

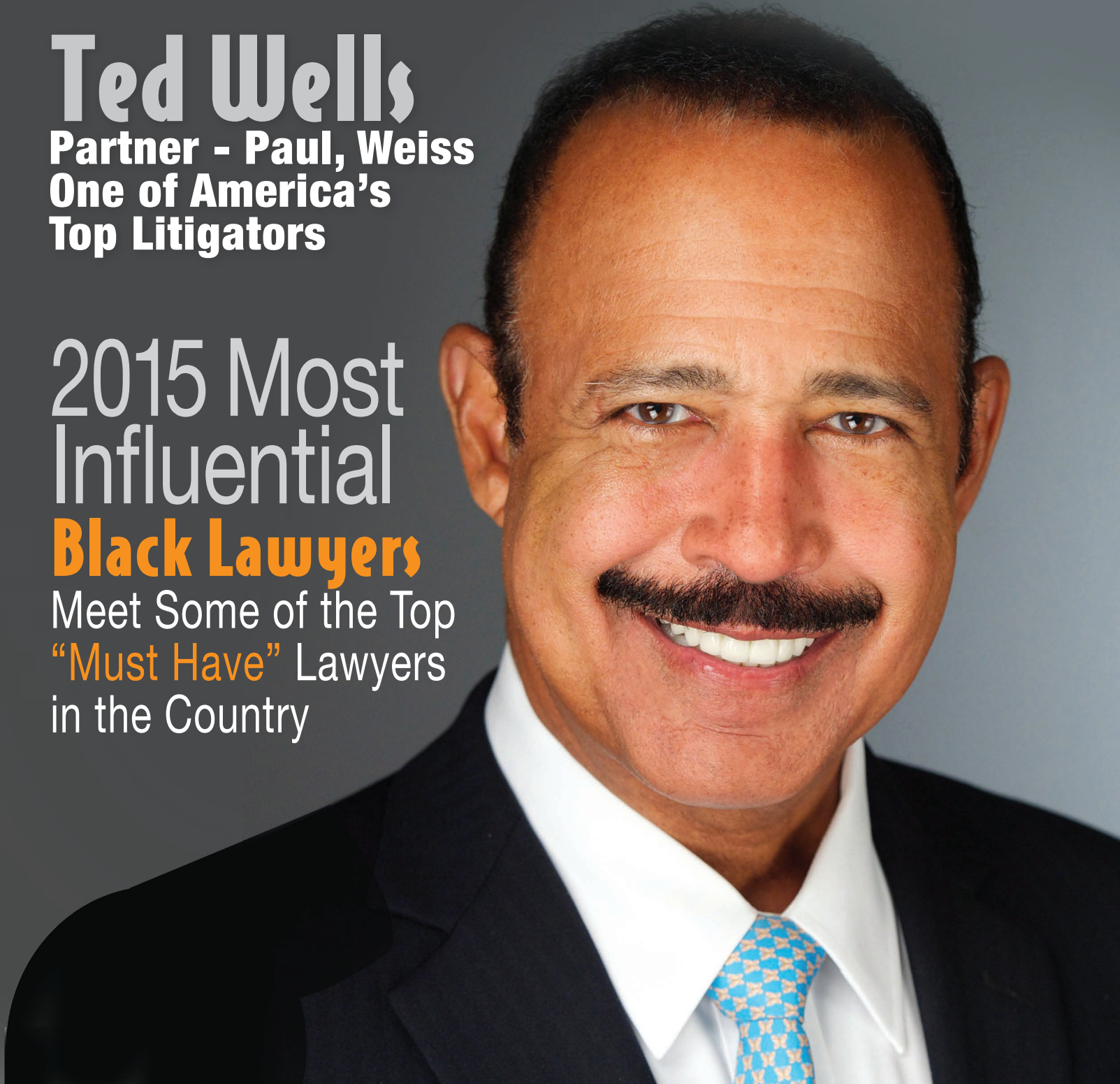
SAVOY

Ted Wells

**Partner - Paul, Weiss
One of America's
Top Litigators**

**2015 Most
Influential
Black Lawyers**

Meet Some of the Top
"Must Have" Lawyers
in the Country





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Ted Wells, Co-Chair of the Litigation Department at Paul, Weiss, is widely recognized as one of the top trial lawyers in the nation and among the greatest litigators of his generation. He has accumulated a record of success in some of the most challenging civil and criminal defense cases in the country. Prominent companies and high-profile clients line up to hire him when their reputations or personal freedom are at stake. Long devoted to the advancement of civil rights, Wells has been a champion of equal justice

and educational opportunity through his work as the past co-chairman of the board of the NAACP Legal Defense Fund and he serves as a role model and mentor to young minority lawyers on their way up in the legal profession.

Wells has probably tried to verdict more multibillion-dollar cases than any lawyer in the nation. In 2014, he represented Exxon-Mobil in an eight-month bench trial where the State of New Jersey sought \$9 billion in damages for environmental injuries. In 2010, he successfully defended Citigroup in a three-week jury trial where the plaintiff, the London-based private equity firm Terra Firma, claimed it was defrauded in connection with its purchase of the music company EMI and claimed over \$8 billion in damages. The jury found Citi was not liable. In 2008, Ted successfully defended Citigroup in a five-month jury trial where the plaintiff alleged that Citigroup aided and abetted in the massive fraud of Parmalat, the Italian dairy and food corporation. The jury totally rejected the \$2 billion claim for damages against Citigroup and also awarded Citigroup \$364 million on Citigroup's counterclaim. In 2005, Ted defended Philip Morris in the massive 11-month RICO trial brought by the Department of Justice against all the major tobacco companies and requested a staggering \$280 billion in damages.

When Merck was confronted with billions of dollars in civil claims and a federal grand jury investigation relating to its marketing of the pain killer Vioxx, the company turned to Wells as its lead lawyer for the grand jury and SEC investigations, which spanned eight years from 2004 to 2012. Merck's CEO Ken Frazier calls Ted "a lawyer of matchless ability," adding "While he is a commanding presence in the courtroom, Ted is also highly effective in corporate boardrooms as a counsellor to many leading, global companies. If I could only choose one lawyer for all purposes, I would select Ted Wells without hesitation."

Wells is a native Washingtonian with an easygoing manner that belies his hard work behind the scenes, out of public view. His meticulous collection of facts, and development of legal and communications strategies for his clients, set the stage for a successful outcome long before he ever steps foot in the courtroom. Another quality that makes Wells a great trial lawyer is his ability to distill the facts of a case and communicate them in a way that people can understand. When coaching future trial lawyers, Wells insists they put away their notes, push the podium aside, look the jurors in the eye and talk directly to them as if they were sitting together in a living room.

Wells initially won fame defending high-profile clients in criminal cases. In 1987, when the prosecution rested in the nine-month fraud trial of Reagan-era Labor Secretary Ray Donovan, Wells took a gamble, rested his case and did not put up any defense. The jury deliberated barely 10 hours before finding his clients not guilty. Wells stood next to Sec-



Wells with Ken Chenault, CEO of American Express

retary Donovan when he confronted the prosecutor and uttered the now famous statement, "which office do I go to to get my reputation back?" A decade later, when representing Clinton-era Agriculture Secretary Michael Espy, Wells became so conversant with the case that he effectively became his client's alter ego in the courtroom. After a four-month trial, the jury acquitted Espy on all 30 counts. Wells has represented other political figures against allegations of wrongdoing, including U.S. Senator Robert Torricelli, I. Lewis "Scooter" Libby, the Chief of Staff to Vice President Dick Cheney, and New York Governors Eliot Spitzer and David Paterson.

Last year, when a Miami Dolphins football player was accused of bullying a teammate, the NFL hired Wells to uncover the truth. Three months later, Ted released a 144-page report he prepared along with firm chair Brad Karp and two other litigation partners, Bruce Birenboim and David Brown. Dubbed "The Wells Report," Slate called it "the best report on bullying [we've] ever read" and described it as "judicious, per-

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PHOTO: E. LEE WHITE PHOTOGRAPHY



Vernon Jordan, Ted Wells and David Mills, Co-Chair of the LDF Board, at the 25th Annual National Equal Justice Awards Dinner where Mr. Jordan presented Ted with the Thurgood Marshall Lifetime Achievement Award

suasive and a public service...that should be required reading in management courses.”

Wells also worked with his partner Brad Karp to help his client, the NFL, resolve the concussion lawsuit crisis by negotiating a multimillion-dollar settlement with more than 4,500 former players. The settlement, which is still subject to judicial approval, will help all parties avoid lengthy and uncertain litigation, and according to ESPN, “saves the game.”

Wells recently fought a tough legal battle for another American institution – Wall Street. Ted was co-lead counsel for Steve Cohen’s hedge fund SAC Capital Advisors in connection with the government’s insider trading investigation and related litigation. Cohen wasn’t named as a defendant in the criminal case, but the United States Attorney criminally indicted four SAC entities and filed related civil forfeiture proceedings. The case was settled, ending one of the longest running investigations in recent securities law.

In July 2014, Wells worked with Citigroup to achieve a \$7 billion settlement with the U.S. Department of Justice and the SEC that resolved claims related to residential mortgage-backed securities. Wells personally negotiated the \$7 billion settlement directly with Associate Attorney General Tony

West, a process he described as an emotional “roller coaster” and one of the most taxing experiences of his career.

Growing up in a modest rowhouse in Northwest Washington, DC in the 1950s, Wells could not have imagined that someday he would be acclaimed as one of the most influential lawyers in America. His mother was a mailroom clerk at the Department of the Navy. His father was a taxi driver with a sixth-grade education. The 6’2, 225 lb. Wells was a star lineman in high school and went to Holy Cross on a football scholarship.

Holy Cross was the crucible where Wells discovered social activism and a capacity for hard work. As described in a recent book entitled *Fraternity*, Wells was one of 20 black men recruited by Father John Brooks to attend the exclusive Catholic school in the sixties as part of an effort to integrate the college. His black classmates included future Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas, future Pulitzer Prize-winning author Ed Jones, Eddie Jenkins, the former Miami

Dolphins running back who played during their 1972 perfect season, and Stan Grayson, a former deputy mayor of New York City.

Wells’ role as a spokesman for the Black Students Union (BSU), when confronted with on-campus social injustice at Holy Cross, was a precursor to his career as a trial lawyer. The year was 1969, and after a prohibited anti-Vietnam War protest, the administration singled out 16 of the 54 students for expulsion, four of whom were black. The four black students chose Wells to be their lawyer before the College’s judicial board. Wells argued that the College had acted in a biased fashion in charging the four black students. When the College chose to expel the students, the BSU decided that if the school wouldn’t have all of them, it would have none of them. Risking their scholarships, all 64 black students walked out and quit the college. Father Brooks intervened and the charges were dropped, but it was a valuable lesson in leadership and power in shaping public perception. Years later, Wells would become the first African-American to serve as a trustee at Holy Cross.

After earning law and business degrees from Harvard, Wells spent two decades at a New Jersey law firm where he

honed his trial skills and built a sterling national reputation as a trial lawyer. He was recruited by Paul, Weiss, a premier New York-based law firm, and with his wife Nina's encouragement, joined in 2000 as co-head of its litigation department. Wells has been an advocate for the advancement of minority lawyers, both at the firm and in the legal profession.

Paul, Weiss has a history of leadership in civil rights. In 1949, it became the first major Wall Street law firm to hire a black associate, William T. Coleman. No other major New York law firm would hire Coleman, although he graduated first in his class at Harvard Law School and clerked for Justice Felix Frankfurter on the United States Supreme Court. Several Paul, Weiss lawyers, including Coleman, assisted Thurgood Marshall with NAACP cases, and helped Marshall prepare the *Brown v. Board of Education* cases.

Vernon Jordan, the iconic civil rights leader, has worked closely with Ted over the years in supporting the efforts of the NAACP Legal Defense Fund – the public interest law firm started by Thurgood Marshall. Jordan said “In theory and in practice, Ted Wells is the valedictorian, the summa cum laude, the Phi Beta Kappa lawyer advocating for justice and fairness. As impressive as his legal accomplishments are, Ted is equally defined by his leadership outside of the courtroom, especially in the area of equal opportunity. I am honored to be his friend and colleague.” Wells recently helped to defend desegregation education programs in two cases before the Supreme Court. He has also been involved in Democratic politics, including a stint as treasurer for former Senator Bill Bradley's presidential campaign.

As our nation commemorates the 50th anniversary year of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, a monumental piece of federal legislation that re-enfranchised black Americans, Wells notes that “we have made great progress in the number of minorities elected to government office, but the fight to achieve racial justice in a society that holds forth the promise of equality for all Americans is far from won.”

“Despite gains, the country's largest law firms and major corporations continue to fall short in the quest to truly integrate



Wells discusses litigation tactics with Paul, Weiss Associate Orton Nda

these powerful institutions,” says Wells. He calls for law firm leaders to “hire more minority lawyers and mentor them with the same intensity we devote to our most important cases.”

Like most lawyers just starting out, Wells had simple goals – he wanted to learn how to become a jury trial lawyer and he wanted to do well at his first law firm. What motivates him now is gratitude – for the people who believed in him and supported him, for the breaks he got along the way, and for the chance, each day, to make an impact for his clients and in the lives of young people who have yet to take the full measure of their potential. Wells says that he was fortunate to be personally mentored by famous black lawyers like Bob Carter, Constance Baker Motley, Leon Higginbotham, Derrick Bell and Vernon Jordan. Many of Wells' mentees now hold significant positions – among them are former Paul, Weiss associate Hakeem Jeffries, now a U.S. Congressman and Ken Thompson, the first African-American District Attorney for Brooklyn.

Finally, Wells credits much of his success to his wife, Nina. Ted and Nina met at 15, married at 21, and celebrated 43 years of marriage in December. Nina, like Ted, is a highly acclaimed lawyer and is the former Secretary of State of New Jersey. Wells calls Nina and his two children, Teresa and Philip, “the foundation that gives my life strength and purpose.” **s**

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