HUSCH BLACKWELL



Cynthia L. Cordes

PARTNER

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OVERVIEW

A nationally recognized former federal prosecutor, Cynthia is well known by companies, Boards, and executives for counseling them with their most complex legal needs to address growth and risk mitigation.

Cynthia represents both public and privately held companies and advises Boards of Directors in a variety of situations for long-term prosperity. As a former federal prosecutor, Cynthia is well known for her ability to see the entire playing field to advise clients on legal issues related to opportunities for growth and the pitfalls on the horizon. Cynthia's breadth of knowledge is extensive as she has spent years aiding clients in developing compliant, legally sustainable growth strategies and advising through times of transition and challenges faced, whether that be litigation or government investigations.

Cynthia has represented numerous companies in the food, agriculture, manufacturing, and technology industries. She also represents financial and educational institutions and clients in real estate and construction. She regularly interacts and litigates with multiple agencies on behalf of clients, including the U.S. Department of Justice, FBI, EPA, DOL, IRS, HHS, OSHA, SEC, and U.S. Attorney's Offices across the country.

Cynthia served as an assistant U.S. attorney for nearly a decade prior to private practice. During this time, she spearheaded a multiagency task force of more than 20 federal and state law enforcement agencies; and over 60 non-profit organizations. She directed investigations that took

Industries

Financial Services & Capital Markets

Healthcare

Services

Animal Health & Production

Companion Animal Health

Healthcare Regulatory & Compliance Counseling

Hospitality

Human Trafficking Compliance

Rail

State Attorneys General Practice

Tax Controversy

White Collar, Internal Investigations, & Compliance

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down criminal enterprises operating in the United States and overseas and was responsible for some of the largest and most complex investigations in Department of Justice history. The U.S. Department of Justice honored her as the Crime Victims' Rights Act Champion in 2013 and the National Association of Former United States Attorney's honored her with the Exceptional Service Award in 2011.

Cynthia leads sensitive internal investigations for companies and Boards of Directors. This includes internal investigations which address parallel government investigations, regulatory violations and compliance audits. These investigations include embezzlement, financial institution fraud, labor violations, environmental violations, healthcare fraud, domestic and international tax controversies, and the False Claims Act/qui tam claims, among many others.

Cynthia is a trial attorney and appellate counsel who has extensive litigation experience on both sides of the courtroom. She has litigated hundreds of matters in federal district court, prosecuted cases and defended clients in high-profile trials, and won numerous appeals in federal circuit courts of appeal. While well versed in court, she is also known for her artful ability to obtain settlements and handle negotiations in the most complex cases.

Cynthia has received numerous awards and recognitions throughout her career, including being named Missouri's Lawyer of the Year in 2014 by Missouri Lawyer's Weekly, she was selected as one of Kansas City Business Magazine's Most Influential Women, and she received the Judge Arnold Krekel Trailblazer Award by the Missouri Human Rights Commission in 2016. Cynthia is well known for her innovative work in the law, advocacy on behalf of crime victims and clients' rights, and her long standing relationship with the law enforcement community.

Cynthia also launched and directs the firm's Human Trafficking Pro Bono Legal Clinic, the first and only clinic of its kind in the country. Cynthia supervises lawyers firm-wide in this unprecedented dedication of pro bono resources for victims of human trafficking. She serves as president of the firm's only 501(c)(3) nonprofit, the Human Trafficking Rescue Assistance Fund. As a federal prosecutor, she prosecuted more human trafficking cases than any other Assistant U.S. Attorney in the country. Today, Cynthia also leads nuanced supply chain investigations and audits for corporate clients and handles anti-human trafficking compliance efforts on behalf of public and private companies.

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Recognition

- Benchmark Litigation, Local Litigation Star, 2015-2026
- Benchmark Litigation, Top 250 Women in Litigation, 2015-2017
- Missouri Lawyers Weekly, Lawyer of the Year, 2014
- Missouri Bar, Pro Bono Publico Award, 2014
- Missouri Department of Labor, Missouri Human Rights Commission, Judge Arnold Krekel Trailblazer Award, 2016
- Ingram's magazine, 40 Under Forty, 2016
- Missouri Bar Pro Bono Wall of Fame, 2014-2021
- Kansas City Business Magazine, Influential Woman, 2014
- Boston University, College of Communication, Distinguished Alumni, 2014
- Missouri Lawyers Weekly, Lawyer of the Announced, 2013
- Shared Hope International, Pathbreaker Award, 2013
- U.S. Department of Justice, Crime Victims' Rights Act Champion, 2013
- National Association of Former United States Attorneys, Exceptional Service Award, 2011
- U.S. Attorney General's ACTeam, 2011
- U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Outstanding Prosecution – Fraud Investigations, 2009

Education

- J.D., Notre Dame Law School
- B.S., Boston University
    - Journalism

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Admissions

- Missouri
- Illinois
- Kansas



2026 Benchmark Litigation - Litigation Star

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