



SpencerFane®

Stacey Garrett Koju

Partner

Contact

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Overview

Stacey Garrett Koju provides proactive legal advice on all aspects of critical corporate matters, recognizing each transaction is important to the future of a business and its owners and allowing them to maintain successful operations. She concentrates her law practice in the areas of corporate transactions, labor and employment law, employment practices, health care, and higher education.

Her practice includes business transactions and strategic legal advice, review and negotiation of complex contracts, commercial loans and leases, estimation and mitigation of risk, internal corporate governance, employment practices and immigration, charitable giving and deaccessioning, gift deviation, and *cy pres*. Stacey believes the energy of the firm's attorneys and staff is the reason the firm forges extraordinary client relationships.

As general counsel to a local higher education institution, Stacey managed a team of litigators over the course of a seven-year case, which included multiple appeals. The school sought to reform the terms of a gift document for 101 works of art gifted by Georgia O'Keeffe as the executrix of her husband's estate. Ultimately, the client prevailed and was permitted to lift outdated restrictions to appropriately preserve the collection of art and enter into a sharing arrangement with a museum.

In 2003, former Tennessee Gov. Phil Bredesen appointed Stacey to serve as a commissioner on the Tennessee Human Rights Commission through 2009. In 2009, he reappointed Stacey to serve on the commission through 2015, where she served as the chair. Bredesen also designated her to serve on a judicial redistricting study committee and the Committee to Study the Administration of the Death Penalty.

Stacey was formerly deputy chief of staff for Congressman Harold Ford, Jr. of Memphis. Early in her legal career, she served as associate general counsel for two companies and as director of legal affairs for another.

Stacey believes deeply in community investment through charitable and civic activities. She began her commitment to community service at the age of 14, volunteering in a nursing home. There she learned the value of service to others and continues to participate in charitable activities throughout the state. Stacey is a vocal supporter of diversity, inclusion, and

individual empowerment.

Education

- Tulane University School of Law, 1993 (J.D.)
- Duke University, 1990 (B.A.)

Bar Admissions

- Tennessee, 1993

Community Involvement

- Leadership Tennessee, Advisory Council, Chair
- Catholic Charities of Tennessee, Inc., Board Member
- National Museum of African American Music, Board Member
- Abe's Garden, Board Member
- The Links, Inc., Member, Treasurer
- Women's Fund – Community Foundation of Middle Tennessee, Former Advisory Board Member
- YWCA, Former Board Member
- Tennessee Human Rights Commission, Former Chair of the Board
- Special Olympics of Tennessee, Former Board Member
- Make-A-Wish of Middle Tennessee, Former Board Member and Wish Committee Member
- Leadership Nashville, Class of 2012
- Nashville Convention & Visitors Bureau, Former ex officio Board Member and Lead Counsel
- Metropolitan Nashville Board of Zoning Appeals, Former Board Member
- Tennessee Judicial Redistricting Study Committee
- Tennessee Committee to Study the Administration of the Death Penalty

Distinctions

- *Best Lawyers in America*, 2024
- Martindale-Hubbell, Distinguished Rating
- YWCA, Legal Challenge Award of Excellence, 2014
- Leadership Tennessee Inaugural Class, 2013
- *Nashville Post*, Most Powerful Women, 2013
- *Nashville Post*, In Charge: Legal, 2013, 2017, 2022–2023
- *Nashville Medical News*, InCharge, 2017
- Napier-Looby Trailblazer Award, 2013
- Leadership Nashville, Class of 2012
- YWCA, Academy for Women of Achievement Honoree, 2012
- Women's Center at Tennessee State University, Woman of Legion and Merit, 2012
- ATHENA nominee, 2011, 2013
- *Nashville Business Journal*, Women of Influence, Entrepreneur, 2007
- *Nashville Business Journal*, Best of the Bar – Immigration Law
- Nashville Leadership Program, Partnership Institute, 2003–2004
- *Tennessean*, Top 40 Under 40, 2003

Memberships

- The National Black Lawyers, Top 100, 2023
- Nashville Bar Association, Board of Directors, 2007–2010
- Tennessee Bar Association

Presentations and Publications

- “Immigration Update: Preparing for ICE Enforcement in Higher Education,” CUPA-HR Tennessee Chapter Spring Conference, May 2025
- “An Outside (Counsel) Perspective: Building Your Crisis Management Playbook,” Association of Corporate Counsel Tennessee, 2022
- “Women’s Executive Roundtable,” Interdenominational Services Organization of America, 2010 through 2017
- “Diversity,” Emerge Tennessee, 2017
- “Diversity,” The Marion Griffin Women’s Symposium, 2017
- “LLC, Sole Proprietorship, S-Corp, etc.: What’s the Best for Me? And For Sale: Your Internet Browsing History,” National Association of Catering Executives, Nashville Chapter, 2017
- Tennessee Bar Association, Committee on Racial and Ethnic Diversity Job Fair, Panelist, 2012
- “National Origin Discrimination,” Tennessee Human Rights Commission, Employment Law Seminar, 2010

Related Experience

- Handles:
 - Corporate governance, including best practices for ethical and accountability standards, board oversight and authority, and internal disputes.
 - Business formation and services, including shareholder and operating agreements.
 - Member withdrawals and disputes.
 - Mergers and acquisitions.
 - Loan agreements.
 - Franchise agreements.
 - Complex contracts and disputes.
 - Regulatory compliance and external investigations.
 - General counsel services.
 - Executive compensation plans and agreements.
 - Workplace investigations.
 - Wage and hour issues.
 - Diversity and inclusion training and consulting.
 - Employment practices and procedures.
 - Union matters, including negotiation of collective bargaining agreements.
 - Contract and tort claims.
 - Compliance and regulatory matters.
 - Severance agreements.
 - Noncompetition and nondisclosure agreements.
 - Training.
 - Consulting on development of internal procedures / operations manuals.
 - Disciplinary matters.
 - General training and education.

- Risk estimation and mitigation.
- Immigration (H-1B, TN, L, O, and P visas, employment-based permanent residence)