



Katherine Otto

Partner

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Practice Areas

- Litigation
- Medical Malpractice
- Professional Liability

Admissions

- Colorado
- New York
- U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Education & Honors

- University of Denver College of Law (J.D. 2007)
- University Of Northern Colorado (B.A. 2004)

Awards

- Super Lawyer Rising Star 2014 – 2018
- Super Lawyer 2020 – present
- US News & World Report Best Lawyers in America: 2023-2024
- AV Preeminent 2018 – present

Katherine Otto is a highly accomplished trial lawyer who leads the defense of healthcare professionals in Colorado and New York. With a practice primarily focused on professional malpractice litigation and defense of licensure before state licensing boards, Katherine has developed extensive experience representing healthcare professionals across multiple disciplines, including medical, chiropractic, dental, podiatry, mental health, and veterinary medicine. She is also skilled in defending attorneys in malpractice actions and grievances before the Office of Attorney Regulation.

In addition to her expertise in healthcare malpractice, Katherine also defends catastrophic personal injury litigation and has successfully handled FLSA claims in nationwide arbitrations. She has a proven track record of trying cases to jury verdict in both state and federal courts, demonstrating her deep knowledge and proficiency at all levels of litigation.

Beyond her litigation work, Katherine is passionate about teaching and mentoring. As a mentor at Messner Reeves, she guides and supports a team of associates in the Colorado and New York offices. She conducts in-house training sessions and is dedicated to the professional development of attorneys under her guidance. Her commitment to teaching extends beyond her firm, as she enjoys teaching continuing legal education seminars to her colleagues and providing risk management continuing education to her clients.

Katherine actively participates in several professional organizations, where she holds leadership positions and contributes to the legal community. Since 2018, she has been a member of the Medical Liability Committee for the Defense Research Institute (DRI) and was most recently the Program Chair for the Medical Liability and Healthcare annual conference in 2023. She has also been involved with the Colorado Attorney Mentoring Program (CAMP) and Metro Volunteer Lawyers as a volunteer attorney. In addition, she is active with the New York State Medical Defense Bar organization and previously served for four years on the Board of Directors for the Colorado Defense Lawyers Association.

Bio Continued

Dedicated to advancing inclusion and equity in the legal profession, Katherine focuses on empowering women, BIPOC, and LGBTQ+ individuals. She recognizes her own privilege as a white, cisgender woman and is committed to using it to uplift those who have had fewer opportunities. Katherine actively volunteers with Big Dogs Huge Paws, a non-profit dog rescue organization, where she fosters giant breeds and helps them find their forever homes. She also finds joy in training for and running half-marathons, showcasing her determination and discipline outside of her professional life.

Katherine's journey to success has been shaped by her determination and recognition of the importance of using her privilege to help others. Coming from a modest background, she understands the challenges faced by those with limited opportunities in rural areas, which has fueled her passion for amplifying diverse voices and providing mentorship and support to aspiring lawyers.

Known for her selflessness, altruism, and dedication to others, Katherine builds strong communities within and outside of her professional sphere. She cultivates meaningful relationships within the legal community, actively engages with legal associations, and is recognized as a reliable team player with exceptional problem-solving skills and effective communication.

Through her exceptional legal skills, compassionate approach, and commitment to pro bono work, she consistently upholds justice and ensures equal access to legal representation for all. Katherine Otto's journey and her ongoing contributions continue to inspire and drive meaningful change in the legal field.

Associations

- Board of Directors, Communications Director, Colorado Defense Lawyers Association -2014 – Present
- American Bar Association – 2007 – Present
- Association of Healthcare Risk Management of New York, 2017 – Present
- Colorado Bar Association – 2007 – Present
- Defense Research Institute – 2015 – Present
- Denver Bar Association – 2007 – Present
- Medical Malpractice Committee, Vice-Chair, Colorado Defense Lawyers Association -2013-2014
- Colorado Pledge to Diversity Committee – 2014 – 2017
- Membership Committee Chair, Colorado Defense Lawyers Association – 2011-2014
- Metro Volunteer Lawyers – 2009-2010
- New York City Bar Association 2017 – Present
- New York State Medical Defense Bar Association 2017 – Present
- DRI, Women in the Law Committee – 2016 – Present
- DRI, Medical Liability and Healthcare Committee
- Defense Attorneys of New York, 2016 – Present
- Claims and Litigation Management Alliance, 2018 – Present

Publications and Speaking Engagements

- Embracing Social Media Investigation: Five Steps to Optimize Admissibility at Trial, For the Defense, 05.2018
- The Lack of Insurance Coverage and Reimbursement for Medical Marijuana, J. Zen Jackson and K. Otto, M.D. Advisor, 10.18.2013

Community Involvement

- Ambassador, Project Angelheart (501(c)(3))- 2005 -Present

Professional Experience

- Attorney, McElroy, Deutsch, Mulvaney & Carpenter, LLP 2008 – 2017
- Judicial Clerk, Honorable Gerald J. Rafferty, Eighteenth Judicial District, State of Colorado, 2007 – 2008

Representative Experience

- Foster et al. v. Structural Integrity Associates, Inc. et al., No. 12CA0402 (Colo. App. Div. 6 2013) (cert. denied)
- Alice Casias v. Interstate Brands Corp. and Ace American Ins. Co., W.C. No.4-740-818-02 (I.C.A.O. 2013)
- David Cortese v. Kaiser Space Products and Home Insurance Co. c/o Colorado Insurance Guaranty Association, W.C. No. 4-171-138 (I.C.A.O. 2010)
- Barnett v. Elite Prop. of America, Inc., 252 P.3d 14 (Colo. App. Div. 2 2010) (cert. denied)
- Clements DPM v. Davies DPM, 217 P.3d 912 (Colo. App. 2009) (cert. denied)
- Holly Hand v. Peterson Contractors Excavation, Inc. W.C. No. 4-392-766 (I.C.A.O. 2009)