



JEFF P. DEGRAFFENREID

PARTNER

WICHITA OFFICE

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PROFILE

Jeff DeGraffenreid is a partner at Foulston Siefkin LLP. With significant experience both in-house and as outside counsel, Jeff brings rare insight to clients who trust him to understand their needs, develop strategies to solve them, and explain them in straightforward terms.

Jeff is a seasoned trial lawyer with experience ranging from bet-the-company litigation to individual lawsuits. He is comfortable with senior public company executives, entrepreneurs, HR professionals, and juries alike. He manages lawsuits and arbitrations throughout the United States and frequently appears in cases in the Kansas federal and state courts. Jeff represents clients in complex commercial matters and disputes, often involving supply chain issues, class and collective actions, and employment issues, including matters involving trade secrets, misuse of confidential information, and restrictive covenants. With his years of experience in the Kansas courts and his relationships with counsel from across the country, he is well-positioned to advise and support national firms seeking local Kansas counsel.

Between two stints at Foulston, Jeff spent nine years at Spirit AeroSystems (NYSE: SPR), the world's largest tier-one supplier of aerospace components, most recently as Deputy General Counsel. Jeff's responsibilities included department administration and leadership, managing all litigation and disputes, as well as support of commercial programs, human resources, corporate compliance, EEO compliance and investigations, and enterprise risk management. Today, Jeff uses the skills acquired during his tenure at Spirit to provide outside General Counsel services and to assist clients with legal operations and litigation management, including acting as a liaison and project manager for clients without in-house litigation counsel. He regularly provides day-to-day employment and commercial advice to a broad set of clients.

Outside of work, Jeff and his family—wife Kelley, and sons Nate and Pierce—love camping, hiking, fishing, and sports of all kinds. They enjoy working with community organizations focused on youth development and education, particularly by learning life skills in the outdoors and through sports. He is board President and a founder of The Sedgwick Meeting House, a non-profit community coffee shop/café, and a former Council President of the Boy Scouts of America, Quivira Council. He is a Director of the Wichita State University Foundation, and recently joined the board of League 42. A family of passionate sports fans, you can often find the DeGraffenreids cheering on their beloved Wichita State Shockers.

Education

FOULSTON

ATTORNEYS AT LAW

- Washburn University School of Law (J.D., *magna cum laude*, 1992)
Washburn Law Journal, Associate Editor; National Moot Court Team
- Wichita State University (B.A. in Political Science, 1988)

Admissions

- Kansas
- U.S. District Court for the District of Kansas
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit
- U.S. Supreme Court

PRACTICE AREAS

- Litigation & Disputes
- Employment & Labor
- Supply Chain Management
- Government Investigations & White Collar Crime
- Privacy & Data Security
- Noncompete & Trade Secret Litigation
- Mediation/Dispute Resolution
- Startup/Entrepreneurship

INDUSTRIES

- Aviation & Aerospace
- Construction
- Manufacturing
- Energy & Natural Resources
- Hospitality & Retail

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

- Broad experience in legal department operations (including executing structural change for department support, hiring, budgeting, and outside counsel management) and litigation management of regional and national counsel, including developing ground up department processes and reports to provide clear and useful summaries of specific matters and litigation metrics.
- Deep knowledge of the aerospace industry and general manufacturing operations, including business, supply chain, employment and labor, and other legal issues.
- Experience with the restaurant and hospitality industries, including legal advice and hands on experience with restaurant finances and management.
- Many years of experience with providing counsel and service to non-profits and educational institutions.

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- Public company board of directors experience, including developing and presenting board presentations and advice.
- Adept at handling internal investigations, including sensitive and complex issues involving corporate executives and alleged misconduct.
- Experienced with supply chain management and optimization, contract negotiation, general advice, and dispute resolution.
- Corporate compliance and Enterprise Risk Management advice and consulting. Provided executive leadership for compliance/investigation departments of two different clients.
- More than 25 years' experience in litigating employment matters involving discrimination, breach of fiduciary duty, wrongful discharge, misuse of trade secrets and confidential information, and violation of restrictive covenants and non-compete agreements. Recognized by *Best Lawyers*® for Labor and Employment and *Benchmark Litigation* for Commercial Litigation.
- Significant experience in support of commercial transactions, including supply chain negotiations, and mergers and acquisitions.
- Assisted clients with issues involving Department of Justice (DOJ), Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), Department of Labor (DOL), Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), and public company filings.
- Represented clients in labor negotiations, arbitrations, and litigation.
- Successful defense of hundreds of individual lawsuits, and numerous matters involving claims in excess of \$50 million, including significant divestiture-related litigation, large-scale employment class and collective actions, and \$600 million securities class action lawsuit.

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS, AFFILIATIONS, AND HONORS

- Selected by peers for inclusion in *The Best Lawyers in America*® in the areas of Labor and Employment Law, 2007-2008, Litigation – Labor and Employment, 2020-2025, Commercial Litigation, 2022-2025, and Mediation, 2025
- Recognized by *Best Lawyers*® as the 2021 and 2024 Wichita Litigation - Labor and Employment “Lawyer of the Year”
- Named a “Litigation Star” in the area of Dispute Resolution by Benchmark Litigation, 2022-2025
- “AV” Peer Review Rated by Martindale-Hubbell
- Kansas Bar Association
- Wichita Bar Association

PRESENTATIONS

2024

- Employment Law Squares (Foulston Siefkin LLP, Employment Law Institute)

2023

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ATTORNEYS AT LAW

- Recent Developments for In-House Counsel, from the Attorney-Client Privilege to the Rise of AI (Foulston Siefkin LLP, Corporate Counsel Series: Ethics)

2022

- The Legal and Ethical Responsibilities of the Board Member (Foulston Siefkin LLP, Corporate Counsel Series: Ethics)

2021

- Tales From the Dark Side: Employment Law Trends, Our Predictions for the Future, and What This Means for You (Foulston Siefkin LLP, Employment Law Institute Webinar Series)
- Legislative/Regulatory Update (Foulston Siefkin LLP, Corporate Counsel Series: Legislative Update)

2020

- The ABCs of Non-Compete Agreements and Other Restrictive Covenants (Foulston Siefkin LLP, HR Training Series)

2019

- #MeToo: Lessons Learned (Foulston Siefkin LLP, Kansas Employment Law Institute)

2018

- Ethical Issues in Workplace Investigations (Foulston Siefkin LLP, Corporate Counsel Series: Ethics 2018)
- Recruiting and Retaining Workers: Why Culture Eats Strategy and Employees for Lunch (Foulston Siefkin LLP, HR Training Series)
- Litigation Update 2018 (Foulston Siefkin LLP, Corporate Counsel Series: Litigation 2018)
- The Weinstein Effect: Addressing Sexual Harassment in Today's Workplace (Foulston Siefkin LLP, Employment Law Institute)
- Workforce Development: Hiring and Managing New Workers (Foulston Siefkin LLP, Employment Law Institute)
- #MeToo: An Employer's Guide to Managing Harassment and Conducting Investigations (Foulston Siefkin LLP, HR Training Series)

2016

- Trends in Corporate Investigations, Corporate Litigation Executive Round Table

PUBLICATIONS

1991

- "Testing the Constitutionality of Tort Reform with a Quid Pro Quo Due Analysis: Is Kansas' Judicial Remedy an 'Adequate Substitute' for a More Traditional Constitutional Requirement?" Washburn Law

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Journal, Vol. 31, No. 2, 1991

ISSUE ALERTS

2020

- Coronavirus: What Should Your Business Be Doing to Comply with the Law and Take Advantage of Stimulus Dollars?

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- Wichita State University Fairmount College, Advisory Council
- Wichita East Side Rotary
- Beta Theta Pi, Former Chapter Advisor
- The Sedgwick Meeting House, Inc., Founding Board Member, Secretary (2015-2019); President (2019-2023)
- Wichita State University Foundation, Board of Directors (2018-2024); National Advisory Council (2015-present)
- Boy Scouts of America, Quivira Council, Executive Board of Directors (1997- present); President (2014-2016); Council Commissioner (2011-2014); Vice President/Membership (2008); Treasurer (2004-2006)
- League 42, Board Member
- Wichita State University Alumni Association, Board Member (1996-2004), President (2002–2003)
- 40 Under 40 Business Leader, Wichita Business Journal
- Leadership Wichita, Wichita Chamber of Commerce