

ALIA L. ADKINS-DERRICK

PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY



ALIA L. ADKINS-DERRICK is the Managing Partner and a Certified Mediator at Derrick Law, PLLC and an Adjunct Law Professor and community educator who is frequently called up to speak at business conferences. Ms. Adkins-Derrick helps clients protect their interests, tackle complex employment, business, contract, and civil litigation matters, and provides specialized mediation services. For more information about Ms. Adkins-Derrick or Derrick Law, PLLC, a premier boutique law firm with offices in Dallas and Houston, Texas, visit: www.dlgam.com or call 214.330.2881 (Dallas) or 713.828.1287 (Houston).

PRACTICE AREAS & SERVICES

- Employment & Labor
- Business
- Contracts
- Civil Litigation
- Mediation

ADMISSIONS & EDUCATION

Bar & Court Admissions

- State Bar of Texas, 2007
- United States District Courts for the Southern, Eastern, Northern, and Western Districts of Texas

University of Texas at Austin School of Law, Austin, TX

- Juris Doctorate – 2007
- Certified Mediator under Texas Civil Practices and Remedies Code

Rice University, Houston, TX

- Bachelor of Arts – 2003
- Major–History & Spanish; Education Emphasis | Texas Teacher Certification (8-12th Grade History)

BIOGRAPHY

Alia L. Adkins-Derrick serves as the managing partner of Derrick Law, PLLC. Her primary focus is helping clients avoid legal ruin by providing them with the legal foresight and representation they need to minimize their legal risks. Ms. Adkins-Derrick regularly counsels business clients across various professions and industries on the practical implications and impact of employment, business, and contract laws on their respective business practices, policies, and procedures. She has first-hand experience preparing clients for changes in the law and guiding their efforts to bring their company and/or workplace into compliance. Her clients describe her as “on your team . . . looking out for your best interest” and a “great partner for the long-term: trustworthy, knowledgeable, and caring.”

Ms. Adkins-Derrick is no stranger to the courtroom. She helps clients protect their interest by representing them in administrative and court proceedings, if and when, the need arises. As a mediator with advanced training and first-hand experience, she empowers litigants with the tools needed to negotiate and resolve the complex disputes between them. As a legal advocate, Ms. Adkins-Derrick uses this specialized knowledge to give her clients a competitive advantage in alternative dispute resolution proceedings.



When she is not engaged in fierce client advocacy, Ms. Adkins-Derrick educates others on the law. She serves as an Adjunct Law Professor at a local law school and is frequently called upon to speak at various business seminars and conferences. She takes great pride in: (1) equipping the next generation of Texas attorneys with the critical reasoning and practical legal research and writing skills they need to be effective client advocates; and (2) educating business owners and clients on practical steps they can take to avoid legal landmines.

Prior to forming Derrick Law, PLLC, Ms. Adkins-Derrick had the distinct honor of serving as a briefing attorney for former Texas Supreme Court Justice Scott A. Brister where she gained in depth knowledge of court procedure as well as unique and invaluable insight and understanding of court decisions that translates into a competitive advantage for her clients. Ms. Adkins-Derrick later joined a large law firm where she gained experience as legal advocate for clients.

Ms. Adkins-Derrick obtained her B.A. degree in History and Spanish from Rice University and her J.D. from the University of Texas at Austin School of Law. She also holds an advanced mediation certification and serves as a neutral third party mediator trained to help parties resolve complex disputes.

REPRESENTATIVE MATTERS

Preventative & Administrative Employment Counseling

- Advise global and national employers in reductions-in-force efforts, including compliance with the Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (“WARN”) Act and the Older Workers Benefit Protection Act (“OWBPA”).
- Advise and counsel doctors, executives, and other professionals on employment contract negotiations and termination/separation matters.
- Prepare employment agreements that include compliant non-competition and non-solicitation provisions, wage deduction and training reimbursement provisions.
- Advise residential and community disabilities service provider in the application of wage and hour standards imposed by the Fair Labor Standards Act (“FLSA”) and federal regulations and assist in development and implementation of revised plan.
- Advise national employers on the application of the FLSA to executive employees.
- Advise medical provider C.E.O. of best employment practices for workers and interns, how to properly handle insubordination and other HR matters, and the impact of recent legal developments on company policies.
- Advise medical provider of how to navigate unemployment benefits claims.
- Advise medical service provider of intellectual property protections and prepared employment agreements for personnel.
- Advise and represent residential construction service provider in U.S. Department of Labor, Wage and Hour Division’s investigation of employer’s overtime compensation practices, exemptions, and employee/independent contractor classifications.
- Advise and represent global employers in state unemployment benefits administrative proceedings and enforcement of non-competition agreements.
- Advise national vision care system provider in the confidential separation of employee and oversee the preparation of severance and consultancy agreement.
- Advise employers regarding reasonable accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (“ADAAA”), workers compensation regulations, and Family Medical Leave Act (“FMLA”).
- Advise national employer regarding the implications of the Vietnam Era Veterans Readjustment Assistance Act (“VEVRAA”) and Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act on federal contractor

affirmative action plans.

Employment Litigation & Alternative Dispute Resolution

- Briefed and obtained precedent setting victory in a wage and hour lawsuit for national employer on the issue of whether gap time claims are actionable under the FLSA.
- Obtained summary judgment for national hospital network in Title VII national origin discrimination lawsuit.
- Obtained partial summary judgment for multi-state residential homebuilder in FLSA wage and hour collective action lawsuit.
- Represent multi-state residential homebuilder in FLSA misclassification collective action lawsuit.
- Successfully represented regional hospital organization in Texas whistleblower and anti-retaliation lawsuit.
- Successfully represented national hotel management company in workers' compensation retaliation and wrongful termination lawsuit.
- Successfully represented building services provider in sexual harassment, discrimination, retaliation, and constructive discharge lawsuit.
- Successfully mediated discrimination, retaliation, and constructive discharge lawsuits for various employers.
- Successfully negotiated favorable settlements for medical provider and steel manufacturer clients to recover thousands of dollars from former workers.
- Successfully represented Pediatric Physician in the negotiation of her employment contract.

Commercial Litigation

- Successfully identified, researched, and advised trial team of legal authority that if extrapolated and applied could, and did, salvage our sole viable counterclaim of breach of the duty of good faith and fair dealing, bolster our trial defense strategy, and result in a half-million dollar verdict.
- Successfully defended national financial institution as *first chair* at trial on consumer contract dispute.
- Obtained summary judgment for a consulting and technology solutions provider in a breach of contract lawsuit.
- Obtained directed verdict for national consumer services company as *first chair* at trial on breach of implied contract and negligence lawsuit.
- Successfully represented medical transcription company in breach of non-competition agreement and fraud lawsuit.
- Successfully represented national airline in mediation of personal injury lawsuit.
- Represent commercial labeling company in indemnity lawsuit.
- Successfully represented global and national environmental testing, engineering, and oil & gas companies to quash, defend against, and/or respond to both party and third-party subpoenas.
- Currently representing medical provider in whistleblower retaliatory discharge lawsuit.
- Currently representing owner of car dealership in complex breach of contract lawsuit.

Regulatory Matters

- Assisted in representation of regional electricity transmitter & distributor in state regulatory rate-making proceedings before utilities commission and court proceedings.
- Assisted small interpretative service company in obtaining conditional certification from Federal Communications Commission.

HONORS

- 2016 - 2018 Recognized by Super Lawyers as a Texas Rising Star three consecutive years.
- 2017 Recognized by D Magazine as a “2017 Best Lawyers in Dallas” for Labor & Employment, an honor bestowed only upon the top 4% of lawyers in Dallas and Collin counties.
- 2015 Life Fellow of the Texas Bar Foundation
- 2014 Named to the Lawyers of Color Hot List
- 2014 Recognized among the best trained attorneys in Texas as she joined the College of the State Bar of Texas honorary society of judges and attorneys
- 2013-2014 Elected, from among the top 1/3 of 1% of Texas attorneys, to become a Life Fellow of the Texas Bar Foundation based on her outstanding contributions to the legal profession and commitment to the community.
- 2013 Jack Sun Walker Award
- 2011-2012 Associate Member of the Patrick E. Higginbotham American Inn of Court
- 2011 State Bar of Texas LeadershipSBOT Class
- 2011 Dallas Bar Foundation Life Fellow
- 2005 Texas Law Fellowship Recipient (Peer Recognition)
- 2003-04 Outstanding First Year Teacher Award
- 2003 Who’s Who Among Students in American Colleges & Universities

SPEECHES/PUBLICATIONS

Speeches

- “*Growth Hacks Every Business Owner Should Know to Achieve the Big 3: Success, Profits, & Longevity*” at Frost Bank’s Growing Small Businesses Breakfast Seminar – Sept. 2017.
- “*Asset Today, Liability Tomorrow: Small Business Killers & C.Y.A. Tips to Avoid Legal Ruin*” at 2017 Small Business Expo - Oak Cliff Chamber of Commerce – Aug. 2017.
- “*When Opportunity Knocks . . . CYA with NDAs*” at Small Business Development Center’s Biz Wake Up Call Series: Legal Workshop Featuring a Panel Discussion– Apr. 2017.
- “*Asset Today, Liability Tomorrow: Labor & Employment Laws and Developments Every Small Business Needs to Know*” at Frost Bank’s 2016 Small Business Workshop Series – Oct. 2016.
- “*Taking Care of Your Legal Business: What Every Business Needs to Know.*” at the SBDT’s 2016 Success in Business Seminar – June 2016
- *Divorce-Proofing Your Business: 4 Effective Steps to Help Ensure Your Business Survives In Event of Divorce* – at the DAYL’s 2016 Small Business Symposium – June 2016.
- “*5 Tips Every Business Owner Needs to Know to Avoid Legal & Financial Ruin!*” at Small Business Power Hours – April & May 2016
- “*Employ, Train, & Retain Your Next Rockstar: Legally*” at Grove Dallas’ Speaker Series – Nov. 2015
- “*Legal Landmines: Tips to Protect Your Business From Legal Ruin.*” at the SBDT’s 2015 Success in Business Seminar – Oct. 2015
- “*Know Your Rights: Tips for Tenants, Homeowners, & Potential Homebuyers*” at UNIDOS Townhall Meeting – May 2015
- *US Supreme Court Update* – spoke on *Burwell v. Hobby Lobby* and Its Impact on Employee Health Insurance at July 2014 CLE presentation.
- “*I See Working People: Now What Should[n’t] I Do?*” a look at Recent Trends in Enforcement of Fair Labor Standards Act at February 2014 assembly of the Houston Chapter of the American Payroll

Association.

- “*Are You Prepared? Health Care Reform Changes*” at a 2013 business conference.
- “*Employment Law Update: Healthcare, 401(k) Plan Fee Disclosures and Fiduciary Responsibilities, and Other Recent Changes*” at the Houston Texas Society of Certified Public Accountants Foundation’s 2012 CFO/Controller Conference.
- “*Combating Early Exits: How Effective Mentorship Increases Retention & Diversity*” at the 2011 State Bar of Texas Annual Meeting’s “LeadershipSBOT” Seminar.
- “*As the Federal Rules ~~World~~ Turns: Changes to the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure Now Affecting Federal Practice*” at a 2011 CLE presentation.

Articles & Publications

- *Salaried Today, Hourly Employee Tomorrow: 4 Million Reasons Companies Should Prepare Now for New Overtime Laws & Three Effective Steps to Compliance* – 2016.
- *Divorce-Proofing Your Business: 4 Effective Steps to Help Ensure Your Business Survives In Event of Divorce* – published and presented at the DAYL’s 2016 Small Business Symposium – 2016.
- Co-authored “*Landmines in Settlement, Separation, & Severance Agreements*” with Marcia N. Jackson – later presented at the Texas Bar’s 23rd Annual Advanced Employment Law Course – 2015.
- *A Tale of Equal Pay Laws to Come? How Two New Executive Actions for Federal Contractors Could Eventually Affect All Employers* – 2014
- “*Big Deal? How the NLRB’s [(National Labor Relations Board)] Recent Decision Limits the Confidentiality of All Employer HR Investigations?*” – 2012
- Co-authored “*Targeted Advertising: Tracking Online Activity and the Privacy Debate*” with Kathleen LaValle which was later presented at the 2009 Texas State Bar Public Utility Law Section Seminar.
- Co-authored “*2008-09 Banking Law Updates*” CLE presentation.

LANGUAGES, SERVICE, & INTERESTS

Languages

- Proficient in Spanish

Leadership & Service

- Founding Member and Executive Committee Member of Dallas’ premier “The N.E.W. Roundtable” group of in-house and private practice women attorneys (Present); former Mentoring & Outreach Committee Chair (2015)
- Rice University: ARUBA Board Member at Large (2015); Alumni MVP Liaison, Admissions Interviewer, & Bush Community Building Award Committee Member
- Mentor Foster Care Teens and Volunteer at HAY Center’s Mock Interviews and Prom Event
- Dallas’ & Houston’s Volunteer Lawyers Program and Legallines Pro Bono Attorney
- Dallas’ & Houston’s Bar Associations and Labor & Employment Section Member
- Houston Lawyers Association & J.L. Turner Legal Association
- Urban League of Greater Dallas Young Professionals & Houston Area Urban Leagues Young Professionals Volunteer
- Lakewood Church: (1) Singles Bible Class Teacher; and (2) Operations Assistant responsible for leading and working with volunteers to ensure the operations and logistics of the worship service run smoothly and any medical, ministry, or safety needs are promptly and properly resolved.

- Volunteer in quarterly Fifth Ward Community Beautification, Clean Up, and Outreach Projects

Interests

- Singing & Acting (UT Law's Assault & Flattery) — Sang U.S. National Anthem for President of Croatia, Croatian National Delegation, & the Consular Corps of Houston at May 2014 Reception
- Basketball