

# THE AXELROD FIRM, PC

## Alternative Dispute Resolution Services

### PRACTICE AREAS

Alternative Dispute Resolution  
Expert Witness Services: Commercial Disputes | DEI  
Receiver Services  
Commercial Litigation



*"Ms. Axelrod served with me on a large complex commercial dispute with the amount in controversy in the tens of millions. During the two-week hearing she was very attentive, asking insightful questions, and raising important points during the panel discussions .... She was [also] instrumental in the preparation ... of the 70-page award[.]"*

**John Lowe**

INTERNATIONAL ARBITRATOR AND MEDIATOR

*"[After being appointed the Receiver and completing her analysis of the case,] Ms. Axelrod was able to successfully work with the parties to resolve a case [spanning 6-years in litigation] that seemed completely unresolvable. I highly recommend Ms. Axelrod both as a Receiver, and also as a Mediator."*

**Brett Berman**

CO-CHAIR OF LITIGATION, FOX ROTHSCHILD

**theaxelrodfirm.com**

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# THE AXELROD FIRM, PC

## Alternative Dispute Resolution Services

**SHERYL L. AXELROD**

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**SHERYL L. AXELROD** is President and CEO of The Axelrod Firm, P.C.

### Alternative Dispute Resolution Services

Ms. Axelrod provides Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) services in Commercial Disputes. Ms. Axelrod is available to serve as an Arbitrator, Mediator, Discovery Master, and Receiver.

With over 30 years of litigation experience, including at an Am Law 100 law firm, and including in state and federal courts and before administrative bodies, conducting jury and non-jury trials, Ms. Axelrod brings a wealth of experience handling Commercial Disputes. In fact, Ms. Axelrod has been recognized for years as one of the Top 100 Super Lawyers in Pennsylvania.

“Pennsylvania Jury Verdict Review & Analysis,” which catalogs significant state verdicts, published about one of her trials, a David versus Goliath commercial litigation victory for her client-defendant, and three of her commercial cases were covered in *Law360*, which covers the largest and most high profile cases.

Ms. Axelrod also has experience in Aviation Litigation.

Ms. Axelrod is also a Senior Fellow in Litigation Counsel of America (LCA), a by-invitation-only organization of top trial lawyers that accepts less than one-half of one percent of the country’s lawyers.

She is rated AV Preeminent by Martindale-Hubbell®, the highest rating awarded by this nationally recognized leader in lawyer ratings.

In recognition of her skills in the courtroom and at the negotiation table, Ms. Axelrod was appointed a Judge Pro Tempore (JPT) / Settlement Master, an honor bestowed by the Philadelphia Court of Common Pleas Commerce Court on less than 130 attorneys. In the role, she has assisted parties in settling approximately 85% of the cases that have come before her. This track record holds true even in matters in which the parties were ordered to attend settlement conferences before her, rather than requesting to do so.

Ms. Axelrod also successfully completed the rigorous vetting and training process required to join the elite roster of American Arbitration Association panelists for commercial arbitrations, and regularly serves as a AAA Arbitrator.

She is available to serve as an Arbitrator, Mediator, Discovery Master, and Receiver. She is also specially rated to serve as a AAA Arbitrator in Large, Complex Commercial Disputes.

In these roles, she has presided over a variety of cases including business torts, business litigation including business "divorces", business disputes, commercial leases, construction disputes, strength of concrete disputes, water damage, insurance coverage, contract disputes, corporate veil issues, derivative litigation, fiduciary duty claims, fraud claims, loan disputes, misrepresentation claims, non-compete disputes, noncompete disputes, non-compete disputes, nonsolicitation disputes, non-solicitation disputes, hold harmless disputes, confidentiality agreements, trade secrets, real estate disputes, real estate litigation, title disputes, title litigation, receiverships, shareholder disputes, contract interpretation, disputes concerning master agreements, contract amendments, the present value of money, present value damages, economic damages, accelerator fees, penalties, interest, attorneys' fees, attorney's fees, cancellation fees, audit rights, exclusive agreements, and tender claims in a wide array of industries including aerospace and aviation including in airline matters, charter airline matters, and air charter matters including matters involving the Federal Aviation Regulations (FAR), Federal Aviation Administration regulations (FAA), professional sports teams including the National Football League (NFL), National Basketball Association (NBA), National Basketball League (NBL), Major League Soccer (MLS), National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), March Madness, all in contracts, all-in contracts, ACMI, appointed services, commission fees, flight brokers, brokered flights, Maintenance, Repair, Overhaul (MRO), Maintenance Repair Overhaul, Operations Specifications (Opspecs), commercial airplanes, one off flights, ad hoc flights, live flights, ferry flights, VIP configurations, 737 aircraft, 737-400 aircraft, 737-800 aircraft, Club Charter Services, corporate concierge services, Statements of Work, BlueOne, torque-meter shaft seals, engines, and disputes in the aviation, banking, construction, health care, church, and non-profit industry.

The National Association of Women Lawyers (NAWL) hosted a webinar in which Ms. Axelrod served as a panelist on, "Business Continuity During the #COVID19 Pandemic...and How Alternative Dispute Resolution Can Help." During this panel, Ms. Axelrod discussed what AAA Arbitrators in Commercial Disputes do. She also presented to the Philadelphia Bar Association Women in the Profession Committee on, "Becoming a AAA Arbitrator and a Judge Pro Tempore / Settlement Master."

Ms. Axelrod was also appointed to membership on the Investigative Division of the Commission on Judicial Selection and Retention, on which she led teams investigating those seeking to become judges.

Ms. Axelrod's writing is so strong, two of her briefs have been published. The Superior Court of Pennsylvania, Pennsylvania's primary intermediate appellate court, chose her to appear on television to explain Pennsylvania appellate practice to the public prior to televised oral arguments.

### **Expert Witness Services**

Ms. Axelrod is also available to provide expert witness services in: 1) commercial litigation cases, and 2) matters related to diversity, equity, and inclusion including:

1. The Israel-Hamas War, Islamic terrorism, and protestors' threats to national security;
2. Antisemitism and generational trauma;
3. The disenfranchisement of women and all in historically underrepresented groups;
3. Unconscious and confirmation bias;
4. The profitability of diversity;
5. Tools everyone, and organizations, can use to become diversity champions; and
6. Onboarding men – including white men – as diversity champions, i.e., allyship.

### **Partnerships with Am Law 100 Law Firms**

In select cases, Ms. Axelrod also handles major client counseling matters in partnership with Am Law 100 firms.

## **Educational and Work Background**

Ms. Axelrod received her Bachelor's degree *Cum Laude* in Economics from Brandeis University in 1990 after spending her junior year of college studying at la Universidad Complutense de Madrid (in English, the Complutense University of Madrid). She received her law degree from Temple University in 1993 after having won the 1992 Samuel J. Polsky Moot Court Competition. Upon graduation from Temple Law School, she clerked for the Honorable Sandra Mazer Moss, a distinguished, award winning (and now retired) jurist.

Ms. Axelrod is a past President of the Temple Law Alumni Association, the fourth woman to hold the post in TLAA's nearly one hundred-year history.

Prior to founding The Axelrod Firm, Ms. Axelrod worked in the Commercial Litigation Department of Blank Rome LLP, one of the largest law firms in the country, handling some of the largest and most complex commercial litigation matters. Ms. Axelrod continues to partner with Blank Rome on complex matters.

## **Languages, Licenses & Court Admissions**

Ms. Axelrod is fluent in Spanish. She is licensed to practice law in Pennsylvania and New Jersey, and is admitted to the Supreme Court of the United States, the United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit, the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania, the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, the United States District Court for the Middle District of Pennsylvania, the Supreme Court of New Jersey, and the United States District Court for the District of New Jersey.

## **REPRESENTATIVE MATTERS**

### **A. Receiver, Discovery Master, Mediator, and Arbitrator Services**

In her mediation work, Ms. Axelrod's effective, open approach assists the parties in reaching a resolution in an efficient manner. Among the cases she handled, are the following selected matters:

1. ***Receivership and Mediation Services, Winding Down a Partnership and Resolving All Claims:*** Ms. Axelrod brings all of her skills to bear in her work. The following illustrates how her mediation skills assist even in her receivership work. Ms. Axelrod was appointed to serve as a Receiver in a complex commercial litigation matter, to wind down the assets of a partnership. Prior to her appointment, the parties in this highly contentious action – the partnership's majority and minority partners – had engaged in such litigious battles, they had gone to the Supreme Court of the United States and back and separately, to the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania and back. In fact, over the course of the litigation, three separate Commerce Program judges presided over it. Two retired during it.

It appeared a given, when Ms. Axelrod was appointed Receiver, that the action would take many more years to resolve.

Despite that, Ms. Axelrod worked on getting all the documents she needed from the Defendants to quickly get a neutral valuation of the property. Thereafter, she and the Accountant she hired, spent time answering Plaintiffs' counsel's office's questions about that valuation, and why certain items were not included in it.

Then she carefully and strategically navigated the parties, and property owners who had filed



motions in the case, toward what ultimately became a full, expeditious, and amicable resolution of all claims. During the parties' negotiations, she always listened to the parties' concerns, and always addressed them, making all the calls necessary to reach an agreement over each before moving to the next and ultimately toward the finish line.

In the process, she likely saved the parties many years of litigation, and avoided having to liquidate the major piece of real estate at issue in the matter.

2. ***Receivership Services, in an Action Between Shareholders:*** Ms. Axelrod served as Receiver of a corporation which owned a parking lot, in a multi-party action which involved claims by one of the shareholders that the others were fleecing the corporation.
3. ***Arbitration Services, on a Large, Complex Aviation Dispute Between a Charter Airline Company and its Broker over the Broker's Fees for Bringing Professional Sports Teams and Rock Stars to the Airline as Customers:*** This dispute involved numerous multimillion dollar claims and counterclaims that were litigated over the course of a 7-business days-long arbitration. The matter concerned a lengthy commercial contract that called for the broker's fees to be paid under many different circumstances, each at rates that depended on numerous variables. Each side in the action was represented by a team of lawyers. The matter was highly complex. The panel's 70-page arbitration award, was not appealed.
4. ***Mediation Services, in a Complex Real Estate Matter involving 10 Parties Represented by 6 Law Firms Resulting in a Global Settlement and Counsel Recommending Ms. Axelrod on LinkedIn:*** This dispute involved issues surrounding title insurance, a prior foreclosure action, a mortgage, and alleged negligence. Ms. Axelrod managed to get all the parties to settle the entire matter in a single day. For her Settlement Master services in the complex action, an attorney in the case, Scott Rothman, posted the following recommendation on Ms. Axelrod's LinkedIn profile:

*"Sheryl served as mediator in a complex real estate litigation case, involving ten parties and six law firms. The parties and their respective counsel viewed a resolution as unlikely heading into a mediation session. Sheryl came prepared with a firm grasp of complicated facts and a good understanding of some atypical issues of law. By the end of the day, what seemed impossible became a reality, a settlement was accomplished, and an expensive trial proceeding was averted. I would recommend Sheryl for mediation services for both her knowledge of substantive law and expertise with dispute resolution."*

5. ***Mediation Services, in a Multimillion Dollar Business Litigation "Divorce" Between a Corporation and its Shareholders:*** Ms. Axelrod assisted the parties in reaching an agreement calling for the shareholders' amicable buyout of the corporation.
6. ***Mediation Services, in a Complex Insurance Coverage Claim:*** This matter concerned water damage to a church. The cause of the water intruding into the church, and the timing of the damage, were both at issue, as a result of the insurer's policy language. After Ms. Axelrod assisted the parties in resolving the dispute, Kutak Rock Partner Amy Blumenthal wrote the following recommendation on Ms. Axelrod's LinkedIn profile:

*"Sheryl served as a mediator in a six-figure property damage matter against my insurer client. The parties started out so far apart that we immediately walked in and said 'this will never settle.' However, after less than 4 hours we were done, with both sides being pleased with the result. I'd easily use Sheryl again for another matter."*

7. ***Mediation Services, in a Non-Compete, Non-Disclosure, Non-Solicitation, and Related Business Tort Claims:*** Ms. Axelrod assisted the parties in resolving all of their claims and counterclaims in a consolidated matter brought by a Plaintiff-company against its former employee and his current company (the “Defendants”), for the former employee’s alleged breach of the non-compete, non-disclosure, and non-solicitation agreements he signed with the Plaintiff-company, and related business tort claims against the Defendant-company including for alleged unfair competition, unjust enrichment, civil conspiracy, and accounting. Plaintiff claimed the former employee of Plaintiff converted and used Plaintiff’s trade secrets to divert Plaintiff’s clients and business to Defendants. Plaintiff asserted a claim for individual liability against one of the Defendant-company principals under a Participation Theory. The Defendants asserted a counterclaim for payment of Plaintiff’s commission and claimed Plaintiff violated the Fair Labor Standards Act. The consolidated action also involved choice of law issues and issues regarding the enforceability of various aspects of the parties’ aforementioned agreements.
8. ***Mediation Services, in a Mechanics’ Lien Claim for a Subcontractor’s Work Done on a Large, Well Known Commercial Property in Center City:*** Ms. Axelrod assisted the parties in resolving multiple claims set out in separate lawsuits between a general contractor and the subcontractor that installed flooring and countertops on a high end, high profile piece of commercial real estate in Center City, Philadelphia.
9. ***Discovery Master Services, in a Huge Commercial Tenancy Action:*** Ms. Axelrod served as Discovery Master in an enormous landlord-tenant action involving claims by Plaintiff against multiple named defendants. In the action, the plaintiff asserted it could pierce the corporate veil of the defendants, and the defendants brought multiple counterclaims. This matter involved the review of many motions, and raised numerous complex discovery issues, a number concerning: 1) an individual Plaintiff sought to depose, who allegedly resides overseas and was the claimed principal of the named defendants, 2) confidential bank records, and 3) the scope of legitimate discovery in consideration of the parties’ claims and counterclaims.

## **B. Representation of Clients in Commercial Litigation**

The following selected cases are representative of the variety of matters she has handled:

### **(a) Published Matters**

1. ***Successful Defense of a Multimillion Dollar claim, Published in “Pennsylvania Jury Verdict Review & Analysis”:*** *Visiting Nurse Group, Inc. vs. Gaudite* (PCCP) - Successfully represented Carmelo Gaudite (“Gaudite”), who had owned one-third of the shares of a nursing company, Visiting Nurse Group (“VNG”), in an action brought against him by VNG. Before the lawsuit was filed, Gaudite had leased another nursing company, ACT Home Health Services, Inc. (“ACT”), the nearby building from which it operated. When VNG found out about the lease, VNG purchased Gaudite’s shares in VNG in exchange for him signing a non-compete agreement with it. In the lawsuit, VNG claimed that Gaudite breached his fiduciary duty to it during his term as a VNG shareholder, by leasing ACT its offices. VNG also claimed that Gaudite violated the parties’ non-compete agreement by funneling nurses to transfer their employment from VNG to ACT. Ms. Axelrod represented Gaudite through to

a bench trial before the Honorable Albert W. Sheppard (deceased), winning Gaudite a defense verdict on all claims. The case was published in *Pennsylvania Jury Verdict Review and Analysis*, which covers the largest cases in Pennsylvania. Plaintiff VNG never appealed.

2. ***Successful Defense of an Over Million Dollar Lien Superiority Claim Published in Law360.*** *EagleBank v. BR Professional Sports Group, Inc.* (EDPa): Ms. Axelrod, working with an attorney in Maryland, successfully represented EagleBank in an Eastern District of Pennsylvania action in which BR Professional Sports Group (“BR”) sought to keep \$1.25 million that EagleBank had loaned to it. A more junior lienholder attempted to intervene in the action to obtain the funds. The more junior lienholder was permitted to intervene but after multiple briefs, Ms. Axelrod and Maryland counsel successfully obtained a Court Order entering summary judgment in favor of EagleBank on all of BR’s claims. BR appealed and Ms. Axelrod and Maryland counsel convinced the United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit to affirm the District Court’s ruling. Thirty days after that ruling became a final judgment, BR returned to EagleBank the full \$1.25 million BR had been holding, completing Ms. Axelrod’s client EagleBank’s victory.
3. ***Successful Defense of an Over \$99-Million Claim Published in Law360.*** In *LifeWatch Services, Inc. v. Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association* (EDPa): Ms. Axelrod represented a major health insurer as local counsel in an antitrust action in the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania brought by the manufacturer of a heart monitoring device seeking \$99.5 million dollars. The defense team managed to defeat Plaintiff’s claims through successfully litigating a Motion to Dismiss the action, including in the United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit, which affirmed the dismissal. This resulted in the client-defendant not having to engage in any written discovery or depositions.
4. ***Representation Through to a Favorable Settlement of a Derivative Claim, Published in Law360.*** *In re Universal Health Services Inc., Derivative Litigation* (EDPa) - The Axelrod Firm, by and through Ms. Axelrod, was appointed liaison counsel by the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, to work with court appointed lead counsel in four multimillion-dollar derivative actions. These consolidated cases arose out of a scheme to cause Nominal Defendant Universal Health Services, Inc. (“Universal”) to over-admit patients and then keep them admitted to over-bill Medicare and Medicaid for unwarranted “services.” Universal owns and operates more than 230 behavioral health facilities through which Universal and its affiliates provide psychiatric and behavioral health care to more than 460,000 individuals per year. The individual defendants were Universal’s directors and senior officers. In the derivative suits, Universal alleged that these defendants caused Universal to violate the False Claims Act and to file false financial reports with the Securities and Exchange Commission, thus artificially inflating the price of Universal common stock by concealing the illicit source of a growing portion of Universal’s reported revenues. The team of law firms representing Universal in the derivative litigation, including The Axelrod Firm, obtained a settlement approved by Universal’s shareholders which, among other positive measures for the shareholders, included the creation of a committee focused on regulatory compliance. This was done to “significantly reduce the chances that similar wrongdoing will recur,” as the shareholders wrote in their memorandum filed in support of their motion for preliminary settlement approval.

**(b) Other Matters**

1. ***Representing a Business in a Major Breach of Contract Action:*** Representing an international company in a multimillion-dollar contractual dispute pending in federal court in

New York involving complex issues including regarding claims for willful and threatened material breaches.

2. ***Representing the Pennsylvania Insurance Department in its Largest Ever Health Care Insurance Matter.*** Providing advice and counsel, in partnership with an Am Law 100 law firm, to the Pennsylvania Insurance Department in connection with overseeing that Highmark Inc. (“Highmark”) complies with its obligations under the Order dated October 13, 2013, as amended (the “Order”). The Order authorized Highmark to become affiliated with West Penn Allegheny Health System, Inc (now Allegheny Health Network) and thereby, create an integrated healthcare delivery network (an “IDN”), subject to certain conditions (the “Conditions”). Highmark must comply with the Conditions, which are designed to preserve and promote competition in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and ensure that Highmark’s change of control to an IDN would not violate Section 1402 of the Insurance Holding Companies Act. The Axelrod Firm and its partner law firm assist the Commonwealth in ensuring Highmark’s compliance.
3. ***Successful Defense in a Construction Trial.*** Defended the sellers of a property in a construction action. The buyer claimed the sellers, whom he had hired to perform major renovations on the property, performed the work negligently and defrauded him in its sale. In the Philadelphia Court of Common Pleas Commerce Court litigation, the plaintiff-buyer produced a punch book of over 500 pages of photographs that he testified supported his claims. The matter went to trial and after a jury was selected, the Motion *in Limine* Ms. Axelrod drafted for her clients, the defendant-sellers, was granted, and the plaintiff’s damages’ expert was stricken. Immediately thereafter, the plaintiff voluntarily discontinued the action and never filed suit against the defendant-sellers again.
4. ***Successful Breach of Contract Arbitration*** - Successfully defended an attorney in a breach of contract action. The matter went to trial before an arbitration panel in federal court that could have awarded unlimited damages. The arbitration panel found in favor of Ms. Axelrod’s client, awarding a complete defense verdict.
5. ***Successful Breach of Contract Jury Trial*** - Successfully defended a couple in a breach of contract action. The matter went to a non- jury trial in the Court of Common Pleas of Philadelphia, which found in favor of Ms. Axelrod’s clients, the defendants.

### **C. Aviation**

Ms. Axelrod also has aviation experience in:

- (a) Commercial Aviation Litigation, including for example:
  - 1) between a charter airline and its broker for professional sports team and rock star customers, involving numerous breach of contract claims and counterclaims that were litigated over the course of an arbitration that lasted 7-business days. The matter was so complex, that the Award entered in this case, which disposed of all claims, was 70-pages long. It was never appealed; and
  - 2) breach of contract actions regarding aircraft sales, airplanes, and parts, including aircraft manufacturers and companies that convert aircraft;

(b) Products Liability experience including with passenger bodily injury claims and claims involving component part manufacturers;

(c) AIR21 Litigation,

(d) proceedings over FAA Part 91 certificates, Part 91 aircraft operators, Part 91 operators, FAA Part 121, Part 121 certificates, Part 121 aircraft operators, Part 121 operators, FAA Part 121 certificates, FAR 212, FAA Part 125 certificates, and FAA Part 135 certificates; and

(e) Aviation Claims brought under the Warsaw Convention.

Ms. Axelrod co-authored, "[Mayday, Mayday! Minimizing air carriers' exposure by protecting their whistleblowers – lessons gleaned from AIR21](#)," in the American Bar Association Tort Trial and Insurance Practice Section, Aviation and Space Law.

#### **D. Appeals and Major Brief Writing**

Below are a few of her distinctions in the space:

1. ***Published in Law360.*** *EagleBank v. BR Professional Sports Group, Inc.*, EDPa Civil Action No. 14-5550 – As noted above, Ms. Axelrod, working with an attorney in Maryland, successfully convinced the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania to grant summary judgment to their client in a \$1.25 million case. The intervening lender appealed and Ms. Axelrod and Maryland counsel convinced the United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit to affirm the District Court’s ruling. The case was never further appealed.
2. ***Published in the Aviation Litigation Reporter.*** Wrote two briefs in federal court cases that were published in the *Aviation Litigation Reporter*, including a brief filed in the Supreme Court of the United States in an action brought under the Warsaw Convention, “Brief of Northwest Airlines, Inc. in Opposition to the Petition for a Writ of Certiorari,” *Grimes v. Northwest Airlines, Inc.* Ms. Axelrod successfully defended an airline company in the *Grimes* matter in the United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit and the Supreme Court of the United States, from a claim by a passenger aboard an international flight. The passenger alleged that his refusal to leave a seat to which he was not assigned, and his subsequent arrest and removal from the flight by airport police: (1) caused him to suffer an “accident which caused damage” within the meaning of Article 17 of the Warsaw Convention; and (2) was outside of the limitation of liability provision in Article 25 of the Warsaw Convention. The United States District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania granted summary judgment in favor of the airline on the passenger’s claims. After briefing by Ms. Axelrod, the Third Circuit affirmed. After the Opposition to the Petition for a Writ of Certiorari Ms. Axelrod wrote, the Supreme Court denied certiorari.
3. ***Researched and Drafted Appellate Briefs in Pennsylvania and New Jersey State and Federal Courts.*** Briefs include the appeal brief in a dispute in which \$825 million was at stake.
4. ***Successfully Defended an Aerospace Component Part Manufacturer from Post-Trial Claims.*** This action was tried in the Eastern District of Pennsylvania and litigated through an appeal to the Third Circuit, and involved claims that the component part manufacturer’s seal was defectively designed and caused flammable fluid to reach the engine manifold of a military helicopter, leading to the deaths of all Marines onboard.



5. *Presented the Continuing Legal Education Course, “Successfully Navigating the Appeals Process,” with Former Supreme Court of Pennsylvania Justice Sandra Schultz Newman and Judge Genece E. Brinkley*

Ms. Axelrod is so highly respected as a brief writer that she also spent years volunteering with a top team of talented brief writers on the National Association of Women Lawyers (“NAWL”) Amicus Committee, which reviews requests for participation as amicus curiae in cases of interest to NAWL members, and drafts amicus briefs on NAWL’s behalf.

### **EXPERIENCE RUNNING A BUSINESS**

Owner of The Axelrod Firm since 2007. Experienced in business and project management, payroll systems, profit and loss projections, and other accounting records, time and billing software systems, and other law firm and business management software.

### **TECHNOLOGY PROFICIENCY**

Experienced in using online platforms including Zoom and LoopUp, for hearings and conferences.

Have helped a number of parties, and their counsel, successfully navigate through technical difficulties with online hearings.

Experienced in electronically stored information (ESI) issues, and with cybersecurity agreements, confidentiality agreements, and stipulated protective orders.

### **EQUALITY, DIVERSITY, & INCLUSION LEADERSHIP**

#### **A. Honors**

Ms. Axelrod is an award winning champion and expert, author, and public speaker in the diversity, equity, and inclusion space, and has received numerous awards for her leadership in space including:

1. [Being inducted into The League for Entrepreneurial Women of Temple University Hall of Fame](#);
2. [The NAMWOLF Yolanda Coly Advocacy Award](#). This award is conveyed to an individual for exceptional advocacy on behalf of NAMWOLF member law firms. The individual receiving this award:
  - 1) is a person of influence with wide ranging professional connections such as in, but not limited to, the political sphere, corporate America, and/or the legal profession;
  - 2) who, through stellar advocacy, profoundly advanced NAMWOLF’s mission;
3. Shortlisting for the [Chambers Diversity Shortlist for the Gender Diversity Lawyer of the Year Award](#);
4. [The TLAA Women’s Champion Award](#);
5. The TLAA Distinguished Service Award;
6. A [Diversity Law Institute](#) (“DLI”) Award. The DLI is an international non-profit association of lawyers and law firms committed to diversity in all aspects of the legal profession and justice systems of the United States and Canada. Ms. Axelrod serves as Advisory Board Co-Chair of the DLI and launched the DLI Diversity Symposium in Philadelphia.

## B. Memberships and Community Service

1. Board of Directors, [NAMWOLF](#), the National Association of Minority & Women Owned Law Firms.
2. Advisory Board, the [Diversity Law Institute](#).
3. Advisory Board, [Women Owned Law](#).
4. Advisory Council, the [Gender Wealth Institute](#).
5. Advisory Council, [Women Lawyers On Guard Conversations With Men](#).
6. Past President, [Temple Law Alumni Association](#) (TLAA) from 2012-2013.  
Founded:
  - 1) TLAA Women's Initiative and its annual award, and
  - 2) TLAA Diversity Committee and its annual award.
7. [Philadelphia Bar Association](#):
  - 1) Member, Chancellor's Diversity Advisory Panel (by appointment of the Philadelphia Bar Association Chancellor);
  - 2) Planning Committee Member, 2024 Diversity Symposium;
  - 3) Past member, Women's Initiatives in Law Firms Task Force;
  - 4) Past Co-Chair, Law Practice Management Committee;
  - 5) Past member, [Young Lawyers Division](#). Co-chaired the Michael K. Smith Oratorical Contest.
8. [National Conference of Women's Bar Associations](#) GOOD Guys' programs, past regular keynote speaker and moderator of GOOD Guys panels.
9. [The Barristers' Association of Philadelphia](#), an organization dedicated to addressing the professional needs and development of Black lawyers in Philadelphia, first white member (starting in 2014).
10. Founder, [Fearless Women Network](#), a non-profit dedicated to shattering glass ceilings and obliterating unequal pay.
11. Prior Executive Council member, and Diversity Team of Ambassador, [Pennsylvania Bar Association](#) (PBA) Commission on Women in the Profession (WIP).  
Former Co-Chair, PBA WIP Diversity Committee.
12. Past member, ABA Task Force on Gender Equity (by appointment of the ABA President)
13. Past Fellow, [American Bar Association Diversity Fellows](#).
14. Member, [Forum of Executive Women](#).  
Co-creator, The Forum's Male Champions for Women program.
15. Past supporting member, [DirectWomen](#).
16. Past member, [National Association of Women Lawyers](#) (NAWL).  
Former member, Diversity Committee and Amicus Committee.

Ms. Axelrod has undergone LGBTQI+ ally training, twice.

## C. Volunteerism

The Salvation Army, Holiday Toy Drives (2011-2019).

Tutoring (3 academic years between 1986-1990): Tutored a local African American high school student while on campus at Brandeis University. (Ms. Axelrod spent her junior year abroad.)

Coached high school mock trial teams (1999: Overbrook High School Mock Trial Team (Regional Finalist), 2000: Overbrook High School Mock Trial Team (Regional Champion, State Semifinalist), 2005: Upper Darby High School Mock Trial Team, 2008: Clearview Regional High School Mock Trial Team.

Spearheaded bringing “Philadelphia Reads” to Blank Rome’s Philadelphia Office (in 2000).

#### **D. Authorship**

Ms. Axelrod is recognized as an expert in the equality diversity and inclusion space and is regularly called upon to speak and write articles in the space. See <https://theaxelrodfirm.com/sheryl-l-axelrod/#published-articles> (and click the “+” under “Published Articles”).

#### **E. Speaking Engagements**

Ms. Axelrod has spoken widely across the country in the equality, diversity, and inclusion space. Her public speaking engagements are found on The Axelrod Firm’s website at <https://theaxelrodfirm.com/diversity/> under our Community & Diversity News.

#### **F. Articles about Ms. Axelrod**

The following is a sampling of articles that have been written about Ms. Axelrod:

1. [“Pushing for diversity and inclusion in the legal industry,”](#) profiling Ms. Axelrod in Thomson Reuters' Fearless Persona Campaign. Thomson Reuters launched this national campaign featuring fearless attorneys – General Counsels at the forefront of the largest companies in the country, partners in Am Law 200 and other large law firms, partners in midsize law firms, and owners of small law firms like The Axelrod Firm – who are changing the landscape of the legal industry. Ms. Axelrod was featured for her work in the equality, diversity, and inclusion space. She was asked to write about what she does, why she does it, and the tools she created to minimize bias against women and minorities;
2. [“A Woman Worth Watching,”](#) which appeared in *Profiles In Diversity Journal*. Being profiled in this magazine is a significant honor for those in the diversity space;
3. [“Video highlights: Expert makes business case for diverse workplace during Midyear Meeting 2016,”](#) published by The American Bar Association (ABA), discusses Ms. Axelrod’s speech on the profitability of diversity that she presented to the ABA;
4. [“Member Spotlight – Sheryl L. Axelrod,”](#) published by the ABA when Ms. Axelrod served as an American Bar Association Diversity Fellow;
5. [“Law Firm Diversity Professionals Roundtable,”](#) published by *Insight into Diversity*, in which a panel of three diversity professionals were interviewed in total, including Ms. Axelrod;
6. [“A Firm of Her Own,”](#) an interview of Ms. Axelrod by Diana Konate published by MS. JD;
7. [Female Powerbrokers,](#) published by *Law360*.

You can view these pieces at <https://theaxelrodfirm.com/sheryl-l-axelrod/#articles-published-about-interviews-of-ms-axelrod> by clicking the “+” under “articles published about / interviews of Ms. Axelrod.”

#### **G. Articles About The Axelrod Firm**

The Axelrod Firm’s memberships:

1. Women Lawyers on Guard Conversations with Men Advisory Organization, and
2. Law Firm Antiracism Alliance member.

The Axelrod Firm's sponsorships:

1. The Barristers: The Axelrod Firm has sponsored The Barristers' Turkey Drive, every year from 2014 to the present. Ms. Axelrod has also attended every Barristers' Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Breakfast from 2014 to the present. In 2022, The Axelrod Firm also sponsored The Barristers' Scholarship Gala;
2. The Hispanic Bar Association;
3. The National Asian-Pacific American Bar Association;
4. The Brandeis Law Society.
5. The Temple Law Alumni Association.
6. The Salvation Army's Annual Luncheon.

*THE AXELROD FIRM, PC*  
Alternative Dispute Resolution Services



**DEBORA A. O'NEILL** is a Senior Attorney in The Axelrod Firm's Philadelphia, Pennsylvania office where she handles complex commercial litigation, employment litigation and counseling, and product liability litigation matters on behalf of organizations (companies and governmental bodies) in state and federal courts. She has over twenty-five years of extensive litigation and trial experience in the prosecution and defense of complex commercial and tort litigation in a wide variety of cases involving multiple parties and vigorously contested expert issues.

Ms. O'Neill's commercial litigation experience includes cases involving claims for interference with contractual relations, fraud, unfair competition, misappropriation of customers, assets, intellectual property, and trademark and copyright infringement, including claims in partnership and minority shareholder disputes and business torts. She has handled multiple requests for injunctive relief and temporary restraining orders requiring fast-paced litigation on a compressed schedule in both state and federal court. Her commercial litigation experience spans cases involving a variety of business problems including contract and sales actions, construction and building disputes, collection of receivables matters, and Dragonetti claims.

Ms. O'Neill also brings to the firm extensive experience in both the prosecution and defense of class actions involving contracts, consumer fraud, consumer products, credit reporting, and securities.

Her employment litigation experience includes providing employment advice and counseling to both corporate clients and employees in discrimination matters, whistleblower claims, employment separation matters, and restrictive covenants involving trade secrets and non-competition agreements. She has defended class actions involving wage and hour claims under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and racial discrimination claims under Title VII. Her experience includes the litigation of class age discrimination and ERISA claims arising out of voluntary separation plans and reductions in force as well as class claims to remedy construction defects in residential developments.

Ms. O'Neill also has very substantial experience in the litigation of product liability claims in state and federal court. She has prosecuted serious and life altering injury and wrongful death cases resulting from use of household products, industrial machinery, athletic equipment, pharmaceutical drugs, dietary supplements, and over the counter products. Her litigation experience involves working with experts in several technical, medical, and financial specialties. Early in her career, Ms. O'Neill was involved with the defense of libel claims on behalf of media defendants and in the representation of reporters in Philadelphia.

Ms. O'Neill is admitted to the Bars of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania and New Jersey, the United States District Courts for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, the District of New Jersey, and the United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit. She has received Martindale-Hubbell's AV Preeminent rating, the highest rating that can be given to an attorney. She obtained her J.D. from Villanova University School of Law in 1981. She attended Penn State University, where she majored in Architecture, receiving her Bachelors of Science degree in 1978. Ms. O'Neill formerly practiced with the firm of Meyerson & O'Neill in Philadelphia for over twenty years.

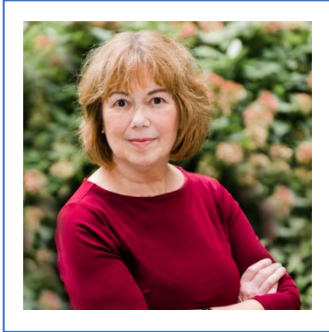


*THE AXELROD FIRM, PC*  
**Alternative Dispute Resolution Services**

**SUPPORT PROFESSIONAL**

**CINDY GANA**  
**Senior Paralegal**

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**CINDY GANA** is a Senior Paralegal. Cindy assisted and worked closely with attorneys for many years in large Philadelphia law firms including in defense litigation and business law in federal and state court litigation. Cindy supports The Axelrod Firm in litigation matters and in its marketing and community engagement efforts. Cindy has a 40-year-old son. She believes equity, equality, diversity and inclusion are “the basis of freedom of any society” as evidenced by the many nations that have adopted the French motto of “liberté, égalité, fraternité”.