

Mikiko Akemi Thelwell

Counsel

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With experience as a Federal Defender, an assistant attorney general at the state level, and as a corporate litigator, Mikiko Thelwell combines courtroom poise with strategic thinking and technical know-how. Clients facing government inquiries and investigations look to Mikiko for representation and counseling that balances calm pragmatism with deep empathy and a willingness to think creatively in order to achieve the best possible outcome.



Before joining RSHC, Mikiko served as a Federal Defender, helping people charged with federal crimes navigate the justice system from the time of their arrest through case resolution. Mikiko also previously served as an assistant attorney general in the Illinois Attorney General's Civil Rights Bureau, where she investigated and litigated complaints and allegations of discrimination and led complex and sensitive negotiations between the state of Illinois and the Chicago Police Department. In her practice today, she focuses on government enforcement actions, internal and external investigations, and white collar criminal matters, as well as complex commercial litigation.

An accomplished trial lawyer who has handled high-stakes and high-profile cases, Mikiko has the skills to successfully defend her clients in court, when necessary, and the sophistication to achieve positive resolutions for them outside the courtroom whenever possible. Clients value Mikiko's deep experience in strategic problem solving and her unparalleled insights into public policy and the workings of government enforcement actions at both the state and federal levels as well as the calm and focused demeanor she brings to helping them manage stressful circumstances.

EXPERIENCE

Clerkships

Judicial Extern, Hon. Matthew F. Kennelly, U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois (2012)

Representative Engagements

- Represented large, publicly traded company in highly-regulated industry in whistle-blower internal investigation relating to CEO and high-level executives.
- Served as a lead negotiator in federal constitutional litigation that resulted in the entry of a landmark consent decree for the reform of the Chicago Police Department.
- Represented public official during investigation by special prosecutor into mishandling of high-profile case.
- Obtained dismissal of federal extradition case by pursuing novel constitutional defense.
- Obtained dismissal of federal criminal case on the eve of trial.

CREDENTIALS

Education

Duke University School of Law, J.D., 2014

Paul B. Williams Law Scholar

Research Editor, *Duke Journal of Gender Law & Policy*

Lead Editor, *Duke Forum for Law & Social Change*

Brown University, B.A., Development Studies, 2008

Award for Excellence in Thesis Writing: Brown University Department of Development Studies

Study Abroad: School for International Training: Public Health, Durban, South Africa (Spring 2007)

Bar Admissions

California (pending)

Illinois

U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit

Languages Spoken & Fluency

Spanish, Conversational

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Duke Law Alumni Association, Board Member