



## Mercedes Colwin

### PARTNER

New York

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### RELATED SERVICES

- Employment
- Professional Liability Defense
- Class Action Defense
- Cyber, Privacy & Data Security
- Trial Practice
- Commercial Litigation
- Product Liability
- Directors & Officers and Shareholder Litigation
- Employment Counseling & Transactional Due Diligence

### OFFICES

- New York
- Livingston
- Long Island

### OVERVIEW

Mercedes Colwin, a highly successful trial attorney, is the founding partner of GRSM's New York City Office. She handles a wide variety of litigation, including employment law, commercial litigation, class actions, products liability, professional liability, wage and hour class actions, defamation and related First Amendment claims, civil rights violations and criminal law.

Mercedes has defended thousands of cases throughout the country to a favorable result and won over

ninety percent of her numerous trials and arbitrations. She regularly litigates business disputes and defends corporations and executives of Fortune 500 companies accused of wrongdoing, including claims of sexual misconduct.

Prior to private practice, Mercedes served as an Administrative Law Judge for the New York State Division of Human Rights. During these nine years of service, while a partner at a major regional New York law firm, she presided over three thousand cases brought under federal and state discrimination laws.

Mercedes has received several significant honors. Forbes Business American Airlines named Mercedes one of the six most influential women in America. The list includes dignitaries such as former U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright. Notre Dame Law School presented Mercedes with the prestigious Graciela Olivarez Award for outstanding achievement as a leading Hispanic lawyer of the highest ethical and moral standards. Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor received the same award. MultiCultural Law magazine also profiled Mercedes in a Leadership Interview titled, Reaching Back to Diversify the Legal Professional. Human Resources Magazine named Mercedes as one of the Nation's Most Powerful Rising Employment Attorneys. Law Dragon selected Mercedes as one of the leading corporate employment lawyers in the country. This distinction celebrates her illustrious and exceptional contributions to the legal profession.

Widely regarded as a top national legal analyst, she regularly appears on television to discuss critical legal issues affecting the nation.

## **PRESENTATIONS**

- What to Expect on Your Way to Trial: Everything from Last-Minute Settlement Efforts Through Trial, GRSM Legal Education Conference, New York, NY, May 2025
- What to Expect on Your Way to Trial: Everything from Last-Minute Settlement Efforts Through Trial, GRSM Legal Education Conference, Hartford, CT, May 2025
- Navigating Employment Discrimination Claims: A Fireside Chat with Employment Keynote Speaker EEOC General Counsel Karla Gilbride, GRSM Legal Education Conference, New York, NY, May 2024
- What to Expect on Your Way to Trial: Everything from Last-Minute Settlement Efforts Through Trial, GRSM Legal Education Conference, Hartford, CT, April 2024
- Getting to the Finish Line as a Winner: Tools for Successful Case Resolution in 2023, GRSM Legal Education Conferences, New York, NY and Hartford, CT, May 2023
- Moderator, EPL Claims Trends, ExecuSummit, June 2021
- Moderator, Navigating the Pitfalls and Challenges of COVID-19 and the Post-Quarantine Workplace, ExecuSummit, May 2020

- Co-Chair and Moderator, Discussing the Use of Quotas to Increase the Numbers of Women in C-Suite Positions and Boards, Fourth Annual Women in Insurance Leadership ExecuSummit, Uncasville, Connecticut, March 2020
- Hot Button Issues and New Developments in Employment Litigation, GRSM Legal Education Conference, Chicago, October 2019
- What Insurers and Their Counsel Need to Know, Bad Faith Traps, and a Review of Ethical Issues, GRSM Legal Education Conference, New York and Hartford, May 2019
- Panelist, Employment Practices Liability Breakfast Symposium, New Jersey, November 2018
- Panelist, Bridging Humanity Debate, 2018 Global Meeting of the Women's Forum for the Economy and Society, Paris, France, November 2018
- #METOO – Navigating Sexual Harassment Claims in the Aftermath of Weinstein, GRSM Legal Education Conference, New York and Hartford, May 2018
- Co-Chair and Moderator, Building Your Brand Both Inside and Beyond Your Organization, Second Annual Women in Insurance Leadership ExecuSummit, Uncasville, Connecticut, April 2018
- Moderator, LGBT – Status of Sexual Orientation as a Protected Class and Protections for Gender Expression and Gender Identity, Fourth Annual Employment Practices Liability Insurance ExecuSummit, Orlando, Florida, April 2018
- Panelist, The Corporate Culture Effect, 2018 PLUS D&O Symposium, New York, January 2018
- Co-Chair, American Conference Institute's 26th National Conference on Employment Practices Liability Insurance, New York, January 2018
- Moderator, Wage and Hour Update: Impact of the change in administration, new policies and the recent litigation developments, 13th Annual Employment Practices Liability Insurance ExecuSummit Conference, Connecticut, September 2017
- Moderator, Regulatory Update: Global Upheaval, Annual Advisen Executive Risk Insights Conference, New York, New York, September 2017
- Moderator, How to Prevent a Title IX Lawsuit – Preventative Measures Universities Can Take, 2nd Annual Title IX ExecuSummit Conference, Connecticut, July 2017
- Moderator, Proven Strategies for Litigating the Latest Misclassification Claims – What Are Plaintiffs' Counsel Capitalizing On in These Cases, Best Practices for Avoiding and Defending Against These Claims, and Lessons Learned from Someone Who Has Litigated to a Hung Jury or Judgment, American Conference Institute's 30th National Forum on Wage & Hour Claims and Class Actions, June 2017
- Moderator, The Art of the Deal – Best Practices for Settling Management Liability Cases, PLUS Management & Professional Liability Symposium, Chicago, Illinois, April 2017
- Co-Chair and Moderator, American Conference Institute's 25th National Conference on Employment Practices Liability Insurance, January 2017

- Co-Chair and Moderator, American Conference Institute's 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Forum on Defending and Managing Employment Discrimination Litigation, July 2016
- Co-Chair and Moderator, How to Litigate a High Profile Title IX Case and Harness the Jury of Public Opinion, Inaugural Title IX ExecuSummit Conference, Connecticut, July 2016
- Moderator, American Conference Institute's 2nd Annual Networking & Leadership Forum for Women Leaders in Insurance Defense, Claims and Compliance, July 2016
- Moderator, Positioning Yourself for the C-Suite and Board Roles, IICF Women in Insurance Conference Series, June 2016
- Moderator, 2016 CLM Annual Conference, Employment Practices liability Insurance – Twenty Years at A Glance, April 2016
- Moderator, RIMS 2016 Annual Conference & Exhibition, The Affordable Care Act and Same-Sex Marriage: Implications Under Your EPL Program, April 2016
- Co-Chair, American Conference Institute's 24th National Conference on Employment Practices Liability Insurance, January 2016
- Moderator, TWEET, POST, LINK: The Use of Social Media at Trial, 2015 DRI Professional Liability Seminar, DRI-The Voice of the Defense Bar, New York City, December 2015
- Panelist, Employment Hot Topics for In-House Counsel, Fourth Corporate Counsel Institute, New York State Bar Association, New York City, October 2015
- Panelist, EPLI Spotlight, 2015 Executive Risk Insights Conference, New York, September 2015
- Co-Chair, American Conference Institute's Summer Installment of the National Conference on Employment Practice Liability Insurance, July 2015
- Panelist, New Americans & The Changing Face of Discrimination, 2015 National Conference on Equal Employment Opportunity Law, American Bar Association, Miami Beach, FL, April 2015
- Moderator, EPLI Trends: What Claims Trends Should We Expect in 2015 & Beyond, 10th Annual National Employment Practices Liability Insurance ExecuSummit, Connecticut, April 2015
- Co-Chair, American Conference Institute's 22nd National Conference on Employment Practice Liability Insurance, March 2015
- Panelist, Legalized Marijuana: Will the PL Insurance Industry Inhale?, PLUS International Conference, Nevada, November 2014
- Moderator, Whistleblowers: How to Contain the Damage and Best Practices for Defending the Claim, 9th Annual National Employment Practices Liability Insurance ExecuSummit, Connecticut, October 2014
- Panelist, The Paparazzi!!, ACLI Compliance & Legal Sections Annual Meeting, July 2014
- When Employees Meet, Greet and Tweet in Cyberspace: Social Media in the Workplace, GRSM National Employment Law Webinar Series, June 2014
- Co-Chair, American Conference Institute's 21st National Conference on Employment Practices Liability Insurance, June 2014

- Developing Effective EEO Programs in Challenging Environments, Federal EEO and Civil Rights Council roundtable, Washington, D.C., June 2014
- Panelist, Premier Session 2: Under Pressure – Effective Leaders Make Decisions in Difficult Situations, Claims & Litigation Management Alliance 2014 Annual Conference, April 2014
- Moderator, Clients’ Expectations for the Future, Federation of Defense & Corporate Counsel 2014 Winter Meeting, March 2014
- Co-Chair, 20th National Employment Practices Liability Insurance Conference, January 2014
- Panelist, Paparazzi!!, ABA 40th Annual TIPS Mid-Winter Symposium on Insurance and Employee Benefits, January 2014

## CREDENTIALS

### Admissions

- New York
- U.S. District Courts, New York
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit
- U.S. Supreme Court

### Memberships

- DRI-The Voice of the Defense Bar
- Professional Liability Underwriting Society
- New York State Bar Association
- American Bar Association
- National Association of Insurance Women
- New York County Lawyers Association
- The Federation of Defense & Corporate Counsel
- Council on Litigation Management

### Education

- J.D., Brooklyn Law School
- B.A., English, New York University

### Honors

- Finalist, Distinguished Leader Honoree, New York Legal Awards, *New York Law Journal*, 2025
- *Super Lawyers*® distinction in Employment & Labor, Professional Liability, Personal Injury, 2007-2024
- “Six Most Influential Women in America,” *Forbes Business American Airlines*
- Graciela Olivarez Award for outstanding achievement as a leading Hispanic lawyer, Notre Dame Law School

- “Alumni Achievement Award,” The Brooklyn Law School Latin American Law Students Association

**Languages**

- Spanish