding with an estate representative to defraud the primary beneficiary. The presiding judge entered judgment for WTO's clients, concluding that the plaintiff had failed to prove virtually every necessary element of her claims.
- Won a landmark federal case in Illinois defining the obligations of lead and liaison counsel in multidistrict litigation.
- Obtained Rule 12 dismissal for a Midwest-based, AmLaw 200 firm facing claims exceeding \$500 million in state court in Kentucky.
- Won a complete defense jury verdict in a \$12 million legal malpractice case. The jury found in favor of WTO's client on all claims and also awarded unpaid legal fees owed by plaintiffs.
- Won a complete defense jury verdict in federal court for a large international law firm accused of malpractice. The plaintiff hired WTO's client to handle a complex patent infringement matter, then sued the firm for negligence and breach of fiduciary duty.
- Won a complete jury verdict for a contractor who claimed a Canadian software company failed to pay him amounts due under a contract. The jury, in Douglas County, Colorado, returned a verdict in favor of WTO's client after 22 minutes of deliberation, awarding all the damages the client requested.
- Successfully briefed and argued in opposition to an appeal by two Las Vegas automobile dealerships arising from WTO's successful defense of the establishment of a new dealership approved by WTO's client, Chrysler Group.

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- Secured a favorable outcome for our client in a real estate dispute involving damages claims of almost \$9 million. The defendant alleged that our client had defaulted on a personal guaranty related to a Texas real estate development project. Following a five-day trial in federal court in Colorado, the jury awarded only a tenth of the original demand.
- *Chapman Las Vegas Dodge v. Chrysler* - Successfully defended Chrysler against a protest filed by two local dealers to stop Chrysler's establishment of a new Las Vegas dealership. This successful establishment was viewed as a test of New Chrysler's ability to expand its dealership network following the economic downturn and termination of almost 800 dealers in Old Chrysler's 2009 bankruptcy.
- Successfully defended Chrysler against an automobile dealership's allegations of oppressive and unreasonable terms in a letter of intent to enter into a franchise agreement after Chrysler's bankruptcy in a franchise case of national significance.
- Briefed an appeal in the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit, resulting in full affirmance of a verdict in favor of WTO's client, Chrysler Group, on a federal statutory issue of first impression stemming from Congress's enactment of Section 747 of the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2010.
- *Mercedes-Benz v. Star Automobile* (M.D. Ga. 2011) - Won a preliminary injunction in Georgia for Mercedes-Benz USA in a dealership breach of contract dispute involving the sale of a dealership to a proposed buyer that MBUSA did not want as a Mercedes-Benz dealer.
- Co-managed with one other law firm the response to requests from 418 dealers for arbitration relating to the bankruptcy of Chrysler Group LLC and following Chrysler's termination of those dealerships. WTO litigated 187 of these Section 747 arbitrations, and, as directed by Congress, resolved all of the litigation within seven months--with a 96% success rate.
- Obtained partial summary judgment in federal court for a large national law firm that had been sued for malpractice, aiding and abetting, conspiracy, and violations of RICO. The ruling reduced the damage claim from over \$150 million to less than \$2 million and paved the way for a favorable settlement of the case.
- Represented footwear manufacturer Crocs in nationwide litigation involving allegations of defectively designed footwear and failure to warn with respect to alleged risks associated with wearing the shoes on escalators.

BAR & COURT ADMISSIONS

Colorado

U.S. District Court, D. Colorado

U.S. Court of Appeals, 10th Circuit

U.S. Court of Appeals, 2nd Circuit

U.S. Court of Appeals, 6th Circuit

U.S. Court of Appeals, 9th Circuit

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LEGAL MEMBERSHIPS, ACTIVITIES & HONORS

Colorado Rising Stars

Professional Liability - Defense, 2014-2018

Business Litigation, 2013

The Best Lawyers in America

Legal Malpractice Law - Defendants, 2021

ARTICLES & PRESENTATIONS

Articles

- "Behavioral Ethics and the Practice of Law," ALAS Loss Prevention Journal, Vol. XXX, No. 2, Winter 2019
- Co-authored "New Strategies for Defending Professional Liability and Malpractice Cases," *Best Practices for Addressing Professional Liability Claims* (2015).
- "Keeping the Lights on for Colorado Legal Services," *The Colorado Lawyer* (March 2013).
- "Reforming the Law of Proprietary Information," 56 DUKE L.J. 1159 (2007).

Newsletters

- Evaluating Arbitration in Legal Malpractice Claims

PERSONAL INTERESTS

Mountain and road biking, very long hikes, and skiing