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Day Pitney Partner On Being Named Head Of NJ Federal Bar

By *Nick Muscavage* | June 24, 2021, 1:04 PM EDT

[Day Pitney LLP](#) partner and general counsel Elizabeth J. Sher has been tapped to lead the Association of the Federal Bar of New Jersey, where she plans on drawing from her experience as a complex commercial litigation attorney to lead the organization as its new president.



Elizabeth J. Sher

Sher, who took over the new role on Tuesday, has nearly four decades of experience as a trial and appellate lawyer representing clients in commercial litigation throughout the country.

Additionally, she has handled professional liability disputes, consumer class action defense, and directors and officers liability defense. She is based in Day Pitney's Parsippany, New Jersey, office.

Some examples of the complex litigation Sher has taken on include her role in defending an [insurer against coronavirus-related claims](#) and her [representation of Brazilian iron companies](#) in a multimillion-dollar breach of contract case against a coal magnate.

She is admitted to practice in New Jersey, New York and Pennsylvania, as well as the [U.S. Supreme Court](#). Sher is also admitted to the Second, Third and Federal circuits, as well as several U.S. district courts, including New Jersey, the Southern District of New York and the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

The Association of the Federal Bar of New Jersey, or AFBNJ, was founded in 1971 to bring together judges, attorneys in private bar and federal law enforcement attorneys to strengthen professional relationships.

Since May 2018, Sher has been Day Pitney's general counsel, assisting the firm's management and personnel with ethics issues, risk management and contract review, among other legal matters. She graduated from [Brandeis University](#) and received her law degree from [New York University School of Law](#).

Law360 Pulse spoke to Sher on Thursday to learn more about what she has planned for the AFBNJ. This interview has been edited for length and clarity.

[What skills will you tap into at the AFBNJ, and how will you apply](#)

those in your new role?

What I have learned from nearly 37 years of practice and will apply to my role as president is the importance of thoughtful analysis, active listening, being detail-oriented and well-organized, and knowing when to delegate, supervise and/or collaborate. I view my role as president much like being a ship's captain: I will do my best to chart the course, but the "crew" — the officers, trustees, advisory board and members — will collaborate to do the hard work to get us to our destination. I hope to apply my skills and experience by focusing on efficient and effective communications and meetings, by ensuring each constituent has a voice and a role to play in our programming, and by orchestrating demonstrated successes in the coming year.

What goals do you have planned for the AFBNJ, and how will you go about accomplishing them?

Among the goals I have planned for the coming year is a return to the pre-pandemic "normalcy" we all long to reclaim, where meetings and events such as our annual Judicial Conference and Brennan Awards reception are held in person with the robust attendance and camaraderie the association is used to. I also hope to implement lessons learned from the past 15 months of remote participation, finding ways to combine in-person and remote access to maximize participation in those events. We will also continue to celebrate the association's 50th anniversary, present numerous educational programs, support the re-entry and pretrial opportunity programs, or POP, that assist former criminal defendants, and focus on increasing diversity and inclusion in our membership. Other goals will be developed during the summer with the participation of the executive committee.

Why do you believe the AFBNJ is an important organization?

It's important because it forges and enhances the understanding and relationships between the federal bench and bar in ways that benefit both the

federal court and the litigants who come into federal court — voluntarily or otherwise — seeking justice. The association enjoys the unique support of, and participation from, the federal bankruptcy, magistrate and district court judges, and offers federal practitioners rare opportunities to engage with those judges in educational and social settings. The better the lawyers and judges know each other, the more collegiality and trust that exists among the lawyers and between the lawyers and the judges, the better the adversary system works for all of us.

Do you believe your new role at the AFBNJ will bolster your existing practice?

I hope so. Along with my service on the Lawyers' Advisory Committee and as a trustee of the District Court Historical Society, and co-editing the ALM treatise on New Jersey Federal Civil Procedure, my role in the AFBNJ will enhance my knowledge of federal practice, give me a chance to work with and get to know more of the federal judges, and expand my network of referral sources. I would hope that clients would view all of that as quite positive when choosing counsel to represent them in the District of New Jersey.

If you could have lunch with any lawyer, living or dead, who would you choose?

I would choose to have a long lunch with Justice William Brennan. Why? Because he was a Jersey boy who rose to become one of the most influential Supreme Court justices of the 20th century, and because once upon a time he was a name partner in the law firm at which I have been privileged to spend my entire legal career. I would like to talk to him about his private practice and his public service, and thank him for the priceless legacy he left for New Jersey lawyers, most certainly including me.

--Editing by Brian Baresch.

