

Rising Star: WilmerHale's Brittany Amadi

By Tiffany Hu

Law360 (July 10, 2020, 3:22 PM EDT) -- Brittany Amadi of WilmerHale successfully represented Intel Corp. in a \$2 billion patent dispute over circuit technology, along with other major victories, landing her a spot among the intellectual property attorneys under age 40 honored as Law360 Rising Stars.

HER BIGGEST ACHIEVEMENT:

AVM Technologies LLC accused Intel in 2015 of infringing its system of implementing logic functions using high-speed and low power dynamic logic circuits, which enable smaller sizes, reduced reliability problems, reduced power consumption and higher-speed operations.

Amadi, who represented Intel, said the \$2 billion patent infringement suit was the second time AVM asserted those patents but against different Intel products, creating "some complicated preclusion issues" in addition to the usual infringement and invalidity allegations.

"It was sort of an interesting trial, in that leading up to that, we successfully excluded their damages expert and the court had issued a ruling that would allow them to call our damages expert adversely," she said, calling it a "unique experience."

After a six-day trial, a Delaware jury in 2017 found that Intel didn't infringe any of the asserted claims, but it also found that the company hadn't shown the claims were invalid. In August 2018, U.S. District Judge Richard G. Andrews refused to overrule the jury verdict.

WHY SHE'S AN IP ATTORNEY:

After graduating with a mechanical engineering degree from the University of Maryland, Amadi worked on satellite design at the Naval Research Laboratory, where she said she realized that she wanted "more opportunity to engage with people" and do more collaborative work.



Brittany Amadi
WilmerHale

Age: 35
Home base: Washington, D.C.
Position: Partner
Law school: Harvard Law School
First job after law school: Clerk in the Eastern District Court of Virginia

Amadi said that going into law school as an engineer, "everyone expects you to do IP litigation," but she was initially interested in pursuing employment discrimination law. It was only after her clerkships — first at the Eastern District of Virginia, then at the Federal Circuit — did she have a "clearer picture" of what she wanted to do, she said.

"That was sort of the first time I thought it was interesting: digging into the arguments and seeing the advocacy on both sides, and realizing I wanted to be a litigator, but also specifically an IP litigator," Amadi said. "Clerking at the Federal Circuit really cemented that for me."

HER PROUDEST MOMENT:

Amadi said her proudest moment came in a case when she first started out at WilmerHale. She had been tasked with writing the complaint in a human trafficking civil case, in which she — along with a firm partner and another associate — represented the victim against the traffickers.

They took the case through discovery, depositions and heading up to trial, ultimately reaching a settlement on behalf of the client. Amadi said that while the victim wasn't able to tell her story at trial, the settlement "set her up" for the future.

It was "really a rewarding experience — one of my proudest moments — being able to touch an individual person that went through this very traumatic experience," Amadi said. "Being able to see that case all the way from the beginning was very important to me."

OTHER NOTABLE CASES:

In October, a Massachusetts federal court handed Harvard University a win in a landmark admissions trial over the school's race-conscious admissions policy.

The lawsuit, brought by anti-affirmative action group Students for Fair Admissions, claimed that Harvard unfairly caps the number of Asian American students admitted, using its subjective "personal rating" to ding applicants with strong academic and extracurricular qualifications.

But in October's highly anticipated ruling, U.S. District Judge Allison D. Burroughs said that Students for Fair Admissions could not present a single example of a rejected applicant that reflected racial animus on the part of the nation's oldest university.

Amadi, who is part of the WilmerHale team representing Harvard, said it was an important issue to her personally, and that "having any opportunity to defend something that goes beyond just the case that was in front of us" has been a rewarding experience.

"While the normal IP case definitely doesn't bring as much — generally speaking — emotion, that case has sort of stuck with me as one of the more important cases I've been involved in over the course of my career," Amadi said. The case is currently on appeal.

— As told to Tiffany Hu

Law360's Rising Stars are attorneys under 40 whose legal accomplishments belie their age. A team of Law360 editors selected the 2020 Rising Stars winners after reviewing more than 1,300 submissions. Attorneys had to be under 40 as of April 30, 2020, to be eligible for this year's award. This interview has been edited and condensed. All Content © 2003-2020, Portfolio Media, Inc.