HUSCH BLACKWELL



Gene Summerlin

SENIOR COUNSEL

OMAHA, NE

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OVERVIEW

Gene is a trusted advisor, leveraging over three decades of experience representing food systems clients nationwide.

Gene represents protein processors, pharmaceutical companies, and animal health and genetics firms. His strategic guidance has driven growth for both established companies and new ventures. He excels in advising startups focused on emerging technologies, having served as general counsel to several such startups in the animal health and pharmaceutical sectors.

Gene is known for his creative solutions to business challenges, guiding companies from inception through capital raising, market entry, and exit strategies. His success stems from his commitment to understanding each client's business and objectives, ensuring that they have the right legal team for their unique goals and covering a wide range of practice areas.

Beyond his nuanced approach to problem-solving, a deep knowledge of food systems sets Gene's practice apart. He is a respected voice in agribusiness, contributing to trade publications and industry speaking events. His insight and thought leadership continue to influence and shape the future of agricultural and related industries and make him an invaluable asset to clients seeking to navigate the complexities of today's business landscape.

Gene's career has been marked by several notable achievements. As special counsel to the Department of Justice's U.S. Trustee, he played a pivotal role in developing strategies that successfully recouped over $100 million in investor losses. Gene also guided a

Industry

Financial Services & Capital Markets

Services

Animal Health & Production

Commercial Litigation

Companion Animal Health

Credit Unions

Emerging Companies & Venture Capital

Litigation & Alternative Dispute Resolution

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new protein processor through conception, development, and operation to an organization with an annual operational output of over $1 billion.

Experience

- Representing defendant in a patent infringement case in the U.S. District Court for the District of Colorado involving a method of using genetic merit to determine relative value of feed animals.
- Special counsel to the Department of Justice's U.S. trustee in a complex cattle investment-fraud case with $3 billion in assets.
- Class counsel for farmers who alleged commercial harm by cross pollination of genetically modified corn.
- Advertising injury coverage litigation arising from insurer's refusal to provide defense to antitrust, Lanham Act and Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act (RICO) claims brought against cattle breed association.
- Challenged Nebraska tax commissioner's methodology for equalization of centrally assessed property on behalf of pipeline companies and public service entities.
- Defended cattle breed association in litigation asserting that association engaged in monopolization and fraudulent conspiracy to control American purebred cattle market.
- Class action litigation brought on behalf of foster children challenging defects in Nebraska foster care system.
- Took action against the City of Lincoln, Neb., in constitutional litigation against city arising from passage of anti-picketing ordinance that violated plaintiffs' First Amendment speech rights.
- Won a federal ruling that forced a Nebraska prison to accommodate the kosher food request of a Muslim inmate.

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Experience

- Successfully represented national association of surgical nurses with 42,000 members in antitrust litigation under Sections 1 and 2 of the Sherman Act and obtained dismissal of both claims.

Recognition

- *The Best Lawyers in America*®
  - Commercial Litigation, 2024-2027
- Great Plains Super Lawyers, Business Litigation, 2012-2025
- Martindale-Hubbell AV Preeminent
- Nebraska Appleseed Center for Law in the Public Interest, Seeds of Justice Award, 2007

Education

- J.D., University of Nebraska College of Law
  - with high distinction
  - Order of the Coif
  - American Jurisprudence Award for Trial Advocacy, Advanced Trial Advocacy
  - Arthur E. Perry Scholarship
  - Kutak Rock & Campbell Scholarship
  - National Trial Team
  - Roscoe Pound Memorial Award
  - Thomas Stinson Allen Award for Oral Advocacy
  - *Nebraska Law Review*, executive editor
- B.S., University of Nebraska-Lincoln
  - Agriculture

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Admissions

- Nebraska
- U.S. District Court, Central District of Illinois
- U.S. District Court, Southern District of Illinois
- U.S. District Court, District of Nebraska
- U.S. District Court, District of North Dakota
- U.S. Court of Appeals, Eighth Circuit
- Omaha Tribal Courts
- U.S. Supreme Court

Community Leadership

- Family First, advisory counsel, 1999-2001
- Grace Chapel, Haiti ministries coordinator, 2010-2013
- Latino Berean Church, Advisory Board, 2000-2002
- Lincoln East High School hockey coach, 2005-2013
- Lincoln Ice Hockey Association, Board of Directors, 2005-2010; president, 2007-2010; youth hockey coach, 1998-2013
- Lost Lamb Rescue Mission, Board of Directors, 1999-2001
- YMCA youth baseball, football, soccer and softball coach, 1997-2006
- Zion Presbyterian Church, Board of Deacons, 1995-2007; deacon chair, 1997-2007

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