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Christopher J. Lee

Partner

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Practices:

Securities Fraud and Insider Trading, Internal Investigations, Securities Litigation, Complex Business Litigation, Class Actions

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A native South Korean and first-chair trial lawyer in U.S. Court, Christopher Jumin Lee offers clients top-flight advocacy combined with a unique ability to bridge disparate business cultures.

Recognized as a Southern California Rising Star by Super Lawyers Magazine for three consecutive years (2022–2024), Chris has earned a reputation from clients both in the U.S. and from his native Korea for handling high-stakes, complex disputes. In 2022, Chris obtained a complete defense judgment in a copyright infringement case on behalf of several prominent Korean media companies – including Kakao Entertainment, Genie Music, and NHN – and later successfully defeated the Plaintiff's Ninth Circuit appeal. In 2024, Chris represented a Korean-American apparel supplier in a two-month jury trial against troubled multi-level marketing company LuLaRoe, ultimately securing a $164 million verdict in his client's favor.

Other recent representations include Samsung Electronics, SBS, MBC, TV Chosun, TJ Media, Keum Young, and HTX (formerly Huobi).

Chris also specializes in cutting-edge disputes involving the blockchain industry. His work includes multiple successful lawsuits to recover investor assets lost to fraudulent ICOs, rug-pull schemes, and security exploits. Chris also represents executives from major cryptocurrency firms in both civil litigation as well as regulatory proceedings.

Beyond his commercial practice, Chris maintains an active pro bono docket and is a vocal advocate for many causes. His commentary on social and political issues in Korea has been featured by international media, including BBC and *The Economist*, as well as major Korean outlets such as *Donga Ilbo*, TBS, Ohymynews, and Korea Pro. His widely-read book on equal rights legislation in South Korea has been cited by legislators arguing in support of a comprehensive anti-discrimination bill.

Since 2019, Chris has represented a U.S. Marine Corps veteran and human rights activist in extradition proceedings connected to an alleged attempt to rescue defectors from the North

Korean embassy in Madrid. In 2021, he received the ACLU's Humanitarian Award for his role in securing emergency relief for incarcerated persons during a massive COVID-19 outbreak in California's federal prisons.

Before practicing the law, Chris worked as an Air Force intelligence officer and high school teacher. He graduated cum laude from Harvard College and Harvard Law School, and was a judicial intern for the Hon. James E. Boasberg in the United States District Court for the District of Columbia.

Education & Admissions

- Harvard Law School, J.D., cum laude, 2016
- Harvard University, B.A., cum laude, 2009

- California, 2018
- New York, 2018

Notable Matters

Won landmark habeas corpus ruling blocking the extradition of Christopher Ahn, a U.S. Marine Corps veteran and human rights activist targeted for assassination by the North Korean regime for providing aid to high-profile North Korean defectors, including Kim Han-Sol, the nephew of Kim Jong-Un. The order marks the first time in U.S. history that a federal court has applied a humanitarian exception to international extradition — previously a purely theoretical doctrine.

Successfully represented a Korean-American apparel company in two-month jury trial against multi-level marketing company LuLaRoe, ultimately securing a $164 million verdict for client.

Secured summary judgment on behalf of South Korean media company SBS in a long-running copyright dispute concerning the works of South Korean composer Jae-Ho Lee.

Obtained dismissal with prejudice on behalf of South Korean media companies SBS, MBC, MBN, and state-owned bank Industrial Bank of Korea ("IBK") in a copyright-infringement lawsuit concerning the works of South Korean composer Jae-Ho Lee. Previously won a similar copyright-infringement suit in favor of a joint defense group comprised of other prominent media companies – Kakao Entertainment, Genie Music, NHN Bugs, TJ Media, Keum Young, MBC, and TV Chosun. Successfully prevailed on successive motions to dismiss, securing a dismissal with prejudice. The

decision was later affirmed by the Ninth Circuit of Appeals.

Achieved a significant and favorable outcome on behalf of apparel company owner who faced criminal charges of underpayment of tax and duty by $35 million and money laundering over $80 million. Convinced Judge to decrease sentence to twelve months and one day in custody, rather than the five years recommended by the Sentencing Guidelines and demanded by the government.

Obtained preliminary injunction in a pro bono class action lawsuit against federal prison over the inefficient measures taken by prison officials to prevent the spread of COVID-19, in violation of the Eighth Amendment prohibition against cruel and unusual punishment. Successfully convinced the court to require prison officials to consider all medically vulnerable, non-violent prisoners and those over the age of 50 for home confinement.

Associations

- Member, Korean American Bar Association
- Board Member, Korean American Chamber of Commerce - LA (KACC-LA), 2025

Awards & Recognitions

- Leading Litigators in America, *Lawdragon*, 2027 - present
- 40 & Under List, *Benchmark Litigation*, 2026
- Top Plaintiff's Verdict of 2024, *Daily Journal*, 2025
- Lawdragon 500 X - The Next Generation, 2025 - present
- Best Lawyers in America: Ones to Watch, Commercial Litigation, Best Lawyers®, 2025
- Southern California Rising Stars, Super Lawyers, 2022 - present
- Humanitarian Award, American Civil Liberties Union, 2021

Publications and Speaking Engagements

- Panelist, "Local Rules, Global Disputes: Depositions and Privilege in International Arbitration," Korean Commercial Arbitration Board ADR Festival, October 2026
- Quoted, "Judge rejects extradition bid, faults use of Google translate," *Daily Journal*, April 2026
- Featured, "Winning U.S. Litigation: Lessons for Korean Companies," *Legal Times*, March 2025
- Quoted, "Why is it so hard to arrest South Korea's impeached president?" BBC, January 2025
- Featured, "Korea urged to enact anti-discrimination law to align with global standards," *The Korea Times,* November 2024
- Author, "_____" ("Why Anti-Discrimination Law?"), Book Journalism, May 2021