



Yates M. French

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Yates French joined the litigation department at Rathje Woodward LLC in 2023 bringing over a decade of experience previously having worked in an AM Law top 10 firm. Yates is an experienced commercial litigator and trial lawyer who has represented a broad range of companies ranging from oil and gas to radio and billboard businesses.

In addition to his experience in civil matters, Yates has experience defending pro bono litigants in criminal actions and appeals.

Practice Areas

- Litigation

Education

- University of Minnesota Law School (J.D., 2008) *magna cum laude*
- Marquette University (B.A., 2005) *cum laude*

Bar Admissions

- 2008 Illinois Supreme Court
- 2008 U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois

Memberships & Recognitions

- Named as a Litigator of the Week by The American Lawyer Litigation Daily, May 14, 2020

Presentations and Publications

- ["Bullied by Government: How the South Shore Chamber of Commerce Resisted Defeat," Chicago Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights, December 18, 2020](#)
- ["Spotlight on Success: How Auburn-Gresham Fought Back and Won," Chicago Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights, September 29, 2016](#)

Prior Work Experience

- Kirkland & Ellis, LLP - Partner (2015 - 2023)
- Kirkland & Ellis, LLP - Associate (2008 - 2015)

Representative Matters

- *Wilmington Savings Fund Society, FSB v. iHeart Communications Inc. et al.* – Trial counsel for iHeart Media, Inc. in a victory at trial against Noteholders alleging breach of a \$500 million indenture. After trial, the court entered a complete defense verdict, disposing of claims alleging securities fraud, breach of contract and seeking related equitable relief.
- *Official Committee of Unsecured Creditors of HH Liquidation, LLC v. Comvest Group Holdings, LLC, et al.* — Defended Comvest Equity Partners, LLC, and all other defendants, in a \$100 million victory at trial against the Official Committee of Unsecured Creditors of HH Liquidation, LLC. After a week-long bench trial in Federal Bankruptcy Court in Delaware, defendants prevailed on all 78 counts vindicating their position against claims for fraudulent transfer, constructive fraud, breach of fiduciary duty, substantive consolidation, recharacterization and equitable subordination.
- *Country Visions Cooperative v. Archer Daniels Midland Company et al.* — Trial counsel for ADM in a breach of contract case seeking \$25 million in damages and ownership of a commercial property. After two weeks of trial, the court entered a highly favorable judgment awarding \$0 damages and declining to grant any equitable relief.
- *Ambac Assurance Corp. v. MHPI Projects* — Achieved complete victory for privatized military housing projects against bond insurer claims that projects must pay \$220 million for breach of loan agreements. During three years of litigation, won every substantive battle, including three summary judgments on the ultimate merits, three preliminary injunctions and multiple motions to compel.
- *Fort Benning Family Communities LLC, et al. v. American Management Services LLC, et al.* — Obtained historic settlement of nearly \$200 million on behalf of Plaintiffs and the U.S. Army in a series of cases involving privatized housing at four military bases. The settlement resolved claims of fraud, breach of fiduciary duty and civil RICO against a third-party property management firm, and its chairman and CEO, and is the largest settlement or verdict of a RICO claim in Georgia.