

SEPTEMBER 10, 2024 | NEWS

Former Manhattan Prosecutor Joins National Law Firm, Elevating Sports Law Practice

TOLEDO, OH — Shumaker is excited to announce that Diana Florence, a former Manhattan prosecutor and distinguished attorney with nearly 30 years of legal experience, has joined the firm. Diana's addition significantly strengthens Shumaker's rapidly expanding national Sports practice. Diana has significant experience in investigations, worker protection, and public policy gleaned from her 25 years of distinguished service as a leader in the Manhattan District Attorney's Office. Recognized as one of the Office's top attorneys by the late, legendary District Attorney Robert Morgenthau, Diana created and led the first-of-its-kind Construction Fraud Task Force, which united the public and private sector in rooting out industry corruption. In 2020, she was a candidate for District Attorney in New York County.

Diana partnered with Shumaker attorneys in obtaining a Preliminary Injunction in favor of Manhattan College basketball player Dejuan Clayton against the NCAA in *Clayton v. NCAA* in the New York State Supreme Court in February. She previously assisted the University of North Carolina in obtaining NCAA eligibility for football player Devontez Walker in the Fall of 2023.

"We couldn't be more excited to have Diana join Shumaker. Her rich background and unique experience will be invaluable as we guide our sports industry clients through a rapidly changing landscape, particularly in inter-collegiate athletics. Diana's prosecutorial experience also enhances our value and capabilities in the firm's White Collar Defense and Investigations practice, among others," said Bennett Speyer, Shumaker Partner and Hospitality, Leisure and Sports Business Sector Chair.

INDUSTRY SECTOR

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Investigations

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As a prosecutor, Diana took over 60 trials to verdict. She championed the rights of undocumented construction workers, leading to nationwide changes in how wage theft and construction fatalities are prosecuted. After entering private practice, she recognized the parallels between the undocumented construction workers she represented and young athletes—both groups were looking to be fairly compensated for their labor, which fuels multi-billion-dollar industries—and transitioned her practice to collegiate athletics as both an attorney and a consultant.

"I am deeply honored to join the prestigious team at Shumaker," said Diana. "With Shumaker's reputation for excellence in client service, I'm eager to help drive the growth and success of the Sports Law team."

Diana's move to Shumaker underscores the firm's strategic focus on expanding its capabilities in sports law, investigations, and complex litigation representing both institutions and high-profile individuals. Shumaker's national sports industry clients are diverse and include coaches, athletic directors, conference commissioners and other industry executives, and professional athletes and entertainers, as well as colleges, universities, and athletic conferences.