

Matt Nguyen

Associate



mnguyen@cooley.com

+1 202 728 7123

Washington, DC
Los Angeles

Issues and Appeals
White Collar Defense and Investigations
Congressional Investigations
Commercial Litigation
National Security
Pro Bono

Matt represents innovative clients in high-stakes disputes, with a focus on government investigations and enforcement; appellate advocacy up to the US and California Supreme Courts; and impact pro bono centering on civil rights, racial justice, and the rule of law. Drawing on his diverse experience in federal and state government, including as a captain in the US Army Reserve JAG Corps and counselor to senior elected leaders, Matt strategically advances client priorities in government-facing matters.

Matt's recent representative matters

Supreme Court and Appellate Litigation

- Represented a director of one of California's largest charitable foundations in an eight-figure enforcement action, securing a landmark California Supreme Court opinion that reversed the Court of Appeal and reinforced whistleblower protections for 110,000 charities across California
- Represented the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Southern California, ACLU of Northern California, First Amendment Coalition, JusticeLA Coalition, Check the Sheriff Coalition and Black Lives Matter-Los Angeles in the California Supreme Court challenging a statute that chills protected speech and petitioning activity concerning police misconduct in violation of the First Amendment
- Represented dozens of leading neuroscience and psychology scholars, the American Academy of Pediatric Neuropsychology, Juvenile Law Center, Pacific Juvenile Defender Center, and The Sentencing Project before several state supreme courts (California, Massachusetts, and Michigan) challenging statutes that condemn young adults to mandatory life sentences without the possibility of parole, culminating in several precedential victories that repeatedly cited the amicus briefs
- Represented a Fortune 500 company in preserving an earlier district court victory on summary judgment in the US Court of Appeals for the First Circuit
- Represented a real estate company and its CEO in preserving a total defense judgment against a former business partner in the California Supreme Court
- Represented a unicorn startup in reversing lower courts' dispositive order and summary writ denial via a grant-and-transfer order by the California Supreme Court
- Represented a Fortune 500 fintech company in affirming dismissal with prejudice of contract claims brought by high-risk vendors in the California Supreme Court
- Represented the ACLU and 14 ACLU state affiliates in a US Supreme Court amicus brief seeking to protect the fundamental rights of Native American children, families and tribes

- Represented March For Our Lives, Everytown for Gun Safety and Brady: United Against Gun Violence in amicus briefs to stem the proliferation of unregulated ghost guns for criminal activity
- Represented University of California, Berkeley School of Law Dean Erwin Chemerinsky and other leading federal courts scholars in a US Supreme Court amicus brief supporting the NAACP's constitutional challenge to North Carolina's voter suppression laws

Government Investigations and Enforcement

- Represented a top management consultancy in responding to a US Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations subpoena involving sports and foreign affairs
- Represented a top generative artificial intelligence (AI) company in responding to a US House Judiciary Committee subpoena concerning algorithmic bias and the First Amendment
- Represented a Fortune 500 airline in multibillion-dollar enforcement actions by the US Department of Justice (DOJ), state attorneys general and private plaintiffs
- Represented a Fortune 10 technology company in a cross-border investigation by the US Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC)
- Represented 50+ amici cybersecurity leaders and groups opposing the US Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) enforcement action against SolarWinds and its chief information security officer
- Represented the second-largest US television broadcaster in a nationwide, industrywide, follow-on private enforcement action following the successful resolution of a DOJ investigation
- Represented a former DOJ senior official and third-party witness in a highly publicized US special counsel prosecution and in a separate DOJ investigation with national security implications
- Represented several edtech startups in investigations by the DOJ, US Federal Trade Commission (FTC), US Department of Education and US Department of Veterans Affairs
- Represented a unicorn AI startup in resolving an investigation on the US False Claims Act (FCA), US Foreign Corrupt Practices Act (FCPA) and the US Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC)
- Represented an individual client in a multi-jurisdictional DOJ investigation and prosecution involving alleged fraud resulting in a highly favorable one-day sentence
- Represented public cloud-computing and social media companies in responding to DOJ subpoenas on the US Stored Communications Act (SCA) and US Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA)
- Counseled a major news publisher on minimizing national security and legal risk related to its viral article on domestic election integrity, foreign espionage and US counterintelligence

Other Matters

- Represented certified classes of detainees against Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and its private prison contractors across California, contributing to federal court orders releasing hundreds of medically-vulnerable persons based on violations of their constitutional rights
- Counseled a top federal elected official on extraordinary constitutional issues involving former President Donald Trump's attempts to overturn the results of the 2020 presidential election
- Represented an edtech startup in amicably resolving an eight-figure contract dispute with one of the largest US public universities
- Represented a startup founder and entrepreneur in a trade secrets and contract dispute, securing dismissal with prejudice of all counterclaims by the startup's cofounder
- Defended voting rights and voter access to mail-in ballots in battleground states including Florida, Georgia and Michigan during the 2020 and 2024 presidential elections

- Represented a Black musician in a trademark dispute involving racial justice
- Counseled a mentorship group on nonprofit formation to expand its scholarship program for underrepresented students pursuing graduate education in neuroscience
- Counseled several Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) advocacy groups on nonprofit formation in response to a nationwide surge in anti-AAPI violence and discrimination

Fiercely committed to public service, Matt also serves as a captain judge advocate assigned to the 304th Sustainment Brigade, where he has advised commanders on national security law and investigations, prosecuted military justice offenses, and deployed abroad to support NATO operations. Separately, over the past decade, Matt has counseled senior government leaders—President Biden's campaign and transition team, then-Senator Kamala Harris, then-House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, Secretary of Energy Jennifer Granholm and CA Governors Gavin Newsom and Jerry Brown—on novel legal and policy issues. He has also served as oversight vice-chair for the Coast Community College District, stewarding \$700 million in long-term education investments for students and the local community.

After graduating salutatorian from UC Berkeley, Matt earned his JD from Yale Law School as a Paul & Daisy Soros Fellow, Coker Fellow for torts and legal writing, notes & comments editor of the Yale Law Journal, managing editor of the Yale Law & Policy Review, founding legislative/stakeholder advocate for the We Care Coalition, and director of the Education Adequacy Project Clinic. Following law school, he clerked for Justice Goodwin Liu on the California Supreme Court.

During his free time, Matt enjoys global travel, snowboarding, volleyball, pickleball, golfing and going on adventures with his Shiba Inu.

Education

The Judge Advocate General's Legal Center and School
OBC,

Yale Law School
JD,

University of California, Berkeley
BA, Political Science

Admissions & Credentials

California

District of Columbia

Rankings & Accolades

Forbes 30 Under 30 (Law & Policy)

CAFE 100 Changemaker, Preet Bharara

Paul and Daisy Soros Fellowship

Exemplary Legal Writing, The Green Bag

Captain, U.S. Army Reserve