



Eric Nowak

Mediator

Eric Nowak joins Perry Dampf after 25 years of advocacy for families and businesses throughout Louisiana and the Gulf South. He is an AV-rated litigator recognized as a Best Lawyer in commercial litigation and a Super Lawyer. He has proudly represented everyday people in injury and contract cases, entrepreneurial West Bank companies fighting for their survival, entire neighborhoods needing a voice, and national and international companies looking for solutions to big problems. He brings a resume of experience, hard work, and compassion to every mediation.



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Concentrations

Hurricane Cases

Insurance Disputes

Personal Injury

Premises Liability

Commercial Litigation

Business Disputes

Partnership and Fee Disputes

Class Actions / Mass Torts

Education

BA, University of Arizona, magna cum laude (1993)

JD, University of Texas School of Law, with Honors (1997)

Recognitions

Court appointed mediator for Hurricane Ida Claims: USDC Eastern District of Louisiana and the Judicial District Courts for the Parishes of Orleans, Jefferson, Tangipahoa, St. Tammany, Lafourche, Livingston, St. Charles, St. John the Baptist, Terrebonne and St. Helena

Super Lawyers New Orleans

New Orleans Magazine, Top Personal Injury Lawyer

National Litigators Award for Personal Injury & Mesothelioma Litigation

E. Randolph Williams Award for Outstanding Pro Bono Service

Biography

Before becoming a lawyer, Eric was an insurance underwriter for Cigna Healthcare. After graduating from law school, Eric moved to Virginia to join Hunton & Williams. There he handled products liability, toxic tort, premises liability, and contract cases in Virginia, Texas, and Arkansas. Additionally, the Virginia Attorney General enlisted him as Special Counsel to help custodial parents collect unpaid child support. And, as a Legal Aide Volunteer, he represented economically distressed families with housing disputes. His trial work for those in need earned him the E. Randolph Williams Award for Outstanding Pro Bono Service.

In 2000, Eric and his wife Robyn – a lifelong New Orleanian – moved back to Louisiana where he became a partner at the law firm of Sessions, Fishman & Nathan. His practice continued to focus on premises, products, and medical liability cases, including pharmaceuticals. He was counsel for Novartis in the phenylpropanolamine (PPA) cold medicine litigation – defending over 900 claimants in more than 85 separate lawsuits. He also helped successfully defend several class actions involving life insurance and toxic exposures.

Eric later founded Harrell & Nowak – a boutique litigation firm devoted to complex cases that turned on difficult legal, scientific, or engineering issues. Most cases came from other lawyers who needed to send their family, friends, and neighbors to a trusted lawyer.

His resume includes being the lead trial attorney in numerous jury and bench trials at both state and federal court. He has also held lead and prominent roles for plaintiffs in multiple class actions in Louisiana, Texas, and D.C., including an 11-year odyssey where he took a class of 4,000 people in New Orleans from the initial filing, through the class certification hearing, to securing a class liability ruling at trial, and ultimately collecting the judgment, along with handling all the appeals to the Louisiana Fourth Circuit and Louisiana Supreme Court.

Eric has been an active member of the Federal Bar Association for over 20 years. He joined the New Orleans FBA Chapter's Board of Directors in 2006, and he was elected President in 2012.

In 2017, Eric was appointed by then Chief Judge Kurt Engelhardt to the Lawyers Disciplinary Committee for the United States District Court for the Eastern District Court of Louisiana. He was later elevated to Vice Chair by Chief Judge Nannette Jolivet Brown.

Eric has been appointed to the panel of neutrals to mediate cases for the Hurricane Ida Streamlined Settlement Programs in the USDC Eastern District of Louisiana and the Judicial District Courts for the Parishes of Orleans, Jefferson, Tangipahoa, St. Tammany, Lafourche, Livingston, St. Charles, St. John the Baptist, Terrebonne, and St. Helena.