

MVP: Crowell & Moring's David Chung

By Juan-Carlos Rodriguez

Law360 (December 1, 2025, 4:04 PM EST) -- Crowell & Moring LLP partner David Chung spent the last year racking up various accomplishments, including successfully arguing federal appeals cases 12 days apart on opposite coasts and supporting the winning side of a U.S. Supreme Court case, earning him a spot among the 2025 Law360 Environmental MVPs.

His biggest accomplishment:

Chung — who serves as the co-chair of Crowell & Moring's environmental group, co-chairs the firm's lawyer development committee and is a member of its talent development committee — argued cases at the D.C. Circuit and the Ninth Circuit last September only 12 days apart.

In the Ninth Circuit case, Chung represented agricultural groups, including the National Pork Producers Council, that objected to environmental groups' effort to force the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to create new, stronger Clean Water Act regulations for large animal feeding facilities.

And in the D.C. Circuit case, Chung represented the American Chemistry Council and American Fuel & Petrochemical Manufacturers, which challenged an EPA rule that established regulations for confidential business information claims under the Toxic Substances Control Act.

In both cases, his clients were successful, but Chung said the effort really challenged him.

"It was exciting, but very challenging, to have to immerse myself in one case — dig really deeply, present argument — and then immediately shut off the switch, pivot over to digging really deeply into a different case and argue that," he said. "And this is on top of juggling the ordinary press of business and a variety of case deadlines and other matters."

His proudest moment:

Chung said the two appellate court victories gave him a sense of pride for a few reasons.



"People tend to remember the victories and not the losses," he said. "It's always good, when I'm interfacing with either those clients or other clients or my management board, to be able to point to something that I was able to accomplish."

Chung said he always tries to keep in mind that his clients that are engaging in big legal fights are investing significant resources into litigation, and that they don't necessarily want to be fighting in court.

"So to make an investment and not have it pay off can be frustrating, to say the least," he said.

In the Toxic Substances Control Act case, for example, Chung said the issue was the protection of highly coveted, proprietary, confidential business information, which can be multimillion-dollar investments to bring a specific chemical to the market.

"To be able to stand up on behalf of industry and protect those important investments and be able to tell them that their IP is secure is pretty powerful stuff," he said.

His advice for younger attorneys:

Chung, as a member of Crowell & Moring's lawyer development committee, said his first piece of advice is, "Don't be afraid to ask for help."

"All too often I see junior attorneys who are scared to ask questions," he said. "Either they don't want to be perceived as unknowledgeable, or they don't want to be perceived as taking too long to climb the learning curve. And I've seen too many times that's when things go off the rails."

The consequences for remaining silent can cascade from taking longer to answer necessary questions to blowing deadlines or the budget for a client, he said. Or a younger attorney might even end up answering the wrong question entirely.

"We'd all be hard-pressed to find a successful lawyer that got to where he or she is without anybody's help," Chung said. "Everyone in this profession benefits from mentors giving us practice pointers, sharing best practices, and guiding us on how to navigate difficult relationships or manage client expectations, whether that's external clients or internal clients."

And along the same lines, he said younger lawyers shouldn't refrain from speaking up and even disagreeing in intimidating environments.

"The strongest young lawyers that I've worked with are the ones who think very critically," Chung said. "They pressure-test arguments, and weigh the risks and benefits of taking certain positions."

Other notable cases he was involved in:

Besides the Ninth Circuit and D.C. Circuit cases, Chung represented public wastewater and stormwater agencies and municipalities that filed an amicus brief in support of San Francisco in the city's winning battle to invalidate portions of a federal sewer and wastewater system permit.

The ruling established that the Clean Water Act does not support some nonquantifiable water quality standards that the EPA imposed in the permit.

And Chung represented CropLife America, a pesticide industry advocacy group, in a legal battle between

farmworker and environmental health groups and the EPA over the agency's alleged inaction on the Endocrine-Disruptor Screening Program, meant to consider how pesticide chemicals may harm people's hormone systems.

CropLife America intervened in the case to protect its members' interests, and Chung helped it negotiate the industrywide settlement.

--As told to Juan-Carlos Rodriguez. Editing by Adam LoBelia.

Law360's MVPs are attorneys who have distinguished themselves from their peers over the past year through high-stakes litigation, record-breaking deals and complex global matters. A team of Law360 editors selected the 2025 MVP winners after reviewing nearly 900 submissions.

All Content © 2003-2025, Portfolio Media, Inc.