



## Ryan Weiss

Associate

Houston

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### *Overview*

Ryan Weiss is a trial attorney who helps individuals and companies of all sizes resolve high-stakes disputes. Ryan represents plaintiffs and defendants across the country in all phases of litigation, in both federal and state courts, and at both the trial and appellate levels. Ryan's practice is purposefully diverse, but he has specific experience with energy disputes, complex financial matters, business disputes, real estate litigation, class actions, employment disputes, personal injury matters, and more. Ryan's clients value his diligence, creativity, efficiency, and decision-making—qualities that help Ryan visualize, and then zealously advocate for, their goals.

Ryan plays a central role in all of his matters. He has examined fact and expert witnesses at trial, taken and defended numerous critical depositions, and argued dispositive and non-dispositive motions alike. Courts have praised Ryan's "excellent" writing skills, describing him as the "linchpin" of his trial teams

### **BACKGROUND**

Ryan previously clerked for Judge Michael Daly Hawkins of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit and Judge Mark E. Walker of the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Florida, two brilliant jurists who continue to inspire Ryan to strive to become an excellent attorney. These clerkships provided him with a unique perspective on the inner workings of the bench—this helps him view each case with an eye towards what issues matter most to the judge and jury.

Ryan graduated *magna cum laude* from Duke University School of Law, where he was the Managing Editor of the *Duke Law Journal* and was a member of the Moot Court and Mock Trial teams. He remains an active alumnus of Duke University and currently serves as the Law School Representative on the Duke

Houston Board. Ryan graduated *cum laude* from the University of Florida and is a die-hard Gator fan

## Notable Representations

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### Litigation Wins

- **Marco Consulting Group Trust I, by and through its directed trustee, the Bank of New York Mellon v. Allianz Global Investors U.S. LLC (S.D.N.Y.)** Ryan and a team from Susman Godfrey represented an investment trust that asserted breach of fiduciary duty claims relating to investment losses exceeding \$170 million following the collapse of Allianz GI's Structured Alpha Funds. The case was settled on confidential terms.
- **Advance Trust & Life Escrow Services, LTA v. ReliaStar Life Insurance Co. (D. Minn.)** Ryan represented a class of universal life insurance policyholders against ReliaStar Life Insurance Company stemming from ReliaStar's failure to charge cost of insurance rates in accordance with the terms of its policies. In 2023 Ryan and his team secured a \$39 million non-reversionary settlement fund, plus additional non-monetary benefits for the class. In the time leading up to that deal, Ryan opposed ReliaStar's motion for summary judgment in front of Hon. Donovan Frank (D. Minn.). After a lengthy hearing, and in a detailed opinion, Judge Frank denied ReliaStar's motion and simultaneously granted class certification. (A full transcript of Ryan's argument [here](#) and the Court's opinion [here](#) can be provided upon request).
- **1701 Commerce Acquisition, LLC v. Macquarie US Trading, LLC.** Secured affirmance of a \$17 million summary judgment ruling in favor of Macquarie US Trading LLC that dismissed claims of breach of contract by 1701 Commerce Acquisition LLC. Ryan drafted and argued Macquarie's motion for summary judgment in the trial court. Ryan also drafted a critical motion for reconsideration earlier in the case, which the Court granted. That resulted in 1701 Commerce being ordered to produce documents it had previously withheld, which were central to the team's summary judgment win. [Read more.](#)
- **Cotton International, Inc. v. Westin St. John Hotel Co., Inc., et al. (S.D.N.Y. and New York Commercial Division)** Ryan spearheaded a two-person team prosecuting claims by Cotton International, Inc. against Westin St. John Hotel Co. Inc. and other related entities that the defendants failed to pay millions of dollars due under contracts relating to restoration and reconstruction efforts following Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria. The dispute settled on confidential terms favorable to Ryan's client.
- **Confidential Energy Client.** Ryan and a two-person team from Susman Godfrey successfully negotiated a pre-suit settlement for a mid-stream energy client relating to a contractual dispute over a gathering agreement. The dispute settled on confidential terms.

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## Current Litigation

- **Commonwealth of Kentucky Pension Litigation (Kentucky State Courts and E.D. Ky.)** Ryan and a team from Susman Godfrey represents KKR & Co. Inc. in a series of cases relating to the Kentucky Public Pension Authority's investment in certain fund of fund investment vehicles. The Kentucky Supreme Court previously ruled in KKR & Co. Inc.'s favor and dismissed a multi-billion-dollar derivative lawsuit brought against KKR & Co. Inc. and other defendants.
- **Marshall Probate Litigation (Harris County and Louisiana).** Ryan represents Preston L. Marshall, the grandson of J. Howard Marshall II, in several long-running lawsuits pending in multiple courts in Texas and Louisiana, including Texas Probate and District Courts.
- **In re Astroworld Litigation (Harris County).** Ryan represents Live Nation in the widely followed litigation arising out of injuries suffered at the 2021 Astroworld Festival in Houston.

## Honors & Distinctions

- Fellow, Texas Bar Foundation (top one-third of one percent of Texas attorneys)
- Managing Editor, *Duke Law Journal*
- Moot Court Board
- Mock Trial Board
- Dean's Scholar

## Clerkships

Honorable Michael Daly Hawkins, United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit

Honorable Mark E. Walker, United States District Court for the Northern District of Florida

## Education

**Duke University School of Law** (J.D., magna cum laude, 2016)

**The University of Florida** (B.A., Criminology and Law, cum laude, 2013)

## Admissions

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### Bar Admissions

- New York
- Texas

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## Court Admissions

- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit
- U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Texas
- U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of New York
- U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York

## *Wins*

Susman Godfrey Secures Affirmance of \$17 Million Summary Judgement Win from the Fort Worth Court of Appeals for Client Macquarie US Trading LLC