

Danielle Banks

Partner

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Danielle Banks devotes a significant amount of her practice to defending businesses, universities and governmental entities against discrimination claims, including claims brought under Title VII, Section 1981, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) and the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act. She also defends governmental entities against Section 1983 claims. Additionally, Danielle represents businesses in housing and mortgage discrimination claims, represents defendants in asbestos litigation and handles matters on behalf of religious entities.

Danielle's practice is centered primarily in federal court, though she takes matters to trial in state court as well. She has participated in appellate oral arguments before the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit, the Superior Court of Pennsylvania and the Commonwealth Court of Pennsylvania. Danielle is a seasoned trial lawyer who successfully litigates matters to victory through summary judgment or trial, and appeal where necessary.

Danielle is the immediate past chair of the firm's diversity committee and served on Stradley Ronon's hiring committee for a two-year term. She currently serves as the diversity chair for the Philadelphia Bar Association, and previously served as chair of the Federal Courts Committee and the Board of Governors. She also has served as chair of the Philadelphia Bar Association's Justice Sonia Sotomayor Diversity Award Committee (2011-2012) and is a member of the Pennsylvania Bar Association's House of Delegates. In addition, Danielle has served on several nonprofit boards, including serving as president of the board of directors of Smith Memorial Playground and Playhouse, and serving on the board of directors of the Senior Law Center. Danielle also served as co-president of the Philadelphia Diversity Law Group and is currently a member of the board of directors.

RESULTS

- Employment defense summary judgment victories:
 - *Valerie Fulton-Walter and Cristal Swift v. SEPTA*, EDPA, No. 22-224
 - *William Jackson v. Temple University*, EDPA, No. 20-1421-KSM
 - *Sheila Jackson v. SEPTA*, EDPA, No. 19-cv-0760-JMY
 - *Stephen Branch v. Temple University, et al.*, EDPA, 20-cv-2323-CFK
 - *Gardner v. SEPTA*, 824 Fed. Appx. 100 (3d Cir. 2020)

FOCUS

Employment & Labor
Nonprofit & Religious Organizations Litigation
Products Liability & Mass Tort Defense Litigation
Education
Environmental, Social and Governance

BAR ADMISSIONS

Pennsylvania

COURT ADMISSIONS

U.S. Supreme Court
U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit
U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania
U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Pennsylvania
Pennsylvania Supreme Court

EDUCATION

J.D., Temple University Beasley School of Law
B.A., *cum laude*, Temple University

MEMBERSHIPS

American Bar Association, Litigation Section
Board Member, Philadelphia Diversity Law Group, Former Co-President, 2010 - 2012
Barristers' Association of Philadelphia
Diversity Chair, Philadelphia Bar Association
Former Special Advisor, American Bar Association Standing Committee on the Federal Judiciary Committee, 2021 - 2022
Former Chair, Justice Sonia Sotomayor Diversity Award Committee of the Philadelphia Bar Association, 2011 - 2012
Former Chair, Philadelphia Bar Association Federal Courts Committee
Former Member, Executive Committee, Temple Law Alumni Association



Danielle Banks

Page 2

- *Dudhi v. Temple Health Oaks Lung Center*, 834 Fed. Appx. 727 (3d Cir. 2020)
- *Darby v. Temple University*, 2018 WL 3862087 (E.D. Pa. Aug. 14, 2018)
- *Dowdell v. Community College of Philadelphia*, 2017 WL 2506444; 725 Fed. Appx. 198 (3d Cir. 2018)
- *Clarkson v. SEPTA*, 700 Fed. Appx. 111 (3d Cir. 2017)
- *Frederick, et. al. v. Barbush*, 2015 WL 4393339 (M.D. Pa. July 15, 2015)
- *Jones v. SEPTA*, 2014 WL 38877, 796 F.3d 323 (3d Cir. 2015)
- *Toland v. SEPTA*, 2:12-CV-02480 (E.D. Pa. Jan. 16, 2014)
- *Hamilton v. SEPTA*, 2014 WL 2862146 (E.D. Pa. June 24, 2014)
- *Lyles v. SEPTA*, 2:10-CV-04424 (E.D. Pa. July 9, 2012)
- *Fields v. SEPTA*, 2011 WL 4392118, 445 Fed. Appx. 496 (3d Cir. 2011)
- *Grier v. SEPTA*, 2:11-CV-05891 (E.D. Pa. Sept. 16, 2011)
- *Parmar v. SEPTA*, 2:11-CV-03022 (E.D. Pa. May 9, 2011)
- Employment defense public hearing/trial victories:
 - *Schurgot v. SEPTA*, 2017 WL 3226859 (E.D. Pa. Sept. 28, 2018)
 - *Griggs v. SEPTA*, 2:14-CV-06226 (E.D. Pa. Dec. 8, 2016)
 - *Cabiness v. SEPTA*, 14-CV-1371 (E.D. Pa. – June 29, 2015)
 - *Patterson v. Shelton*, 95072945 (Phila. CCP – Nov. 7, 2011)
 - *Wiza v. SEPTA*, 2:12-CV-02748 (E.D. Pa. June 27, 2013)
 - *Brownlee v. SEPTA*, 200706428 (PHRC – Oct. 26, 2010)
 - *Barbee v. SEPTA*, 2:04-CV-04063 (E.D. Pa. – Oct. 31, 2006)
- First Amendment defense dismissals:
 - *Lyons v. National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc.* 007545 (S. Ct., Dist. of Columbia)
 - *Askew v. The Trustees of the General Assembly of The Church of The Lord Jesus Christ of the Apostolic Faith Inc.*, 3rd Cir., 11-1916 684 F.3d 413
- Defamation defense dismissal:
 - *Peterkin Bell v. Butkovitz, et. al.*, 160803265 (Phila. CCP – Feb. 21, 2017)
- In the public interest:
 - *In re City of Philadelphia Litigation* – Danielle represented plaintiff Ramona Africa after the City of Philadelphia dropped a bomb on the house of a back-to-nature group known as the MOVE organization. This incident resulted in the tragic loss of life and the vast destruction of property. A substantial litigation arose out of this incident, and after a two-month trial, the jury returned a verdict in favor of Ms. Africa.

MEMBERSHIPS

Former Ex-officio Member, Philadelphia Bar Association Diversity in the Profession Committee

Fellow, The Litigation Counsel of America

Former Co-Chair, Women in the Profession Committee of the Philadelphia Bar Association

Former Member, Board of Governors, Philadelphia Bar Association

Former Member, Board of Directors, Public Interest Law Center of Philadelphia

Former Member, Board of Directors, SeniorLAW Center Pennsylvania Bar Association

Immediate Past Chair, Stradley Ronon Diversity Committee

National Bar Association

Pennsylvania Bar Association House of Delegates

Former President, Smith Memorial Playground and Playhouse

Philadelphia Bar Association

The National Black Lawyers Top 100

Stradley Ronon Diversity Committee

Philadelphia Bar Association Diversity Advisory Panel

Member, The Forum of Executive Women



Danielle Banks

Page 3

- *Tai Kwan Cureton, et al. v. National Collegiate Athletic Association* – Danielle represented the plaintiffs in a class action suit brought on behalf of four African-American student athletes asserting a disparate impact claim based on Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and certain administrative regulations. The suit sought an injunction to bar the use of Proposition 16's minimum standardized test score requirement to determine freshmen eligibility to participate in Division I sports at NCAA-member colleges. The U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania found a disparate impact and ruled in the plaintiffs' favor. The Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit ultimately reversed on jurisdictional – not substantive – grounds. The eligibility rule ultimately was changed by the NCAA, and that change was consistent with plaintiffs' proffered alternative.

SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

- Moderator, "Reimagining DEI: Finding New Pathways in the Wake of the Supreme Court's Affirmative Action Decision," Philadelphia Bar Association and The Barristers' Association of Philadelphia
- Moderator, "Summer Quarterly Meeting: Celebration of Inspirational Trailblazers," Philadelphia Bar Association
- Panelist, "The C.R.O.W.N. Act: Understanding Hair Discrimination, Current Laws and Policies," Stradley Ronon CLE
- Panelist, "Implicit Bias - The Silent Interrupter: Tips For Recognizing and Rooting Out Implicit Bias," Association of Corporate Counsel Women-In-The-House and Information Governance Networks
- Panelist, "From Recruitment to Retention: Attracting and Keeping Diverse Talent," Women in Law Summit Series, Driving Diversity in Law & Leadership
- Panelist, "Cultivating Male Allies & Change Agents," Women in Law Summit Series
- Panelist, "History of Black Lawyers in Philadelphia and Pennsylvania," Tucker Law Group CLE: Standing on the Shoulders: The Black Philadelphia Lawyer
- Speaker, "First Amendment Developments and Signs for the Future," Pennsylvania Bar Institute 10th Constitutional Law Conclave
- Speaker, "Navigating Legal Minefields in Day-to-Day Church Operations," Pennsylvania Bar Institute
- Panelist, Pennsylvania Bar Association's Fifth Annual Diversity Summit
- Speaker, "The Masters on Depositions, Demonstrations and Tactics from America's Leading Trial Lawyers," ABA Litigation Section
- Panelist, "Title IX in the Year 2000," Black Women in Sports Foundation
- Speaker, "Public Interest Scholars Program," Temple University Beasley School of Law, ACLU Foundation of Pennsylvania
- Speaker, Trial Lawyers for Public Justice Foundation Annual Meeting



Danielle Banks

Page 4

- Participant, Mock Interview Program, Temple University Beasley School of Law Judge, Moot Court Honor Society, Temple University Beasley School of Law
- Speaker, “Nuts and Bolts Career Fair,” Temple University Beasley School of Law
- Competition Judge, National Appellate Advocacy, Northeast Region, American Bar Association
- Member, Reception Committee “Celebrating More than a Century of Women Lawyers in Philadelphia,” Philadelphia Bar Association, Committee on Women in the Profession
- Speaker, “Propositions 48 and 16: The NCAA Scholar Athlete,” National Bar Association/Women Lawyers Division, Philadelphia Chapter
- Speaker, Panel Discussion, “Realizing Diversity: Strategies to Improve Minority Attorney Hiring and Retention,” Philadelphia Bar Association, Minorities in the Profession Committee

RECOGNITIONS

- *Suburban Life Magazine*, "Top Attorney"
- *The Legal Intelligencer*, Power Players
- *Suburban Life Magazine*, "Five-star Attorney"
- Lawyers of Color Nation's Best
- *Philadelphia Business Journal*, “Women of Distinction”
- *Philadelphia Business Journal*, “Best of the Bar: Philadelphia's Top Lawyers”
- The National Black Lawyers Top 100
- Fellow, The Litigation Counsel of America
- *The Legal Intelligencer*, “Diverse Attorney of the Year”
- Barristers’ Association of Philadelphia “J. Austin Norris Award”
- National Diversity Council “Most Powerful & Influential Women Award”
- Rutgers School of Law - Camden Black Law Students Association “Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Champion of Social Justice and Equality Award”
- Temple University Beasley School of Law Black Law Students Association “Cecil B. Moore Award”
- Temple University Beasley School of Law “Distinguished Alumni Award”
- *The Legal Intelligencer*, “50 On The Fast Track”
- *The Best Lawyers in America*
- *The Best Lawyers in America*, Philadelphia Area Litigation – Labor & Employment “Lawyer of the Year”
- Albert S. Dandridge III Diversity Award, 2020
- *Savoy Magazine*, “Most Influential Black Lawyers”

