

JODI-ANN STEPHENSON

ATTORNEY-AT-LAW

CONTACT

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Road Town, Tortola,
British Virgin Islands

PROFILE

Barrister and Solicitor with over 5 years PQE within the jurisdiction of the Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court. Possesses diverse international commercial law experience in complex multi-jurisdictional disputes, fraud, asset tracing, insolvency and restructuring, contentious trusts and probate, shareholder disputes, limited partnership disputes, regulatory and sanctions.

BAR ADMISSIONS

- Jamaica
December 2015
- Saint Lucia
July 2016
- British Virgin Islands
October 2021

EDUCATION

- Master of Laws - 2020
- Legal Education Certificate - 2015
- Bachelor of Laws - 2013
- Bachelor of Arts - 2010

SKILLS

- Effective Oral & Written Communication
- Legal Research Tools
- Attention to Detail
- Time Management
- Customer Service
- Leadership
- Teamwork & Collaboration
- Interpersonal Skills
- Cultural Sensitivity
- Integrity
- Sound Judgment
- Objectivity
- Dependability

PROFESSIONAL WORK EXPERIENCE

Agon Litigation, Tortola, British Virgin Islands
Associate November 2021 - Present

Insolvency and Restructuring

- Successfully resisted an application by a debtor to set aside a statutory demand issued by the creditor pursuant to a debt owing under a loan agreement.
- Assisted in setting aside a statutory demand served on a company as a part of fraudulent attempts by a third party to take-over the company. Analysed and provided advice to client on prospects of setting aside statutory demand vis-à-vis resisting enforcement of foreign judgments obtained by fraud.
- Successfully appointed liquidators over a company stemming from a LCIA award followed by the company's failure to repay the debt or set aside the statutory demand.
- Drafted and issued numerous statutory demands and originating applications to companies on behalf of creditors seeking the repayment of debts.

Shareholder Disputes & Company Law

- Advised client regarding procedure concerning mandatory redemption and statutory appraisal under the BVI Business Companies Act. Assisted in drafting a share buy-back agreement in respect of minority-held shares.
- Assisted in drafting documents for an unlawful means conspiracy and dishonest assistance claim arising out of a dispute regarding the allotment of shares by way of a private investment in public equity.
- Drafted various deeds and directors' resolutions in respect of an application to continue a company out of the BVI.

MEMBERSHIPS

- BVI Bar Association
- BVI Arbitration Group
- BVI Recovery & Insolvency Specialists Association
- Chartered Institute of Arbitrators (CIArb)
- Chair, CIArb Young Members' Group, Caribbean Branch
- Regional Representative, Young ICCA

AWARDS/SPECIAL ACHIEVEMENTS

- Chevening Scholar 2019
- National Reporter, Jamaica ICCA Hearing Project 2020
- Speaker, CIArb University Open Day, London 2020
- Speaker, CIArb/ICC Conference, Paris 2017
- National Commercial Bank Nation Builder Awards, 2014 Visionary Award Recipient

INTERESTS

- Commercial Law & Arbitration
- Literature & History
- Human Rights Advocacy
- Volunteering
- Hiking

- Acted for dissenting shareholder in matter which led to landmark BVI decision concerning the statutory interpretation of a shareholder's right to dissent from a merger. Analysed legal considerations and provided advice to client on various issues including statutory interpretation, statutory formalities, dissenters' rights, and rights of minority shareholders under the BVI Business Companies Act.

Civil and Commercial Litigation

- Assisted in multi-billion-dollar claim involving 35 parties and consequent interlocutory applications, appeals, counterclaims and ancillary claims arising from a joint venture dispute relating to Russian energy assets, including a successful application to discharge substantial freezing orders, debarring orders, service and jurisdiction challenges and anti-suit injunctions. Main roles and responsibilities included drafting and settling pleadings, witness statements and skeleton arguments; drafting, considering, and responding to extensive inter-partes correspondence; liaising with onshore counsel; preparing legal opinions on various points of law; preparing detailed analysis of various without merit applications in view of issuing a vexatiousness claim.
- Conducted extensive drafting, research, and analysis on behalf of partner in aid of instructions to act as an expert witness in a US Court which led to the court's denial of a motion to stay a multi-billion-dollar counterclaim.
- Assisted in various matters involving issuing and resisting applications for a stay of proceedings both in the Commercial Court and Court of Appeal.

Contentious Trusts and Probate

- Assisted Interim Administrator ("IA") in bringing successful court applications to compel parties to comply with the IA's resolutions and to investigate and secure a complex chain of companies that own significant assets in the BVI estate of a late monarch.
- Assisted the English/BVI based administrators in the administration of a multi-million-dollar estate by drafting, preparing, and settling pleadings in applications seeking permission to liquidate assets.
- Assisted in obtaining favourable settlement in trust restructuring in circumstances where the trusts were attacked.
- Assisted in breach of trust case by advising trustee on various legal issues including disclosure, trustee misconduct, impact of letter of wishes and Beddoe applications.

Contentious Regulatory

- Assisted in analysing and reviewing notices to produce information issued by the International Tax Authority pursuant to the Mutual Legal Assistance (Tax Matters) Act and providing regulatory advice to client.
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Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) Invest,
Washington D.C., USA

Remote Legal Consultant

January 2021 – March 2021

- Conducted legal drafting and research to support the LIBOR Transition Working Group in the monitoring and execution of the contract remediation project plan and the development and implementation of new Secured Overnight Financing Rate (SOFR)-based contracts.
- Reviewed the results of local law analysis relating to the LIBOR Transition and the SOFR implementation prepared by external counsel and presented findings in well-organised and clearly drafted reports and presentations, including charts, summaries, and PowerPoint presentations.
- Liaised with project attorneys and external counsel to update local law analysis results and included updates in knowledge management system, including tracking of legal opinions.
- Updated project documentation to reflect the status progress of the contract remediation process and assisted the Legal LIBOR Transition Working Group in knowledge management needs arising out of the remediation process, including updating Model Loan Agreements and FAQs.
- Supported project attorneys with the contract remediation process, including in connection with the amendment or replacement of promissory notes.
- Reviewed and amended transactional documentation such as loan agreements and contractual provisions for cross-border financial transactions.

Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court, Court of Appeal

Judicial Research Assistant

January 2016 – March 2019

- Worked in a specialised team of researchers tasked with providing legal support to the Chief Justice and Justices of the Court of Appeal.
- Engaged in rigorous legal analysis, writing, research, and drafting, traversing the gamut of commercial law from corporate law, banking and finance, property, contracts, equity, and trusts.
- Conducted research using varied legal research tools and sources such as LexisNexis, Westlaw and Justis on diverse areas of the law including public and international private law, labour law, arbitration, and administrative law.
- Prepared draft judgments, court orders, digests of proceedings and legal opinions on various matters including cross-border commercial disputes, shareholder disputes, telecommunications disputes, breach and enforceability of contracts, foreign judgments, and arbitration awards.
- Reviewed policy papers and undertook legal research, engaged in policy discussions regarding draft legislation and contributed to legislative updates.

- Reviewed draft legislation, drafted practice directions and rules of court. Reviewed court filing fees legislation in the member states of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States and assisted with suggested amendments.
 - Collaborated with, supervised, and guided more junior staff and legal interns in the execution of their tasks.
 - Initiated and hosted confidential “ask me anything” sessions with legal interns.
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Precision Group Limited, Kingston, Jamaica

Legal Consultant

January 2017 – March 2019

- Provided commercially feasible and cost-effective legal advice and drafted contracts and other legal documents for several small to medium scale construction projects.
 - Advised on employment matters, including drafting, negotiating, and administering employment agreements, vendor-client agreements, and mediating employee disputes.
 - Improved efficiency by creating standardised contracts for employees, sub-contractors, and vendors.
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University of the West Indies, Mona (Faculty of Law)

Research Assistant

June 2013 – Sept. 2014

- Researched case and statute law for the UWI Rights Advocacy Project (URAP), a non-profit organisation concerned with the promotion of human rights, equality, and social justice in the Caribbean through human rights litigation.
- Undertook research in the ground-breaking Belizean case of *Orozco v AG*. This successful constitutional claim led to the invalidation of a law criminalising same-sex relations in 2016.

Editor-in-Chief, Mona Law Report June 2013 – Sept. 2013

- Conceptualised, wrote legal articles, and edited the inaugural 'Mona Law Report', a publication of the University of the West Indies' Law Faculty.

ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS

University College London (United Kingdom)

Master of Laws (Distinction) 2020

Specialism: International Commercial Law

Norman Manley Law School (Jamaica)

Legal Education Certificate 2015

University of the West Indies, Mona (Jamaica)

Bachelor of Laws (Honours) 2013

Bachelor of Arts in Literatures of English (Honours) 2010

PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

BVI International Arbitration Centre & CADRIN (2022)

Arbitral Tribunal Secretary Certification

Commercial Law Internship Experience UK (2020)

Virtual Commercial Law Internship

Institute of Advanced Legal Studies (2019)

Electronic Research Skills Training

World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) (2018)

Distance Learning General Certificate on Intellectual Property

Chartered Institute of Arbitrators (CI Arb) (2017)

Accelerated Route to Fellowship with Award Writing

National Centre for State Courts (2016)

Oral and Written Judgment Preparation Training