GREENE ESPEL PLLP

X. Kevin Zhao Attorney



Never stop learning. That's what I love most about being a lawyer.

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OVERVIEW

Kevin brings a strategic eye to complex litigation and arbitration. His talent for identifying and articulating the most critical issues without losing important nuances makes him an effective advocate for clients at all stages of litigation—from initial case assessment to post-trial appeals. Kevin is currently coordinating legal strategy in federal and state courts across the country. He has authored winning briefs and argued successful dispositive and non-dispositive motions for clients in significant lawsuits and arbitrations.

Kevin also has substantial experience in international litigation and cross-border disputes. Leveraging his fluency in Mandarin, Kevin (赵晓川) has prepared, defended, and taken numerous depositions of Chinese-speaking witnesses in China and Hong Kong. And Kevin has worked with (and against) experts in Chinese law and regulatory compliance.

In addition to litigation, Kevin conducts internal investigations on behalf of clients. Time and time again, clients turn to Kevin to understand and then help solve their most challenging problems.

EDUCATION

- J.D., Harvard Law School, *magna cum laude*
- B.A., University of Minnesota, Political Science and Global Studies, *magna cum laude*, Phi Beta Kappa

EXPERIENCE

- U.S. District Court for the District of Minnesota, The Honorable Patrick J. Schiltz, Law Clerk
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit, The Honorable James B. Loken, Law Clerk
- Faegre & Benson LLP, Associate

ADMISSIONS

- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit
- U.S. District Court for the District of Minnesota
- State Bar of Minnesota

AFFILIATIONS

- Minnesota State Bar Association
- Minnesota Asian Pacific American Bar Association

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- Twin Cities Diversity in Practice

LANGUAGES

- Mandarin (fluent-speaking)

RECOGNITION

- Appointed to Judicial Selection Committee for Federal District Court Vacancy (2024)
- 2023 Attorney of the Year, *Minnesota Lawyer*
- Listed in *Chambers USA*, *America's Leading Lawyers for Business-The Client's Guide* (2024-2026)
- Appointed to the Commission on Judicial Selection, At Large Member (2023)
- 2021 Attorney of the Year, *Minnesota Lawyer*
- Selected to Minnesota Super Lawyers list (2023-2026)
- Selected to Minnesota Rising Stars list, Minnesota Super Lawyers (2019-2022)
- Recognized as Minnesota State Bar Association North Star Lawyer for pro bono service (2014-2019, 2021)
- Recognized as Up and Coming Attorney, *Minnesota Lawyer* (2018)
- Appointed to the Merit Selection Panel by Chief Judge John R. Tunheim to advise the U.S. District Court of the District of Minnesota on the selection of a new U.S. Magistrate Judge (February, 2018)
- Graduate Fellow for Constitutional Law and Corporations, Harvard Law School

COMMUNITY

- Appointed to Judicial Selection Committee for Federal District Court Vacancy (2024)
- Appointed to the Commission on Judicial Selection (2023)
- Appointed to the Magistrate Judge Merit Selection Panel (2018)
- American Constitution Society
- The Advocates for Human Rights, Board of Directors, Volunteer Attorney

Having emigrated to the United States as a small child, Kevin identifies personally with the immigrant experience. He maintains an active pro bono practice, working closely with The Advocates for Human Rights to help asylum seekers escape persecution and reunite with their families.

NEWS & UPDATES

- **July 15, 2026** Greene Espel Attorneys Recognized on the 2026 Minnesota Super Lawyers and Rising Stars Lists
- **June 4, 2026** Chambers USA Recognizes Greene Espel for Commercial Litigation and Labor & Employment in Minnesota; Jeanette Bazis, Sybil Dunlop, Jenny Gassman-Pines, Kate Swenson, and X. Kevin Zhao Ranked Lawyers
- **May 19, 2026** Minnesota Lawyer Recognizes Jeanette Bazis, Sybil Dunlop, Jenny Gassman-Pines, Mark Johnson, and X. Kevin Zhao on the Minnesota Legal 250
- **July 15, 2025** Greene Espel Attorneys Recognized on the 2025 Minnesota Super Lawyers and Rising Stars Lists
- **June 6, 2025** Chambers USA Recognizes Greene Espel for Litigation and Labor & Employment in Minnesota; Jeanette Bazis, Sybil Dunlop, Jenny Gassman-Pines, Surya Saxena, Kate Swenson, and X. Kevin Zhao Ranked Lawyers
- **July 15, 2024** Greene Espel Attorneys Recognized on the 2024 Minnesota Super Lawyers and Rising Stars Lists
- **June 6, 2024** *Chambers USA* Recognizes Greene Espel for Litigation in Minnesota; Jeanette Bazis, Sybil Dunlop, Surya Saxena, Kate Swenson, and X. Kevin Zhao Named Notable Practitioners
- **February 2, 2024** X. Kevin Zhao Appointed to Judicial Selection Committee for Federal District Court Vacancy by Senators Klobuchar and Smith
- **January 10, 2024** Cargill and Greene Espel Attorneys Recognized by *Minnesota Lawyer* as 2023 Attorneys of the Year
- **July 18, 2023** *16 Greene Espel Attorneys Recognized on the Minnesota Super Lawyers and Rising Stars Lists*
- **January 10, 2023** X. Kevin Zhao Appointed to the Commission on Judicial Selection

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- **July 18, 2022** 16 Greene Espel Attorneys Recognized on the Minnesota Super Lawyers and Rising Stars Lists
- **April 13, 2022** Client Win: Judge Grants Complete Dismissal for Greene Espel Client in Class Action Accountant Liability Case
- **December 21, 2021** 3M and Greene Espel Attorneys Recognized by *Minnesota Lawyer* as 2021 Attorney of the Year Honorees
- **July 21, 2021** Award: Super Lawyers Recognizes 13 Greene Espel Attorneys on the 2021 Minnesota Super Lawyers and Rising Stars Lists
- **July 9, 2021** Kevin Zhao Elected to the Board of Directors for The Advocates for Human Rights
- **June 11, 2021** Client Win: Over One Million Suspected Counterfeit N95 Masks Confiscated by U.S. Marshals
- **June 3, 2021** Pro Bono Victory: Greene Espel Helps Secure Asylum for Pro Bono Client through The Advocates for Human Rights
- **July 20, 2020** Award: Super Lawyers Recognizes 20 Greene Espel Attorneys
- **June 10, 2020** Award: 13 Greene Espel Attorneys Named North Star Lawyers for Pro Bono Service
- **August 6, 2019** Case Analysis: Minnesota Supreme Court upholds the exercise of specific personal jurisdiction over Ford arising out of an auto accident in Minnesota.
- **July 8, 2019** 2019 Super Lawyers and Rising Stars Lists Include 18 Greene Espel Attorneys
- **June 10, 2019** Eight Greene Espel Attorneys Named North Star Lawyers for Pro Bono Service
- **June 21, 2018** Kate Swenson and Kevin Zhao Named Up and Coming Lawyers by Minnesota Lawyer
- **June 19, 2018** Nine Greene Espel Attorneys Named North Star Lawyers for Pro Bono Service
- **May 7, 2018** 2018 Business Law Institute Speakers Include Jenny Gassman-Pines, Faris Rashid, and Kevin Zhao
- **February 21, 2018** Kevin Zhao Appointed to the Magistrate Judge Merit Selection Panel
- **June 9, 2017** Federal Court Upholds $11M Jury Award Against Toyota
- **May 18, 2017** Procaccini and Zhao Speak at 2017 International Business Law Institute
- **May 18, 2017** Six Greene Espel Attorneys Named North Star Lawyers for Pro Bono Service
- **April 20, 2017** Faris Rashid and X. Kevin Zhao to present in the Plenary Session of The 2017 Business Law Institute
- **April 12, 2017** Pro Bono Victory: Greene Espel helps client reunite with her family after five-year separation
- **May 30, 2016** Twin Cities Diversity In Practice Features X. Kevin Zhao
- **May 8, 2016** Seven Greene Espel Attorneys named North Star Lawyers for pro bono services in 2015
- **June 18, 2015** Federal judge affirms $11 million verdict for Greene Espel client
- **June 12, 2015** Seven Greene Espel attorneys named North Star Lawyers for pro bono service
- **February 4, 2015** Zhao serves as co-counsel on team that wins $10.94 million verdict
- **November 12, 2014** Kubicz Hall chairs panel discussion at Sedona All Voices Conference

EVENTS & PRESENTATIONS

- **May 20, 2026** "Issues in Antitrust Class Certification CLE," Antitrust Law Section, Minnesota State Bar Association
- **May 6, 2024** Faris Rashid and X. Kevin Zhao Present at Minnesota CLE's 2024 Business Law Institute
- **February 16, 2022** Course Co-Chair, *50+ Strategies and Tips for Civil Litigators*, Minnesota CLE
- **February 20, 2020** *2020 Business Law Update*, 2020 Business Law Institute, Minnesota CLE
- **May 6, 2019** *2019 Business Law Update*, 2019 Business Law Institute, Minnesota CLE
- **June 5, 2018** Kevin Zhao to Speak at Corporate Law Dept Inclusion and Diversity Initiatives Luncheon
- **June 1, 2018** *Corporate Law Dept Inclusion and Diversity Initiatives – Attracting and Retaining In-House Lawyers and Outside Counsel*, Minnesota State Bar Association
- **May 1, 2018** *2018 Minnesota Business Update: Caselaw and Legislative Developments*, 2018 Business Law Institute
- **May 1, 2017** *Developments in International Law Practice Under the New Administration - Trade, Tax, Cyber Security, Anti-Corruption, and Immigration*, 2017 International Business Law Institute, Minnesota CLE and the MSBA International Business Law Section
- **May 1, 2017** *Minnesota Business Law: Cases You Need to Know About*, 2017 Business Law Institute, Minnesota CLE

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ARTICLES & PUBLICATIONS

- **April 22, 2020** Author, *The Eighth Circuit Applies the 'Effects Test' for Personal Jurisdiction in a Pair of Recent Decisions*, Law.com
- **April 22, 2020** The Eighth Circuit Applies the 'Effects Test' for Personal Jurisdiction in a Pair of Recent Decisions
- **June 1, 2011** Co-Author of "The Criminalization of Immigration and the International Norm of Non-Discrimination: Deportation and Detention in U.S. Immigration Law," Journal of Law and Inequality, Volume 29, No. 2.

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