



Samuel J. Cordes, Esq.

Samuel J. Cordes primarily represents plaintiffs in employment discrimination, ERISA, civil rights and constitutional law matters. Sam joins the Quatrini Law Group as a former member of Samuel J. Cordes & Associates and previous Special Employment Litigation Counsel to Rothman Gordon. During the course of his 30-plus year career, Sam has tried numerous high-profile cases in the Western District of Pennsylvania. He was lead counsel in the largest individual age discrimination verdict and largest pregnancy discrimination verdicts ever awarded in western PA, and won the first employment case under the Americans with Disabilities Act to be tried in western PA.

The *Pittsburgh Tribune Review* calls Sam the “Archangel of employment rights in Western Pennsylvania;” an “extremely creative lawyer, which makes him dangerous to the opposition.” The *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* notes Sam is “Extremely smart in the scholarly sense and has that practical street-smart sense. You don’t see that combination in too many lawyers.” *Chambers USA—America’s Leading Business Lawyers* says Sam is “Smart and highly rated for employment litigation; juries love him.”

Sam has been named among the Top 50 Super Lawyers in Pittsburgh for 13 years in a row, and one of the Top 100 Super Lawyers in Pennsylvania. He is also a Fellow of the National College of Labor and Employment Lawyers and a member of the Allegheny County Academy of Trial Lawyers. He is AV® Preeminent™ by Martindale-Hubbell and is listed in The Best Lawyers in America® and Lawdragon. Sam is active with the Allegheny County Bar Association, and the National Employment Lawyers Association (NELA). He has taught continuing legal education classes to other lawyers for more than 20 years, both in Pennsylvania and nationally.

With a B.A. in Journalism and Communication, *magna cum laude*, and an M.A. in Journalism, *summa cum laude*, from Point Park University, Sam received his J.D., *magna cum laude*, from the University of Pittsburgh School of Law in 1988, where he was an editor of the Journal of Law and Commerce.

Sam has served as the Co-Chair of National Employment Lawyers Association Trial Practice Committee; as a Member of U.S. District Court for Western District of Pennsylvania Rules Advisory Committee; Chair of Amicus Curie Committee of Pittsburgh Chapter of National Employment Lawyers Association; a Member of Pennsylvania Bar Institute Litigation Education Advisory Committee; and Vice Chair of the Allegheny County (Pennsylvania) Bar Association’s Civil Rights Committee. He also was a Spokesman for the Pittsburgh Infant Mortality Prevention Committee, 1983-85; Member of Columbus, Ohio Bar Association Homeless Project Committee; Chair of the Allegheny County Community College Library Advisory Committee; and Member of the Greater Pittsburgh March of Dimes Community Education Task Force. He teaches faith formation classes for Christ the King Parish.

Sam was born and raised in McKeesport, Pennsylvania, the son of a mill worker and a licensed practical nurse. He worked his way through college—a long, and often part-time endeavor—as a taxicab driver, shoe salesperson and telephone solicitor. During the 1960s he was the drummer for local rock bands *The Knives*; *the 4 1/2* and *the Potlatch Forrest*. He served in the U.S. Army in Vietnam and was awarded the Purple Heart. Following college, he worked as a journalist, and public relations representative.

When he is not representing his clients, Sam enjoys both playing and listening to music, especially jazz; traveling; reading; Broadway theater, and teaching his one-year-old grandson to play the drums, one paradiddle at a time. Sam currently lives in Fox Chapel with his wife Maria, a retired attorney, and Virgil, a spoiled English cocker-spaniel. His daughter, Emily, is a New York actor and author of two recently published books of poetry.

Of Counsel

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AREAS OF PRACTICE

- ADA Litigation
- Age/Sex/Race Discrimination
- FMLA
- Wrongful Discharge



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BAR ADMISSION

- Pennsylvania
- United States Supreme Court
- Pennsylvania Supreme Court
- Ohio Supreme Court
- U.S. Courts of Appeals for the Third Circuit
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces (Court of Military Appeals)
- District Courts, Western District of Pennsylvania; Middle District of Pennsylvania; Eastern District of Pennsylvania; Southern District of Ohio

EDUCATION

- J.D., University of Pittsburgh School of Law, Pittsburgh, PA, 1988
- M.A., Journalism, *summa cum laude*, Point Park University, Pittsburgh, PA, 1985
- B.A., Journalism & Communications, *magna cum laude*, Point Park University, Pittsburgh, PA, 1980

REPRESENTATIVE CASES

- *Kengerski v. Allegheny County*, 6 F.4th 531 (3d Cir. 2021)(amicus)
- *Karlo v. Pittsburgh Glass Works*, 849 F.3d 61 (3d Cir. 2017)
- *Ryder v. Westinghouse Elec. Corp.*, 128 F.3d 128 (3d Cir.1997)
- *Brewer v. Quaker State Oil Refining Corp.*, 72 F.3d 326 (3d Cir. 1995)
- *Fiscus v. Wal-Mart*, 385 F.3d 378 (3d Cir. 2004)
- *Boyle v. Allegheny County*, 139 F.3d 386 (3d Cir. 1998)
- *Robinson v. Pittsburgh*, 120 F.3d 1286 (3d Cir. 1997)

HONORS AND AWARDS

- Fellow, National College of Labor and Employment Lawyers
- Rated AV® Preeminent™ by Martindale-Hubbell
- Best Lawyers in America® 2003-present
- Pennsylvania Super Lawyer, 2004-present
- Lawdragon Top 500 Plaintiff Employment Lawyers, 2018-present

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS AND MEMBERSHIPS

- Pennsylvania Bar Association
- Allegheny County Bar Association
- Allegheny County Academy of Trial Lawyers
- National Employment Lawyers Association (NELA)
- Western Pennsylvania Employment Lawyers Association (WPELA)