



Rachel K. Zimmerman

IP work that is
'blow your mind cool'

Intimate knowledge of “bed bug killing chambers” may not be the first thing you associate with a top-flight intellectual property litigator, but trade secret litigation involving how best to kill *Cimex lectularius* was just one of many highlights in 2014 for Rachel Zimmerman of Merchant & Gould.

In 2014, Zimmerman led an all-woman trial team in an eight-day Hennepin County District Court jury trial that resulted in a seven-figure judgment and an award of attorney’s fees for Merchant & Gould client Ecolab in *Ecolab, Inc. v. Hetta Solutions, Inc., et al.* The jury found that the defendants willfully and maliciously misappropriated trade secrets.

Zimmerman describes her practice as 85 percent trial litigation and 15 percent appeals, noting that her colleagues often look to her for assistance with their appellate work in light of her background as an appellate clerk. Zimmerman describes her work as being “on the cutting edge of innovation” and “blow your mind cool.”

Barrister Alex Leonini, Group Intellectual Property Manager for Lush Limited, a U.K. entity with over 100 retail locations in the United States, raved about Zimmerman during a brief telephone conversation, describing her as (among many other things) “intelligent, friendly, focused, persuasive and a strong advocate.” Leonini emphasized that when things get “messy,” Zimmerman is the “big gun” that Lush relies on to represent it in trademark infringement and trade dress disputes.

Zimmerman also has served for many years as a volunteer attorney with the Children’s Law Center of Minnesota and currently serves as president of the Minnesota Chapter of the Federal Bar Association and vice chair of the Fund for Legal Aid.

In 2014, Zimmerman was appointed by Chief Judge Michael Davis to serve on the merit selection panel that selected Hildy Bowbeer to replace Magistrate Judge Arthur Boylan, and co-chaired the panel that selected Becky R. Thorson to replace Magistrate Judge Graham.

With Chief Judge Davis, Zimmerman co-chairs “A Celebration of Minnesota Women in the Law,” a project co-sponsored by the United States District Court for the District of Minnesota and the Federal Bar Association.

These activities would be enough to fill most calendars, but Zimmerman also somehow finds time to co-chair Merchant & Gould’s recruiting committee. She says that a science background is not an absolute requirement for success in intellectual property law, but that if candidates hated high school chemistry or math, IP may not be the right field for them.

—Josh Jacobson