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**Education**

- Dartmouth College, A.B.
- George Washington University Law School, J.D.

**Bar Admissions**

- California

**Practice Areas**

- Civil Litigation
- Employment Discrimination
- Entertainment
- Defamation
- First Amendment rights
- Criminal Defense
- Sexual Assault / Battery

**Trent Copeland** is a Partner at Ellis George LLP. He began his career at a major multinational law firm and then as a solo practitioner specializing in both criminal and civil litigation. He is a nationally recognized attorney and has successfully defended hundreds of serious high stakes civil and criminal matters including several capital offenses. He is regarded as a go-to lawyer for high-profile matters, particularly where legal acumen, courtroom competence and intense media interest intertwine.

Trent is the rare trial attorney who practices adeptly in both civil and criminal litigation. Among others, his list of clients have included prominent medical professionals such as Dr. Gordon Goei who faced criminal prosecution in a high-profile case related to his medical practice but was proven innocent and publicly vindicated following Trent's successful representation. Trent also successfully represented a Muslim college professor who had been wrongfully targeted by the FBI under one of the first uses of the Patriot Act against a U.S. citizen engaging in protected speech. After numerous proffers and an oral presentation by Trent, the Government withdrew its case against her and she was restored to her teaching position. Trent has also represented and provided legal counsel to numerous celebrities, including Jean Claude Van Damme, Matt LeBlanc, Tracey Edmonds, Shannen Doherty, TMZ Co-founder Jim Paratore and numerous other entertainment professionals. Recently, Trent also successfully handled a major dispute directly involving an international music star where he negotiated a substantial six-figure settlement of the claim.

With his colleague, Eric George, Trent took over the high-profile representation of Gary Franklin, who had been victimized by the criminal conduct of his former attorney, Michael Avenatti. Trent and Eric's representation of Mr. Franklin includes all matters associated with his civil interests in his well-documented role in the much-publicized NCAA basketball recruiting scandal.

Trent holds the distinction of being CBS News' first African-American national on-camera legal news analyst where he served in that capacity for eight years. In his role as CBS News on-camera legal news analyst, he provided expert legal analysis on dozens of legal cases, including the Scott Peterson murder trial, the Michael Jackson molestation trial and the Kobe Bryant sexual assault hearings. Trent has also provided legal news analysis for CNN, Fox News and MSNBC. Trent is currently an on-air legal analyst for legendary broadcaster Larry King's digital program Larry King Now where he provides both legal and political commentary on cases and issues of national and political interest. Larry King has publicly called Trent "one of the best attorneys and communicators in the country." Trent was also featured on Dr. Drew's national TV show as a "Life Changer" for his high-profile and successful work in the legal industry. Trent has been interviewed on-camera by Katie Couric, Dan Rather and CNN's Don Lemon, among others. He has been quoted in *People Magazine*, *NY Daily News*, and *US Magazine*.

Trent is featured regularly as one of “California’s Top 100 Lawyers” by the national publication, *Best Attorneys of America*, and he has been regularly selected to the Southern California Super Lawyers list. Trent has spoken at various law enforcement conferences and symposiums, including lecturing for the Beverly Hills Police Department on effective courtroom presentations. Trent was also a keynote speaker at the inaugural opening of the Tom Mesereau Free Legal Clinic. Trent is a frequent speaker on high-profile litigation and the representation of “celebrity” clients.

Additionally, Trent was recently recognized in *Lawdragon’s* ["500 Leading Litigators in America"](#) list (October 2022) and [profiled](#) by *Lawdragon* (April 2021). He has also been repeatedly recognized by *Best Attorneys of America*.

## Recent Representations

- Represents a leading global investment management firm as co-lead defense counsel in several multimillion dollar employment discrimination claims brought by C-suite level employees.
- Led the representation of a high-profile news anchor in obtaining a confidential multi-million dollar resolution of claims of discrimination against a major television network.
- Represented members of the family of the late Senator Robert F. Kennedy as Amicus Counsel in opposing the parole of assassin, Sirhan Sirhan.
- Represented a student in connection with the highly publicized college admissions cheating scandal.
- Led representation of a member of President’s Coronavirus Task Force in connection with First Amendment issues related to his service as a Special Advisor to the President.
- Represented two prominent African-American journalists against major TV network in claims related to employment discrimination.
- Represented a Fox Television executive in an indictment filed by the United States Attorney’s Office, Central District, into potential violations of the federal Anti-Kickback Statute. The case resolved with probation.
- Successfully represented an individual falsely accused of attempted murder in a high-profile case in San Bernardino, negotiating a dismissal of all charges on the eve of preliminary hearing. The case garnered local media coverage.
- Represented an attorney being investigated for potential participation in a major narcotics distribution ring. The investigation was closed by the Department of Justice with no charges being brought against the attorney.