

# *Jonathan C. Jay Augustine: A Litigator Who Values Community Involvement & Winning Cases*

*By Kenneth Davis*

Successful labor and employment litigator Jay Augustine said that two key factors contributed to his decision to enter the legal profession. One was the social exposure he received from his mother, who was a social studies teacher, and the other was his environment.

## **Summary**

Jonathan C. Jay Augustine, litigator and founding partner at Augustine Law Professional Corporation, has a passion for helping clients succeed in a legal system that can be difficult to navigate. He has worked hard to build a successful practice over the last 10 years, but his involvement in the community has been just as important.

Augustine has dedicated his practice to civil and commercial litigation. This includes contractual, real estate, and business disputes as well as professional negligence, franchise, and employment law matters. He is an accomplished and respected litigator, representing both individuals and institutions across Ontario. With a strong background in negotiation, Augustine is committed to providing effective, strategic solutions for his clients.

Augustine is a member of the Bar of Ontario and the Canadian Bar Association, and he regularly speaks and writes on various legal topics. He also serves on a number of boards, including the Canadian Bar Association, the Hamilton Business Forum, and the Hamilton Community Foundation. He is deeply involved in the Hamilton community, facilitating networking and collaboration among local businesses.

Augustine is a strong believer that legal representation doesn't end in the courtroom. He has devoted his time to working with clients to understand their individual needs, and he works with them to develop legal strategies that will serve them best. His approach to litigation puts the client first, and he believes that the most important aspect of his practice is providing the highest quality of service to his clients.

Augustine is committed to providing practical legal solutions to his clients and believes in giving back to his community. He is an active advocate for the less fortunate, volunteering his time with a variety of charitable organizations in the Hamilton area. He is also a coach with the Hamilton Bulldogs, a local minor hockey team.

Jonathan C. Jay Augustine is an experienced litigator and founding partner of Augustine Law Professional Corporation. With a commitment to providing quality legal services, Augustine has championed meaningful reform in the areas of civil and commercial litigation. He is an advocate for his clients and a champion of his community, dedicating his time to creating meaningful legal strategies and giving back through volunteerism.

## **Jonathan C. Jay-Augustine: Litigator & Community Involvement Advocate**

Jonathan C. Jay-Augustine is an experienced litigator who has argued before the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit and the state appellate courts in New Jersey and Pennsylvania. He is a partner at Parker McCay, a law firm based in New Jersey, where he focuses on complex litigation, insurance coverage, and appellate advocacy. He is involved in the bar associations of New Jersey and Philadelphia, and serves on the board of directors of the Camden Youth Center, a nonprofit organization that provides after-school programs and mentoring services to children in Camden, New Jersey.

Jay-Augustine has been recognized as a Euro Rising Star by Super Lawyers, a Thomson Reuters business, each year since 2015. He is a member of the Burlington County Bar Association, and has served

as the chair of the association's Appellate Practice and Young Lawyers Committees.

Jay-Augustine earned his J.D. from Temple University Beasley School of Law, where he was part of the Temple Law Review, and also received an LL.M. in trial advocacy from Temple University Beasley School of Law. He earned his B.A. from Rider University, where he focused on political science and criminal justice.

Before joining Parker McCay, Jay-Augustine was a law clerk for the Honorable Joseph L. Hoffman on the Appellate Division for the Superior Court of New Jersey.

## Jonathan C. Jay-Augustine: Appellate Expert at Parker McCay & Nonprofit Board Member

Jonathan C. Jay-Augustine is a partner at Parker McCay, a law firm with offices in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware. As a renowned appellate attorney, he has argued before the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit and the state appellate courts of New Jersey and Pennsylvania. Recognized as a Super Lawyers EURoeRising StarEUR since 2015, Mr. Jay-Augustine is a highly sought-after litigator and legal advisor.

Mr. Jay-Augustine earned his J.D. from Temple University Beasley School of Law, where he was a member of the Temple Law Review, and completed an LL.M. in trial advocacy. He obtained his B.A. in political science and criminal justice at Rider University. Prior to joining Parker McCay, Mr. Jay-Augustine clerked for the Honorable Joseph L. Hoffman on the Appellate Division for the Superior Court of New Jersey.

Within the legal community, Jay-Augustine is a member of the Burlington County Bar Association and has held leadership positions on several committees. Additionally, he serves on the board of directors of Camden Youth Center, a nonprofit organization in Camden, New Jersey, dedicated to providing mentorship and after-school programs to children in the local community.

"I grew up in the South," he said. "I'm a native of New Orleans, and I'm an African American. I saw an obvious need for civil rights, an obvious need for those who cared and cared enough to take up the cause of civil rights to be involved in the legal process, and that's obviously where rights are protected. So my childhood heroes were attorneys--Thurgood Marshall, moving on to become a justice of the Supreme Court and a gentleman named Ernest Morial, who was a phenomenal civil rights attorney who went on to become the first African American mayor of New Orleans."

However, becoming an attorney was not Augustine's only professional goal. He also aspired to become an Army officer as a result of watching the TV show *F Troop* as a child, he said.

And Augustine has achieved both of these goals in stellar fashion. He served on active duty in the U.S. Army for four years, earning decorations as an infantry officer and leaving service as a first lieutenant. He's currently a partner in the Baton Rouge office of prominent New Orleans-based law firm Montgomery, Barnett, Brown, Read, Hammond & Mintz, where he has a thriving [labor and employment law](#) litigation practice. In addition to maintaining his primary practice at Montgomery Barnett, Augustine serves as General Counsel to the City of Baton Rouge/Parish of East Baton Rouge Personnel Board.

"My childhood dreams were fulfilled," he laughed.

At Montgomery Barnett, Augustine's practice focuses on labor and employment law, commercial litigation, and civil service compliance. He has successfully represented private, public, and individual clients in trial and appellate court matters.

He recently defended the City of Baker, a municipality in East Baton Rouge Parish, in a Fair Labor Standards Act case brought by a class of 30 firefighters. Augustine, who was lead defense counsel in the case, won a summary judgment on the city's behalf in 2004.

Augustine discussed one of the strategies that helped him win the case:

"One of the things that I do [...] is serve on the faculty of the National Institute for Trial Advocacy, where I teach deposition skills, and that's very important," he said. "So from following those same techniques that I teach other lawyers, I was able to ask the right questions in discovery and during, obviously, a lot of depositions that I had to take. So that's something I'm very, very proud of."

In another notable case, Augustine was appointed by the Louisiana Department of Justice to defend the state's interest in a multimillion-dollar damages case. The case involved a California-based insurer who brought a claim against the state of Louisiana. As special counsel, Augustine worked with a team of lawyers and won a favorable verdict for his client in 2005.

"It was a huge, huge case," he said. "And we prevailed at trial on this matter; it's a matter in which I take immense pride."

Last year, he represented some members of the state legislature who brought a claim against the former secretary of state of Louisiana under the Louisiana Public Records Law requesting the release of the list of voters who were displaced by Hurricane Katrina in anticipation of the 2006 New Orleans municipal elections.

"We weren't seeking any private information...no social security numbers, not how much FEMA assistance anyone received," Augustine said. "We merely were seeking their whereabouts and means to correspond with them."

He said he was ultimately unsuccessful in the case but that taking it was the right thing to do because it brought about the right amount of public involvement regarding the displacement of individuals--and the lack of continuity and lack of ability to communicate with those individuals--in the wake of Hurricane Katrina.

Augustine discussed what he enjoys most about his job:

"I enjoy going to court more than anything else," he said. "I'm a litigator at heart. I'm a very good writer, so I'm very proud of the productive time I spend at the desk. But I'm not a desk lawyer by any shape or form. I enjoy the discovery process; I enjoy taking depositions because I enjoy interacting with people. If it has to do with litigation, I'm happy."

Augustine received a fully funded U.S. Army ROTC scholarship to attend Howard University in Washington, DC, where he studied economics as an undergrad. After earning his economics degree in 1994, he received a commission as an active duty infantry officer. Augustine served on active duty from 1994 to 1998 and left the service as a first lieutenant when his scholarship service was complete. He said his former unit, 1-22 Infantry, is the unit that captured Saddam Hussein.

"When I was there, however, I was a platoon leader in X4XXI, or the U.S. Army's Experimental Force for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century," he said. "I field-tested all the then-new digital equipment being used in Iraq and other anti-terrorism hot spots. The bulk of my daily duties, therefore, focused on field-training soldiers and testing the equipment the U.S. Military currently uses in combat operations."

After completing his service, Augustine entered [Tulane Law School](#). During his third year at Tulane, he successfully argued before the Louisiana Supreme Court and won the Tulane Moot Court Competition.

Augustine earned his law degree from Tulane in 2001 and then clerked for a year for Justice Bernette Joshua Johnson at the Louisiana Supreme Court. He said the clerkship was very instrumental in helping him

develop as an attorney.

"It was the best experience I could have had," Augustine said. "Number one, it gave me a realistic perspective from the bench's view--a realistic view of what judges or justices are looking for in terms of written briefs, oral arguments, or cases that can go either way. It gives you a great idea from the inside; it gives you inside perspective that I think can only help your practice. Also, I might add, from a writer's perspective, as a law clerk, I saw some of the absolute best briefs, and I saw the absolute worst; and I tried to take that experience and learn from it. Obviously you learn from the absolute best, as you obviously learn from the absolute worst."

Following his clerkship, Augustine joined a firm in Baton Rouge, where he practiced employment law and [commercial litigation as an associate](#). He left the firm in 2005 to open his own practice, The Augustine Firm, APLC. Augustine served as Managing Director of the firm, where he said he "did some of everything," but the practice was primarily employment law and commercial litigation. Augustine also did human resource consulting work at the firm. He said that although the practice was very successful, he decided to join Montgomery Barnett as a partner in 2006.

"Montgomery Barnett was a wonderful opportunity for me, so I seized it," he said. "I was blessed with success and had a very positive book of business, and I was able to bring something tangible to the table at Montgomery Barnett, which is why the offer was extended to me to join as a partner."

In addition to maintaining his practice and tending to his general counsel duties, Augustine is an adjunct professor of law at Southern University Law Center in Baton Rouge. He said he teaches consumer transactions and legal writing at the school.

Augustine said he also spends a certain amount of time each week doing client-development activities, "meaning development to keep and sustain the current client relationships I have as well as foster new relationships."

"And part of that is being very civically involved," he said. "I'm very, very involved in the community. And that's something I'm very proud of."

Augustine also makes time for academic pursuits and has published four law review articles and two bar journal articles.

He had the following advice for law students and young lawyers:

"I would advise any lawyer, especially young lawyers attempting to make a name for themselves, to spend the extra time to be civically involved, to be politically involved in the community, because it tends to pay dividends, I find, in the amount of clients you can represent. And for law students, I would really suggest pushing yourselves, exhausting yourselves as best you can to develop as many talents as you can while in school."

Augustine was born and raised in New Orleans. He said his mother, Jeanne C. Augustine, had a very positive influence on him when he was growing up.

"She taught high school social studies for 37 years," he said. "I proudly credit her with my broad social exposure at an early age. "My mother sacrificed on a public school teacher's salary--in a state that has not historically prioritized education--to send myself and my older sister, Deborah, to Catholic schools in New Orleans. She wanted us to have the best educational opportunities [...]. As a result of my mother, my older sister (a corporate officer with the GE Corporation) and I both love traveling abroad with our children and exposing them to all the world has to offer. That's the power of a book and an educator."

Augustine is the single parent of a two-year-old daughter named Jillian.

"She is without question the most important thing in my life and the motivating factor that gets me up every morning," he said.

He said he has a great love for literacy and tries to instill that love in his daughter. He is also a big fan of foreign languages and is studying Spanish and Italian.

Augustine discussed some of the professional goals he'd like to accomplish in the future:

"To leave a legacy is the first thing," he said. "I'm confident that my practice will go well in terms of the dollars and cents of it...but to leave a legacy of not just being an in-the-office or in-the-courtroom lawyer but to be a lawyer who's been very involved with the bench and bar and involved in the community...so to use the talents that I've been given or the skill sets I've acquired to do good for others is the most important thing for me."