



JOHN LIERMAN

PARTNER

Arizona

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Areas of Practice:

Automobile Liability Defense
Dram Shop & Social Host Liability
Educational Institutions Defense
General Civil Litigation
Insurance Coverage & Third-Party Liability
Premises Liability
Wrongful Death & Personal Injury Defense

Industries Served:

Education
Insurance
Retail & Hospitality

John Lierman focuses his practice in the areas of premises liability, personal injury and general civil litigation. He represents clients primarily in the retail and hospitality, light industry, insurance, and education fields.

While earning his law degree, John was a member of the Trial Competition Team and competed successfully in several trial advocacy and moot court competitions. He was also a constitutional law fellow, a senior writing fellow, and a teaching fellow. In his final year of law school, he placed first in both the Jenckes Closing Argument Competition and the Richard Grand Closing Argument Competition. John also served as Senior Managing Editor for the Arizona Journal of International and Comparative Law, where his fellow editors voted him the award for the greatest contribution by an editorial board member. He also worked as a certified limited practice student in a trial group at the Office of the Maricopa County Attorney, in a program that he helped create, and as a law clerk at the Office of the Arizona Attorney General, in the Natural Resources section.

Prior to pursuing a legal career, John spent several years teaching in higher education at the University of Sioux Falls. The skills he gained while teaching undergraduate students are often exactly the skills needed to explain difficult concepts to jurors in a courtroom. John's own undergraduate background in hard science often informs his practice, especially when interacting with experts, because it equips him to understand physical and chemical processes that underlie many kinds of personal injury and premises liability claims.

When John is not in the office, he enjoys spending time on the many hiking trails in Arizona and remodeling his historic central-Phoenix home.

REPRESENTATIVE CASES

- **[Successfully defended the owners of a family-style restaurant after it was sued for allegedly overserving alcohol to a man later driving a pickup truck that was involved in a serious traffic incident.](#)** Upon arrival at the accident scene, police found numerous open containers of alcohol in and around the pickup truck. When questioned by police the passenger in the pickup claimed that she and the driver had been drinking at our client's the defendant's restaurant earlier. However, the driver of the pickup denied drinking at the client restaurant. Police arrested both the passenger and the driver of the pickup truck. The driver was found to have BAC of 0.22 two hours after the accident. Plaintiff brought suit, alleging the pickup truck driver was overserved alcohol at our client's restaurant and therefore the restaurant bore fault in the accident. JSH attorneys moved for summary judgment that ultimately the plaintiff had no evidence proving any alcohol allegedly served by the client restaurant had anything to do with the traffic accident. The court agreed and granted summary judgment in the restaurant's favor.
- **[Successfully defended a supplier of concrete and construction materials sued after a hydraulic hose on one of its cement mixer trucks failed, spraying the plaintiff's BMW convertible with hydraulic fluid.](#)** At the time, the top of the convertible was down and it was alleged that fluid landed on the plaintiff and injured his eyes, resulting in dry-eye syndrome. The defense was based on the general rule that damages are limited to those proximately caused by the negligence of a defendant. The defense argued that the plaintiff had pre-existing and unrelated eye problems, and that the plaintiff failed to act reasonably after the incident to mitigate his damages. After a four-day jury trial, the plaintiff asked for an award of \$684,000; the defense recommended the jury award the plaintiff \$35,000 to \$40,000. After deliberating for two hours, the jury awarded the plaintiff \$35,000.
- **[Successfully defended a solar energy company sued by a competitor for interference with contract and abuse of process.](#)** The client had complained to the Arizona Registrar of Contractors that a competitor was contracting without a license. The Registrar brought charges against the competing business, which eventually resulted in it losing some customers. The court found that complaining to the appropriate authorities was not interference with a contract and granted summary judgment on all claims and awarded costs to the client company.
- Successfully represented a commercial landlord sued by a plaintiff who sat in a chair and fell backwards down a flight of stairs while attending an event hosted by a tenant in the landlord's building. The defense was based on the rule that a lessor is not subject to liability for harm caused by a dangerous

condition that comes into existence after the lessee has taken possession of land. Because the tenant had taken possession of the common areas in the building for the purpose of its event, the tenant was responsible for the placement of the chair during that event, not the landlord.

- [Successfully defended two Phoenix Police officers and a client restaurant, all of which were sued after the plaintiff was shot by another restaurant patron.](#) The plaintiff alleged that the restaurant and the officers, who were working as an off-duty officer detail, were negligent in allowing a firearm inside the restaurant. Both officers were cleared because they were independent contractors, with no duty to the plaintiff. The court agreed that evidence the restaurant was performing patdowns at the door was evidence that reasonable measures were in place to keep customers safe, and granted summary judgment because the plaintiff failed to produce evidence that something more should have been done.

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS & MEMBERSHIPS

- Arizona Association of Defense Counsel, Member
- Defense Research Institute, Member
- Maricopa County Superior Court Judge Pro Tempore, current

PROFESSIONAL RECOGNITION & AWARDS

- *Southwest Super Lawyers Rising Star*, 2019-2022
- *Best Lawyers in America: Ones to Watch®*, Commercial Litigation, Insurance Law, Personal Injury Litigation – Defendants, 2023

PRESENTATIONS & PUBLICATIONS

- [“Defeat the Reptile by Not Being Defensive.”](#) Common Defense, Arizona Association of Defense Counsel, Fall 2021
- [“Managers and the Law.”](#) Guest Presenter, Arizona State University School of Community Resources & Development, December 2019
- “Beware the Insured’s ‘Reasonable Expectations,’” Author, JSH Reporter, Fall 2017
- “How to Manage a Crime Free Rental Property in Arizona,” Author, The Record Reporter, January 2015

EDUCATION

University of Arizona College, James E. Rogers College of Law, J.D., *summa cum laude*, 2013

William T. Birmingham Trial Advocacy Award, Order of the Coif

Cambridge University, Ph.D., Religion, 2002

Rice University, B.A., Biology, 1997

BAR ADMISSIONS

Arizona, 2013

U.S. District Court, District of Arizona, 2013

Yavapai-Apache Tribal Court, 2021