

# Moziano "Trey" S. Reliford, III

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Trey Reliford is a shareholder and first-chair trial attorney who represents clients in high-stakes, complex commercial business disputes. With more than a decade of experience across all phases of litigation, Trey has successfully represented clients both nationally and internationally, as well as locally in Nashville. His clients range from Fortune 500 companies, private equity firms, middle-market enterprises and startups to executives, sports franchises, athletes, artists, producers and entertainment industry professionals.

Trey advises clients in a wide range of corporate and business disputes, including matters involving securities, corporate governance, fiduciary duties, fraud, unfair competition, restrictive covenants, trade secrets, and intellectual property. His experience includes litigating non-disclosure, non-compete and non-solicitation disputes, as well as copyright and trademark matters. Trey regularly assists clients in resolving contentious shareholder and member disputes, including “business divorces,” and represents clients in connection with federal and state regulatory investigations.

In addition to his litigation practice, Trey serves as outside general counsel to companies and startups. In this role, he provides strategic, business-oriented guidance to entrepreneurs and business owners on entity formation, contract negotiation, governance issues, capital raising, and risk management. He also assists clients in structuring and scaling their businesses, negotiating and enforcing commercial agreements, resolving founder and shareholder disputes, and protecting intellectual property—both through enforcement actions and by defending against claims.

Clients value Trey’s ability to combine practical business insight with aggressive and effective advocacy, delivering results both in and out of the courtroom.

Trey previously served as a law clerk to Chief Justice Jeffrey S. Bivins of the Tennessee Supreme Court from 2016 to 2017. Before entering the legal profession, he worked as an English teacher in Chiba, Japan.

## Education

- Stanford Law School (J.D., *with distinction*, 2015)
- Sewanee: The University of the South (B.A., *magna cum laude*, 2010)

## Capabilities

- Commercial Litigation
- Sports & Entertainment
- Mergers & Acquisitions Litigation
- Government Investigations
- Litigation

## Bar Admissions

- Tennessee
- New York

## Court Admissions

- U.S. Supreme Court
- U.S. Court of Appeals, Fifth Circuit
- U.S. Court of Appeals, Sixth Circuit
- U.S. District Court, Eastern District of Tennessee
- U.S. District Court, Middle District of Tennessee
- U.S. District Court, Western District of Tennessee
- U.S. District Court, Southern District of New York
- U.S. District Court, Eastern District of New York

## Memberships

- Equity Alliance Board, Chairman of the Board
- National Museum of African American Music, Board of Directors
- Sewanee: The University of the South, Trustee-At-Large
- Nashville Transportation Licensing Commission, Board Member
- Vanderbilt University Law School, Adjunct Professor of Pre-Trial Litigation
- The 100 Black Men of Middle Tennessee
- Leadership Council on Legal Diversity, 2021 Fellow
- Conexión Américas, Vice President, Board of Directors
- Legal Aid Society, Board of Directors
- Nashville Bar Association, Member
- Tennessee Bar Association, Member
- Napier-Looby Bar Association, Member
- Tennessee Alliance for Black Lawyers, Criminal Justice Reform Committee Chair
- Southern Word, Advisory Board
- 2019-2021 Attorney for Justice

## Recognition

- Selected for inclusion in *Best Lawyers in America*® for Commercial Litigation, 2026
- Named a *Nashville Business Journal* 40 Under 40 2024 Winner
- Named one of *Best Lawyers: Ones to Watch*® in America in:
  - Commercial Litigation, 2021-2025
  - Criminal Defense: White-Collar, 2022-2025
  - Entertainment and Sports Law, 2022-2025
- L'Evate Class of 2022

## Languages

- Japanese

## Matters

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- Successfully represented plaintiffs who were seeking reinstatement as officers and managers in a limited liability company in an action brought under 6 Del. C. § 18-110 in Delaware Chancery Court. The Court declared that the plaintiffs had been improperly removed, reinstated the plaintiffs as officers and managers, and awarded them their attorney's fees under a contractual prevailing party fee shifting provision.
- In the defense of a Fortune 500 auto industry executive, conducted an extensive internal investigation to develop facts and negotiate with the Securities Exchange Commission to preempt enforcement actions, obtaining favorable settlement terms and resulting in significant cost savings to client.
- Successfully defended investment fund executive in suit alleging multi-million-dollar damages arising from alleged securities fraud and fraudulent transfers to obtain early dismissal of claims against client, resulting in significant cost savings.
- Represented private equity firms (Buyers and Sellers) in post-closing indemnification, fraud, and earn-out claims and working capital disputes related to sale or purchase of portfolio companies.
- Successfully represented a publicly traded biopharmaceutical company in the defense of multi-million-dollar securities class action claims alleging violations of Sections 10(b) and 20(a) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 and Rule 10b-5.
- Successfully led trial and proxy battle team that secured a preliminary injunction which forced a special meeting of a Tennessee bank's shareholders, leading to a special meeting where my clients replaced the bank's board of directors and took over the bank with \$750 million in assets under management.
- Represented managing board members of a real estate development company in a dispute concerning governance, control, and fiduciary obligations.
- Represented companies and individuals being investigated by the SEC, including investigations related to potential violations of securities trading laws, rules, and regulations, and corporate disclosure obligations.
- Represented a professional sports agency and its principals in a dispute with a players' union involving agent certification, regulatory compliance, and the continued operation of the agency.
- Represented a U.S.-based company in high-stakes litigation and emergency proceedings to prevent the unlawful takeover of its business by a foreign sovereign following political and governmental upheaval.
- In the defense of a leading, Asia-based international financial institution, conducted an extensive, internal investigation to develop facts, advise the company's board of directors, and implement systems and controls to prevent violations of federal and state securities regulations, preempting more significant federal and state enforcement actions and resulting in significant cost savings to the company and its shareholders.
- In the defense of a Fortune 500 media company, conducted an extensive, time-sensitive internal investigation to develop facts, crisis manage, advise the company's board of directors, and implement systems and controls to prevent further misconduct, as well as preempt potential lawsuits, resulting in significant cost savings to the company and its shareholders.
- In the defense of a leading, Asia-based international financial institution, conducted an extensive, internal investigation of alleged "spoofing," and advised the company's compliance department on necessary systems and controls to prevent violations of federal securities, preempting more significant enforcement actions by the CFTC and resulting in significant cost savings to the company and its shareholders.
- In the defense of a world renown charitable organization, undertook extensive internal investigation to develop facts, liaison with federal prosecutors and secure guilty plea of the organization's former managing director who embezzled and defrauded the organization.
- In defense of a Fortune 500 auto industry executive, defended a shareholder derivative suit concerning allegations of federal securities fraud, and other state

securities fraud claims.

- Part of the litigation team that successfully obtained resolution of a DOJ investigation into the merger of college sports two largest media companies.
- Part of the litigation team that successfully supported the merger of major telecommunications companies, resulting in an entity that serviced 254 million customers in 41 states.
- Successfully litigated suit for breach of contract, fraud and conversion in a matter concerning misconduct by a corporation's former managing director, resulting in favorable settlement involving monetary and non-monetary relief.
- Successful arbitration of a breach of contract suit, including successful defense of counterclaims for a transportation company.
- Successfully litigated suit for breach of contract concerning a record deal for an internationally acclaimed, multi-platinum music artist, resulting in favorable settlement involving multi-million dollar monetary and non-monetary relief.
- Successfully defended suit for trademark infringement for an internationally acclaimed, multi-platinum music group, resulting in favorable settlement and continued, unabated use of the marks subject to the dispute.
- Secured defense verdict in a federal jury trial concerning violations of the Federal Wiretap Act.
- Secured favorable permanent injunctions against individuals threatening the safety and security of an internationally acclaimed, multi-platinum mega artist.
- Secured favorable resolutions in multiple matters for a Fortune 500 technology company in disputes concerning alleged misappropriation of trade secrets, breach of non-compete agreements and breach of non-solicitation agreements, among other claims.
- Secured guilty verdict in a state, criminal jury trial concerning allegations of domestic violence.
- Successfully obtained asylum for a Rwandan genocide survivor.