



Gretchen H. Sperry

PARTNER

Chicago

312.796.2999

gsperry@grsm.com

RELATED SERVICES

- Appellate
- Government Investigations & Enforcement Defense
- Product Liability
- Commercial Litigation
- White Collar Defense

OFFICES

- Chicago

OVERVIEW

Gretchen Harris Sperry is a Co-Chair of the Appellate practice group and a Partner in the firm's Chicago office. She has represented clients in numerous state and federal courts of review, including the United States Supreme Court. As a former appellate court clerk, Gretchen is highly skilled in drafting and arguing critical motions and appeals. She has also developed particular expertise as embedded appellate counsel at trial, preparing pre-trial motions, monitoring trial proceedings, and developing appellate strategy in complex commercial litigation, high-exposure catastrophic injury cases, mass torts, constitutional litigation, and labor and employment matters.

Gretchen is highly skilled at handling the sensitive and unique legal issues that arise at the intersection of law, politics, and government. She is experienced in white collar criminal matters, having represented

individuals and entities in federal criminal prosecutions and investigations, as well as conducting internal investigations in anticipation of government involvement. Gretchen frequently represents government agencies and elected officials in constitutional litigation as a court-appointed Special Assistant State’s Attorney. She also represents private sector clients before various governmental, legislative, and regulatory agencies, counseling them on pending legislation and regulatory compliance matters.

Gretchen is an active member of the legal community. She was appointed by the Illinois Supreme Court to serve as a member of the Character and Fitness Committee of the Illinois Board of Admissions to the Bar. She has served as an adjunct faculty member at two Chicago law schools teaching Appellate Advocacy. She also serves as the Secretary of the ABA Council of Appellate Lawyers and is a Past President of the Illinois Appellate Lawyers Association.

Prior to joining GRSM, Gretchen was partner at a national law firm where she served as chair of the firm’s Appellate Practice Group, which was nationally recognized. Previously, Gretchen was a Judicial Clerk to the Honorable Mary Jane Theis and the Honorable Maureen E. Connors in the Illinois Appellate Court. During her time in the Court, Gretchen assisted in researching and drafting judicial opinions and dispositional orders in all areas of the law, including insurance coverage, contract disputes, corporate and partnership formation, fiduciary duty, personal injury, professional liability, declaratory judgment actions, appellate jurisdiction, evidentiary issues, and criminal matters. In law school, she also served as a judicial extern to the Honorable Michael T. Mason, U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois, and was a Senior Research Fellow for Dean Michael J. Kaufman.

PUBLICATIONS

Gretchen authored a bimonthly column in the *Chicago Daily Law Bulletin* titled “On The Docket,” in which she analyzed cases to be heard by the Illinois Supreme Court. She also contributes regularly to *The Brief* and *Cases Pending*, both publications of the Appellate Lawyers Association. She authored the introduction, case analysis and discussion questions for “Education Law and Policy,” (Aspen 2004), written by Michael J. Kauman. Following is a selection of her articles and other publications:

- Featured, “Playing Chess: How Appellate Lawyers Can Shape the Record Long Before Appeal,” Gaetan Gerville-Reache, March 26, 2025
- Quoted, “Illinois Cases To Watch: A Midyear Report,” Lauraann Wood, Law360, 2019-2023
- Quoted, “Biggest Illinois Decisions,” Lauraann Wood, Law360, 2019-2023
- Letter to the Editor, “Appointments of qualified justices show system works,” *Chicago Daily Law Bulletin*, December 15, 2020
- Quoted, “Paul Clement Provides Off-Ramp in CFPB High Court Arguments,” Evan Weinberger, Bloomberg Law, March 2, 2020

- Quoted, “Court Conservatives Disagree on Curbing Agencies in CFPB Case,” Evan Weinberger, Bloomberg Law, March 4, 2020
- Author, “Record on Appeal,” chapter 20, and “The Appendix,” chapter 24, IICLE’s Civil Appeals (Illinois): State and Federal, 2015 edition
- Author, “Preserving Error for Review in Illinois Trial Proceedings,” chapter 2, “Record on Appeal,” chapter 20, and “The Appendix,” chapter 24, IICLE’s Civil Appeals (Illinois): State and Federal, 2022 edition
- Author, “Supreme Court to address med-mal privilege, administrative hearings,” *Chicago Daily Law Bulletin, On the Docket*, January 8, 2015
- Author, “Two state high court cases have lawyers and employers on alert,” *Chicago Daily Law Bulletin, On the Docket*, June 19, 2014
- Author, “Illinois Supreme Court looks at self-critical analysis, insurance case,” *Chicago Daily Law Bulletin, On the Docket*, May 1, 2014
- Author, “Supreme Court takes on duty of care in two new cases,” *Chicago Daily Law Bulletin, On the Docket*, February 27, 2014

PRESENTATIONS

- Speaker, “*The Concept of Preservation – Introduction and Overview,*” with Justice Jesse G. Reyes, Illinois Appellate Court, Preserving the Trial Record for Appeal in Illinois Civil Cases, Pincus Professional Education, July 18, 2023
- Speaker, “*Preservation Issues During Trial,*” Preserving the Trial Record for Appeal in Illinois Civil Cases, Pincus Professional Education, July 20, 2023
- Moderator, “*Unsettling Settled Law?: The Doctrine of Stare Decisis After Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization,*” Appellate Judges Education Institute Summit, Scottsdale, Arizona, November 11, 2022
- Moderator, “*Politicians, Choose Your Voters: Legislative Redistricting After Rucho v. Common Cause,*” Appellate Judges Education Institute Summit, Scottsdale, Arizona, November 10, 2022
- Speaker, “*Fireside Chat: Partner Perspective on the Power of Analytics in Legal Research,*” Law Firm Libraries 2021 Conference, April 28, 2021
- Speaker, “*Impulse Control: Written Communication in Litigation,*” Internal Firm University March 22, 2017
- Speaker, “*Motion Practice in Appellate Court,*” IICLE program, April 21, 2016
- Speaker, “*Illinois Supreme Court Criminal Year-in-Review,*” Appellate Lawyers Association, January 2015 – Present
- Speaker, “*Advanced Appellate Practice Seminar,*” Appellate Lawyers Association, April 2015 – Present

- Speaker, “*Real Talk on Women in the Law: Grit and the Growth Mindset*,” American Bar Association Commission on Women in the Profession, April 2015

CREDENTIALS

Admissions

- Illinois
- U.S. Supreme Court
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit
- U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois
- U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan

Memberships

- Illinois Supreme Court
 - Appointed to Character and Fitness Committee of Illinois Board of Admission to the Bar, 2014 – 2024
- Appellate Lawyers Association
 - Elected as President, 2019 – 2020
 - Elected as Vice President, 2018 – 2019
 - Elected as Secretary, 2017 – 2018
 - Elected as Treasurer, 2016 – 2017
 - Member of the Board of Directors, 2013 – 2015
 - Cases Pending Committee, Co-Chair
 - Seminars Committee
- Loyola University Chicago School of Law’s Alumni Board of Governors
 - Elected Member (2020-present)
- American Bar Association Council of Appellate Lawyers (CAL)
 - Chair (2024-2025)
 - Chair-Elect (2023-2024)
 - Secretary (2022-2023)
 - AJEI Summit Liaison (2022)
 - Executive Board Member (2019-2022)
 - National State Chairs Committee, Co-Chair (2018-2022)

- Women’s Bar Association of Illinois
 - Mary Heftel Hooton Fund Committee (2014-Present)
 - Nominating Committee (2013-2015)
- Women’s White Collar Defense Association, Chicago Chapter
 - National PR and Branding Committee, Co-Chair
- Chicago Bar Association
 - Judicial Evaluation Committee (2013-2015)

Education

- J.D., Loyola University Chicago School of Law
 - Publication Editor, *Annals of Health Law*
- B.S., Psychology, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Honors

- Top Women in Law Honoree, *Chicago Daily Law Bulletin & Chicago Lawyer*
- *Best Lawyers in America*® distinction in Appellate Practice (2025)
- *Super Lawyers*® distinction in Appellate and Civil Litigation (2020-2024)
- Named to the Notable Women in Law, *Crain’s Chicago Business* (2022)
- Recognized as a Notable Gen X Leader in Law, *Crain’s Chicago Business* (2021)
- Recognized by her peers as a “Leading Lawyer,” Civil Appellate Law and Commercial Litigation
- Recognized by her peers as an “Emerging Lawyer” (2015)