

Modinat “Abby” Kotun

Work Experience

Reed Smith LLP

Houston, TX

September 2019 – present

Labor and Employment Associate Attorney

Represent clients in wide variety of labor and employment matters, including general employment counseling; defense of discrimination charges and lawsuits; and trade secret, unfair competition, and wage and hour litigation.

- Draft pleadings, discovery motions, and dispositive motions in state and federal court actions
- Conduct written discovery, including interrogatories, subpoenas, and document production
- Represent employers before the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)
- Represent various pro bono clients in immigration matters
- Advise clients regarding COVID-19 employment laws, standards, and guidance
- Temporarily seconded to national bank in areas of litigation, government enforcement, and employment

Winstead PC

Houston, TX

April 2018 – September 2019

Labor, Employment and Immigration Associate Attorney

- Successfully briefed a motion to dismiss in Americans with Disabilities Act website accessibility case
- Drafted pleadings, discovery motions, and dispositive motions in state court, federal court, and arbitration actions
- Conducted written discovery, including interrogatories, subpoenas, and document requests
- Represented employers before the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)
- Advised clients regarding investigations, citations, and compliance as it relates to occupational safety
- Conducted manager and supervisor anti-harassment and legal interview training for clients
- Represented various pro bono clients in immigration, guardianship, and probate matters

Haynes and Boone, LLP

Houston, TX

March 2014 – April 2018

Labor, Employment and Immigration Associate Attorney

- Successfully argued a motion for default judgment in state civil district court and motions to dismiss and for summary judgment in federal district court
- Drafted pleadings, discovery motions, and dispositive motions in state court, federal court, and arbitration actions
- Drafted employment, consulting, non-competition, severance, and settlement agreements
- Conducted written discovery, including interrogatories, subpoenas, and document requests
- Led witness interviews, took depositions, and presented witnesses in court
- Advised employers on internal investigations regarding discrimination and failure to accommodate
- Represented employers before the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)
- Participated in mediations and settlement negotiations
- Advised clients regarding investigations, citations, and compliance as it relates to occupational safety
- National Institute for Trial Advocacy (NITA) deposition training in March 2016
- Represented various pro bono clients in immigration, family, guardianship, and probate matters
- Prosecuted criminal cases for the City of Houston as a volunteer prosecutor, including trying sixteen jury trials to verdict

Chevron Corporation

2005 – 2012

Chevron Pipe Line Company, Field Engineer, Asset Management, Houston, TX (2011-2012)

- Managed small- to mid- size pipe line projects
- Developed safe process designs and planning safe installations of materials and equipment to support incident and injury free operations

Chevron Energy Technology Company, Process Engineer, Major Capital Projects Support, Houston, TX (2008-2010)

- Designed process equipment for onshore and offshore oil and gas developments

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Chevron Energy Technology Company, Business Analyst, Richmond, CA (2007-2008)

- Supported a unit of 150+ engineers and staff by providing business and financial analysis, management meeting facilitation, and project milestone tracking
- Developed unit Business Plan, monitored financials and performance metrics, and updated Leadership Team periodically

Chevron Energy Technology Company, Process Engineer, New Technology Commercialization Project, Houston, TX (2005-2007)

- Supported commercialization efforts of a new proprietary technology by designing chemical processes and units
- Participated in patenting process with invention disclosures and obtained a patent

Education University of Houston Law Center, J.D., December 2013

magna cum laude | GPA: 3.60 | *Top 5%*

- Houston Law Review, Internet Publishing Editor, Spring & Fall 2013
- Black Law Students Association, Fundraising Officer, Fall 2012–Spring 2013
- The AmJur Award for Scholastic Excellence in Contracts, Spring 2012
- The Lex Award for Scholastic Excellence in Legal Research and Writing, Spring 2011

University of Houston, B.S., Chemical Engineering, May 2005

cum laude | GPA: 3.34

- National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE), Regional Vice Chairperson, Fall 2004 – Spring 2005
- Nigerian Students Association, President, Fall 2004– Spring 2005
- Biography Published in the following:
 - University Publication, *The Collegium*, Spring 2004
 - College of Engineering Recruiting Publication, *Marvels of Engineering*, Spring 2003

Licensure and Admissions

- State of Texas, November 6, 2014
- United States Patent and Trademark Office, December 19, 2014
- Board Certified in Labor and Employment Law, Texas Board of Legal Specialization, 2019
- United States District Courts, Southern, Northern, Eastern, and Western Districts of Texas
- Supreme Court of the United States

Community Involvement and Leadership

- Leadership Houston, Class XXXVIII (2019-2020)
- African American Lawyers Section of the State Bar of Texas – Chair (2019-2020)
- Nigerian-American Multicultural Council – Vice President, Special Projects and Public Relations (2021-present) Vice President, Outreach (2019-2020); Vice President, Sponsorships and Fundraising (2016-2018); Vice President, Education and Mentorship (2014-2016)
- Houston Lawyers Association – President (2017-2018); President-Elect (2016-2017); Recording Secretary (2015-2016)
- Houston Bar Association – Labor and Employment Section, Member
- Association of Women Attorneys, Member
- Houston Alumni Extension, National Society of Black Engineers – Programs Chair (2009-2010); Secretary (2006-2007)
- African Professionals Network – Houston – President (2008-2009); Treasurer (2007)

Publications

- “The Rising Tide of Law Firm Pay Discrimination Suits,” *The Houston Lawyer*, March/April 2018
- “Equal Pay Act and Pay Equity – Past and Future,” co-author, *The Federal Lawyer*, July 2017
- “OSHA is Here. Now What?,” author, *Workforce Q&A, Texas Business Report*, July 2016
- “Five Hot Topics Employers and Their Lawyers Need to Know,” co-author, *The Houston Lawyer*, January/February 2015