

## APPELLATE

# HOT LIST

*The National Law Journal's* annual Appellate Hot List profiles 20 firms that represent the best in the practice of appellate law. These are firms that have amassed precedent-setting victories in the U.S. Supreme Court, the circuit courts of appeal and state appellate courts and that have demonstrated impressive track records over time.

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# Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld

Twenty-four victories in 2009 are emblematic of the firm's stature in appellate law. Its success lies in its coupling of long-established practices such as labor and employment with an experienced team of appellate practitioners. Their global scope, advocacy skills, grasp of issues, comprehension of precedent and anticipation of potential U.S. Supreme Court intervention are all first-class.

### NOTEWORTHY CASES

- *Chau v. Starbucks Corp.*, 174 Cal. App. 4th 688 (Calif. Ct. App. 2009). Lead attorney Rex Heinke. In a case centered on the policy permitting baristas and shift supervisors to share tips, Akin succeeded in reversing the judgment of a trial court that had awarded a class of Starbucks baristas \$86 million in restitution along with approximately \$20 million in interest.
- *In re Mutual Funds Investment Litig.*, 2009 WL 225931 (4th Cir. Jan. 30, 2009). Lead attorneys David Jones, Neel Lane and Patricia Millett. The 4th Circuit affirmed the dismissal of suits alleging that issuers of variable annuities diluted the value of mutual funds by enabling some account holders to improperly time their purchases in foreign markets. The attorneys argued successfully that the Securities Litigation Standards Act pre-empted the class actions.
- *Epistar Corp. v. International Trade Commission*, 566 F.3d 1321 (Fed. Cir. 2009). Lead attorneys Thomas Goldstein (argued), Colleen Coyle, Tobias Zimmerman and Christopher Pudelski. Co-counsel Alston & Bird partner Paul Brinkman. Reversing the International Trade Commission and its holding that prior patent settlement did not preclude subsequent challenge to validity of a patent. The previous ruling had barred the importation of Epistar's light-emitting diode products.

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