

MVP: Latham's Jeff Hammel

By **Emilie Ruscoe**

Law360 (November 14, 2025, 4:04 PM EST) -- Jeff Hammel of Latham & Watkins LLP's securities litigation practice won three cases in one day in March, notching a distinctive career milestone and earning a place among the 2025 Law360 Securities MVPs.

His biggest accomplishment over the past year:

On March 19, Hammel had a banner day as news came in that he'd secured dismissals on behalf of his clients in three separate cases.

One of the cases was in Ohio federal court, where Hammel was representing life sciences company Sotera Health in a proposed investor class action. In that case, Sotera was accused of mischaracterizing its environmental controls and downplaying its liability exposure from numerous lawsuits against a subsidiary.

U.S. District Judge Charles E. Fleming tossed those claims, finding "Sotera's general denials of the litigation claims, vows to defend itself against them, and statements regarding a contingency reserve are inactionable."

Another dismissal, in New York federal court, resolved investor claims against Hammel's client Vroom Automotive and its directors and officers accusing the company of misstatements in connection with its June 2020 initial public offering and a follow-on offering.

In that dismissal order, U.S. District Judge Paul G. Gardephe found that none of the more than 50 statements challenged by the complaint were actionable.

And in New York state court, Justice Andrea Masley dismissed investors' financial misstatement allegations against fintech firm dLocal and its underwriters, finding, among other things, the plaintiffs hadn't shown evidence the company "had any actual knowledge of [an adverse] trend or that it would materially impact the company's financial condition" ahead of the trend's emergence.

Hammel told Law360 that the good fortune he'd had in winning the three cases in one day "was



definitely a highlight of my year."

When the first decision came in, Hammel said, it was "a positive, not totally unexpected, but a nice way to start the day."

"A few hours later, the second one came in, and we got to talk to another happy client — and that was a little bit unusual," he said. "And then in the afternoon, when the third one came in, it was just like, I should go out and buy a lottery ticket."

Hammel recalled seeing the electronic case filing notification for the third case, and clocking that it was a decision stating the motion to dismiss had been granted.

"You know, I was like, 'This can't be happening again,'" he said. "I opened up the decision. I did what I always do: I went to the last page to see if it was granted in full, like, what's the bottom line? I'll go back and read carefully, but I want to know, like, what happened."

"I did that. I saw 'granted in full.' And, you know, a smile came across my face. I immediately sent it to the client and said, 'We're still reading this, but congratulations, we got the result that you wanted.'"

"And, you know, it obviously was quite a good day," he continued. "It's always gratifying when you're dealing with a client who may feel like they've been wrongly sued and want some level of vindication, to be able to deliver that to them [and] to do that three times in one day, you know, was definitely a special experience."

His biggest challenge in the past year:

Hammel said one challenge he faced in the past year was "making sure that all of our very talented young partners get opportunities to stand up and argue motions in court" for them to develop their skills, so that "the next generation of highly talented Latham litigators are getting all of the experience they need."

"You can tell by the white in my beard that I'm getting more and more senior, and so it's easy for me to take all the arguments, or always be the person dealing with the senior levels of the other side, or doing the kinds of things that more senior partners do. But I was very fortunate from a relatively young point to be trusted to do some of those things long before the gray hair came in. And I was always grateful for that," he said.

"That can be challenging, but I think it's important that we do that," he said.

His proudest moment:

Hammel has been at Latham for 25 years, and during that time, he said, the New York litigation department has changed dramatically from 2001 to 2025, in terms of "the number of people in it, the size, [the] recognition of the matters we handle [and] the scope of the matters."

Hammel also said he's proud that Latham prioritizes its pro bono work as a firm, noting that nearly all of the firm's New York litigation attorneys did at least 20 hours of pro bono work in the past year.

"It's sort of a point of pride that we not only do the highest level work for the commercial clients but for the folks who also deserve and need it the most," he said.

Why he's a securities litigation attorney:

"Like a lot of lawyers, I fell into it a little bit," Hammel said of his practice area, noting that a reason he likes and a reason he's stayed in securities litigation practice is because "it's a practice area that gives, in essentially every case, an opportunity for an early win with a motion to dismiss."

"I think our track record over time really demonstrates that we're able to do that at the highest level," he added.

Hammel said that another unique aspect of securities litigation practice is that, in proposed class actions, "not only are companies named as defendants, but individuals are too."

For those individual defendants named in proposed securities class actions, Hammel said, "it may be, and hopefully will be, the first and only time that they see their name in a caption of a complaint accusing them of having done bad things."

Helping clients get through that process on a human level is a particularly gratifying aspect of his practice, Hammel added.

--As told to Emilie Ruscoe. Editing by Dave Trumbore.

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