

MVP: Covington's Shara Aranoff

Law360 (December 5, 2018, 10:03 AM EST) -- Shara Aranoff, a partner in Covington & Burling LLP's international trade practice, helped her Canadian clients secure victories before the U.S. International Trade Commission in investigations over imported aircraft jets and newsprint, earning her a spot as one of Law360's 2018 International Trade MVPs.

HER BIGGEST ACCOMPLISHMENT THIS YEAR:

In February, the ITC voted unanimously to strike proposed tariffs on uncoated grounded paper, or newsprint, imported from Canada, finding that the U.S. industry was not materially harmed by the Canadian imports.

The proposed tariffs by the U.S. Department of Commerce would have spiked the cost of paper and possibly threatened the livelihood of local newspapers and the commercial printing sector. As such, the issue was "life and death, especially for a number of small newspapers around the country who were going to be faced with paper tariffs so prohibitive that they might not be able to continue publishing," Aranoff told Law360.

Aranoff represented both Canadian producer Kruger Inc. and the News Media Alliance, a trade association representing 2,000 newspapers, and said at the time this was a "win-win" for both the foreign producers as well as for the American press.

The logo consists of the letters 'MVP' in a blue, serif font. A red circle is drawn around the 'V', with a red arrow pointing upwards from the bottom right of the circle.

Shara Aranoff
Covington

HER PROUDEST MOMENT:

Aranoff said she was most proud of her success on behalf of Montreal-based Bombardier Inc. earlier this year, which had faced tariffs of more than 300 percent on its C Series commercial jet imports.

The ITC in February unanimously found that although the jets were unfairly subsidized and sold at below-market prices, Boeing Co., which had requested the probe, was not harmed by the Canadian imports. In choosing not to impose tariffs, the ITC determined that the import prices would not likely depress or suppress prices in the U.S. market or raise demand for more imports.

“All of the industry experts, all of the news media and the clients were convinced that they couldn’t win, that the politics were rigged against them,” Aranoff said. “It took a minute to really process that there was a unanimous decision in their favor.”

WHY SHE’S AN INTERNATIONAL TRADE ATTORNEY:

Before joining Covington, Aranoff was a commissioner and a chairman at the ITC, where she oversaw hundreds of Section 337, anti-dumping and countervailing duty investigations. Prior to her time at the agency, she served as senior trade counsel for former U.S. Sen. Max Baucus, D-Mont., at the Senate Committee on Finance.

Aranoff, who graduated from Harvard Law School and Princeton University, said her initial interest in international trade law began while she was on her high school debate team.

“One year, the topic we were assigned to debate was about U.S. trade policy, and I became hooked,” she said.

HER ADVICE TO YOUNG ATTORNEYS:

Young attorneys who are interested in the international field in general tend to focus on international law, or else languages or traveling — however, to be an effective international trade lawyer, attorneys must focus on administrative law and accounting, Aranoff said.

“The big picture issues that you work on are very satisfying, but the hours are a roller coaster,” she said.

— As told to Tiffany Hu

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.