

VALECIA M. MCDOWELL

Co-head of White Collar, Regulatory Defense & Investigations

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Valecia McDowell is a thought leader in the areas of conduct risk management and internal investigations, as reflected in her rankings in *Chambers USA* and *Best Lawyers*, as well as her inclusion in national publications such as *Bloomberg*, *American Banker*, *Corporate Compliance Insights*, and *Inside Counsel*. She also serves on the Firm's Management Committee and serves as Co-Chair of the Firm's Diversity Committee.

For more than 20 years Valecia has brought her candor, pragmatism, and diligence to bear on behalf of her clients, establishing herself as the go-to attorney in her field. Valecia has experience conducting internal investigations across the United States, Europe, Asia, and South America, with specific knowledge and experience in the areas of employee conduct risk and consumer finance investigations.

She has represented clients in disputes, investigations, and negotiations involving domestic authorities, such as the Federal Reserve Board, Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, Department of Housing and Urban Development, Department of Justice, Securities and Exchange Commission, Financial Industry Regulatory Authority, Commodity Futures Trading Commission, United States Department of Agriculture, Office of Inspector General, Congress, State Attorneys General in the United States, and international authorities, such as, the U.K. Financial Conduct Authority (FCA), the Japanese Financial Services Agency (JFSA), and the Comissão de Valores Mobiliários (the Brazilian Securities Commission).

Valecia has served as a guest instructor at the Duke University School of Law, teaching a course on internal investigations, and has twice been invited to speak regarding conduct risk management at the SIFMA C&L Annual Seminar. Valecia has also written or been featured in articles published by *Bloomberg*, *American Banker*, *Corporate Compliance Insights*, and *Inside Counsel* on the topics of internal investigations and risk

Capabilities

- Bank Regulatory & Fintech
- Business Court Litigation
- Civil Litigation
- Class Actions
- Compliance, Controls & Risk Management
- Consumer Disputes
- Consumer Regulation
- Cross-Border Investigations and Defense
- Financial Services Litigation
- Health Care
- Internal Investigations
- Investigations
- Litigation, Regulatory & White Collar
- Securities & Capital Markets Litigation
- White Collar & Government Enforcement Defense

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management.

Civil Litigation

Valecia also possesses significant trial, arbitration, and regulatory defense experience in complex, high-stakes cases, particularly in the financial services, healthcare, securities, manufacturing, and telecommunications industries.

Notable

Valecia has been frequently recognized by her peers for excellence in the law:

- *Chambers & Partners USA*, 2014-present;
- *Best Lawyers in America*, 2013-present;
- *Benchmark Litigation*, 2010-present;
- *Litigation Counsel of America*, 2009-present;
- *North Carolina Super Lawyers*, "Top 50" list of Women, 2021;
- *Super Lawyers*, "Top 25" list of Charlotte and "Top 50" list of Women North Carolina, 2021;
- *Super Lawyers*, 2014-present;
- *Super Lawyers* (Rising Stars), 2009-2013; and
- Named to the inaugural Lawyers of Color "Nation's Best" list, 2019, 2020.
- Current Board Member, Charlotte Mecklenburg Community Foundation
- Current Board Member, Duke Law Alumnae Council
- Former General Counsel of the Charlotte Chamber of Commerce and Charlotte Regional Business Alliance
- Former Board Chair, Arts & Science Council
- Former Board Chair, Community Building Initiative

Affiliations

- Former Member of the Local Rules Committee for the Western District of North Carolina

Education

B.A., Duke University, 1995,
cum laude

J.D., Duke University, 1998

Admissions

North Carolina, 1998

United States Court of Appeals
- Fourth Circuit

United States Court of Appeals
- Eleventh Circuit

Eastern District of North
Carolina

Middle District of North
Carolina

Western District of North
Carolina

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Representative Experience

Regulatory Defense and Internal Investigations

- Leading a team of more than 80 to conduct a risk analysis for a Fortune 50 company
- Leading a team of more than 30 to conduct a review of consumer sales practices for a national bank
- Defending False Claims allegations where mortgage company representatives were tried and convicted for fraud
- Conducting a public company investigation involving accounting irregularities and executive misconduct in the manufacturing industry
- Leading an investigation into allegations of public corruption on behalf of an international bank in South America
- Leading an effort to self-report potential health care billing irregularities
- Successfully representing a national bank in response to allegations of market manipulation lodged by various state attorneys general
- Conducting a highly publicized investigation on behalf of the city of Charlotte involving allegations of sexual harassment by a city council member

Civil Litigation

- Obtaining dismissal in a shareholder derivative class action lawsuit arising out of a \$1.5 billion sales transaction for a publicly traded company
- Obtaining a favorable settlement for a national bank after commencement of jury selection in a federal consumer finance trial in South Carolina
- First chairing successful defense of Sarbanes-Oxley claims in Pennsylvania Administrative Hearing and on appeal before the Third Circuit
- Successfully arguing before the Eleventh Circuit in a product development dispute
- Successfully arguing before the North Carolina Business Court on behalf of Bank of America in its shareholder derivative lawsuit relating to the acquisition of Merrill Lynch