

MVP: Greenberg Traurig's Lori Cohen

Law360 (December 12, 2018, 3:30 PM EST) -- Lori Cohen, co-chair of Greenberg Traurig's global litigation practice and chair of the firm's trial practice group, spearheaded big wins for life sciences clients in the past year, including the Seventh Circuit's rejection of state lawsuits in national litigation over eye drop doses, earning her a spot among Law360's 2018 Life Sciences MVPs.

HER BIGGEST ACCOMPLISHMENT THIS YEAR:

Cohen — who also chairs the pharmaceutical, medical device and health care litigation and Atlanta litigation practices — and her teams have scored a lot of notable decisions, but a few in the last year stand out. For example, she helped prevail in the first case over the irregular heartbeat drug amiodarone to go through full expert discovery, Daubert motions and summary judgment motions.

“We were literally on the eve of trial and the court granted our summary judgment motion,” she said. “[That] was very significant.”

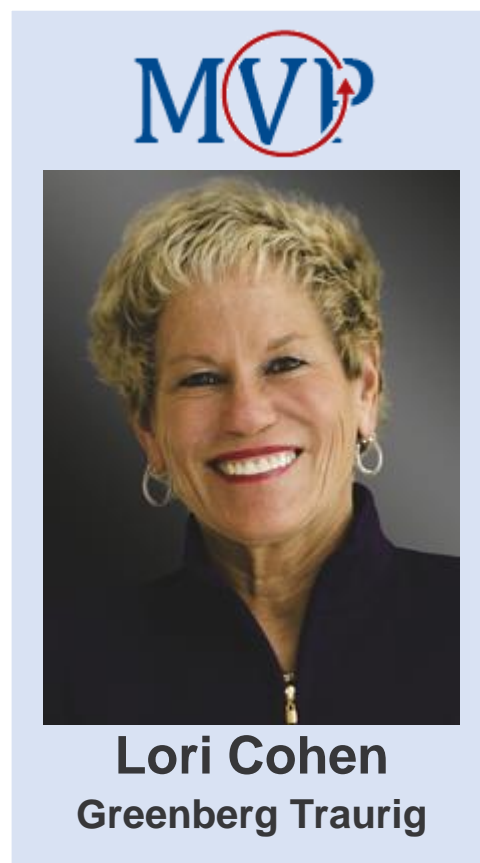
But this victory was “the tip of the iceberg” in terms of major cases this year, she pointed out.

Another big win was seeing the Seventh Circuit throw out class certification in a suit claiming that the design of eye drop bottles caused waste. Circuit Judge Richard Posner held that the court shouldn't say how dispensers are made if they meet laws and regulations.

“The eye drop litigation came to a grinding halt,” Cohen said. “So that was significant because those cases have been around for a while in different courts and different jurisdictions. That was obviously a very significant dismissal that we were able to secure.”

Cohen has taken some career strides, too.

“On the personal side, I took over as co-chair of the firm's global litigation group. I stepped into that role



in February, on top of chairing the pharmaceutical, medical device & health care litigation practice.”

And her community life makes for an even busier schedule: Cohen is part of the American Heart Association’s Atlanta Executive Leadership Team, serves on the Ovarian Cancer Institute board and has recently joined the Emory Law School board and Products Liability Advisory Council board.

HER BIGGEST CHALLENGE THIS YEAR:

Cohen said her biggest challenge over the last year has been when courts exclude evidence of the regulatory process in cases involving life sciences companies. She said that has been a trend in recent years in vaginal mesh litigation.

“To deprive a life sciences company of the right to defend itself fairly and equally and to exclude absolutely any reference to the required regulatory process or mention of the FDA has been very challenging,” Cohen added. “My clients and other companies have been deprived of due process and rights to fair trial with such rulings.”

HER PROUDEST MOMENT:

Cohen said becoming co-chair of the litigation group was a proud moment, noting that she works in tandem with litigation co-chair Jeff E. Scott and considers that a great working relationship.

“I’m very proud of the fact that we’re now co-chairing together,” she said, adding that the firm is paying close attention to diversity and inclusion issues as well.

In the last year and a half, four core team members of the Atlanta pharmaceutical and medical device group became shareholders, something Cohen loves to see.

“To have the four of them ... become shareholders through their own hard work and dedication, that to me is very rewarding.”

WHY SHE’S A LIFE SCIENCES ATTORNEY:

Cohen said she knew from a young age that she wanted to be a trial attorney.

“I wanted to be the next Atticus Finch,” she said.

She noticed that cases involving the life sciences tended to go to trial a lot, and that piqued her career interest.

“Having the opportunity to represent scientists who make these unbelievably important decisions ... it’s really rewarding to me and our team,” she said. “Within the law, the life sciences industry really allows me to represent companies that make important devices and drugs,” she said, “and [it] is an area I’m very passionate about.”

HER ADVICE FOR JUNIOR ATTORNEYS:

Cohen said attorneys have to be their own best advocate, and they have to create their own paths, but they should also be respectful of their team members.

"We're all in it together as our own team," she said. "We are one big team."

"Really work and build your relationships with people at other firms" she said, adding that those relationships can be invaluable in the course of an attorney's career. "Your relationships you build at conferences, at cases ... should be ones that you really cultivate through the years."

— *As told to Christopher Cole*

Law360's MVPs are attorneys who have distinguished themselves from their peers over the past year through high-stakes litigation, record-breaking deals and complex global matters. A team of Law360 editors selected the 2018 MVP winners after reviewing nearly 1,000 submissions.

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