

## Nicole Nehama Auerbach

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### Education

- J.D., *with honors* - DePaul College of Law - 1993
- Articles Editor - *DePaul Law Review* - 1992-1993
- Merit Scholar - Illinois Women's Bar Foundation - 1993
- B.A., Journalism - University of Wisconsin, Madison - 1988

### Affiliations / Awards

- "40 Illinois Attorneys Under Forty To Watch," *Law Bulletin Publishing Company* - 2005
- *Illinois Super Lawyer* - 2007, 2008 and 2009
- "100 Top Women Attorneys In Chicago" - [www.thelegalbalance.com](http://www.thelegalbalance.com)
- Founder and President - Coalition of Women's Initiatives In Law Firms—2008, 2009 ([www.thewomenscoalition.com](http://www.thewomenscoalition.com))
- Co-Founder, Co-Chair - Women's Leadership Forum - Katten Muchin Rosenman - 2004 – 2008
- Member - Chicago Finance Exchange
- Member - Step Up Women's Network
- Member - Leadership Council, National Immigrant Justice Center
- Member - American Bar Association's Women Rainmakers Section
- Member - Federal Trial Bar
- Admitted to: U.S. Courts of Appeal for the 7th and 11th Circuits; U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois; State of Illinois

After nearly 15 years of practice at Katten Muchin Rosenman, I resigned my partnership to help form the innovative litigation firm, Valorem Law Group ([www.valoremlaw.com](http://www.valoremlaw.com)). Why did I risk my kids' college educations for this endeavor? Because it is a firm that embodies all that I hold sacred and feel passionate about when it comes to the practice of law:

1. The client comes first and all strategic moves and decisions must be driven to achieve the ultimate goals of the client.
2. The whole is greater than the sum of its parts; collective thought, unbridled collaboration and team efforts get you far further than individual efforts ever could.
3. The billable hour is an antiquated, inefficient and potentially unethical measure of value provided. Clients deserve to have other options available to them so that they can choose what suits their needs on a case-by-case basis.

At Valorem, I handle a wide variety of complex commercial litigation matters in federal and state courts around the country. I also represent clients in arbitrations, mediations, appellate work and provide "second opinions" to clients seeking an objective opinion in the face of important ongoing litigation. I have been honored by my peers on several occasions. In 2005, I was named one of "Forty Illinois Attorneys Under 40 to Watch" by the Law Bulletin Publishing Company and have been named an Illinois SuperLawyer for 2007, 2008 and 2009.



### Representative Clients:

Miller Brewing Company  
The Chicago Bulls  
Cole Taylor Bank  
The Northern Trust Company  
Orbitz Worldwide  
Kayak.com  
Boston Medical School  
Mercantile Capital Partners  
RFS Surgical Systems  
Scholarships.com  
Bevinco American Bar Systems  
Ingersoll-Rand Company  
United Laboratories  
**Valorem Law Group LLC**  
**35 E. Wacker Drive, 29th Floor**  
**Chicago, Illinois 60601**

**Speaking, Writing & Press**

- “Alternative Fee Arrangements” - ARK Group, Managing Partner Magazine Conference, San Francisco (November 2009)
- “ACC Value Challenge” webinar - Managing Partner Forum (September 2009)
- “Bucking the Trend: Tales of Successful Firms in Turbulent Times” - ABA Annual Meeting, Chicago (August 2009)
- Successful Collaborations—National Coalition of Women’s Bar Associations, Chicago (August 2009)
- Co-Author, “Client Loyalty as a By-Product of Firm Leadership” - RainToday.com - (August 2009)
- Featured in “Superwomen JDs and What You Can Learn From Them” *Ms. JD* (March 2009)
- Affinity Groups and Diversity Initiatives - Marketing Partner Forum - Dana Point, CA (January 2009)
- Starting Your Own Law Firm - Chicago Bar Association's - Chicago, IL (October 2008)
- "Effective Communication for Attorneys: Having the Hard Conversations With Clients" - LexisNexis (May 2008)
- Co-Chair, Mealey's LexisNexis - Women in the Legal Profession Summit - Chicago (April 2008)
- A Litigator's Perspective to Drafting Contracts -Illinois State Bar Association - Chicago (May 2007)

While skilled in all facets of litigation, including trial, I believe two things set me apart — my creativity and my love for the strategic planning of cases — in particular, using litigation tools to provide the right leverage at the right time to obtain a favorable settlement or outcome. The combination of the two is, for me, litigation at its best.

In my opinion, there is no dispute that cannot be successfully resolved as long as the parties are open to creative resolution rather than the conventional “way-we-have-always-done-it-before” type of approach. I have fashioned a number of resolutions, including many with no monetary payments from my (defendant) clients, to ones where we were on the receiving end of settlements of more than \$20 million, simply because the clients were amenable to out-of-the-box thinking. Implementing strategic moves such as producing key documents early, foregoing entirely certain motions or taking certain depositions first to best posture a case to highlight the other side’s weaknesses is key to getting both parties to a point where successful resolution is the most likely.

In addition to my substantive work, I am committed to working on issues that impact women attorneys. In 2004, I co-founded Katten’s Women’s Leadership Forum and in 2008, founded the “*Coalition of Women’s Initiatives in Law Firms*,” an organization made up of member firms in the Chicago area who are committed to working collectively to facilitate the advancement of women in law firms. I am currently serving as the President of the Coalition, the only organization of its type in the country. I am also a member of the Federal Trial Bar and I sit on the Leadership Council of the National Immigration Justice Center. In addition, I devote time to *pro bono* work, helping unaccompanied children seeking asylum navigate the U.S. immigrant justice system.

Married and the mother of three boys, I have ample opportunities to hone my negotiation skills at home.