HALL BOOTH SMITH, P.C.



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Partner

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BIOGRAPHY | CREDENTIALS | MEMBERSHIPS | RECOGNITION | PRESENTATIONS | PUBLICATIONS | IN THE PRESS

Biography

George Ernst is a Partner in our Little Rock office whose practice specializes in immigration, international business, and labor and employment matters. Also proficient in German, he has over a decade of experience representing multi-national corporations across various industries.

His practice focuses on advising clients in highly complex matters relating to the employment of foreign nationals under the EB-5 program for international investors, EB-1 and EB-2 visas for employment-based immigration, national interest waivers, E-2 treaty investor visas, and both H-1b and O-1 temporary work visas for STEM professionals, specialty occupations, and individuals of extraordinary ability.

More +
Because of the nature of immigration representation, George is able to represent clients on issues pertaining to U.S. immigration laws and procedures throughout the United States and abroad, without geographic limitation.

Prior to joining HBS, George served as a director with a local law

Services

Immigration

International Business

Labor & Employment



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firm where he gained experience in business immigration matters and supported the firm's employment defense practice group, specifically related to assisting employers in government-initiated I-9 audits and charges. He also frequently writes and lectures on matters relation to immigration and employment law.

George earned his Juris Doctor from the University of Pittsburgh where he served as the Executive Editor for the *Journal of Technology Law and Policy*. George went on to receive his Master of Laws at the Humboldt University of Berlin. He also earned his Bachelor of Arts, with honors, in German and Philosophy at the University of Kansas.

Credentials

Admitted

State Courts:

- Arkansas
- Pennsylvania

U.S. District Courts:

- U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Arkansas
- U.S. District Court for the Western District of Arkansas

Education

- J.D., University of Pittsburgh
- LL.M., Humboldt University of Berlin
- B.A., with honors, German, University of Kansas
- B.A., with honors, Philosophy, University of Kansas

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Memberships

- American Bar Association
- American Immigration Lawyers Association
- Friends of KLRE/KUAR, Board of Directors
- Jewish Federation of Arkansas, Board of Directors

Recognition

- *The Best Lawyers in America®*, Immigration Law, Best Lawyers®, 2023-2026
- 100 Leading Immigration Lawyers, Lawdragon, 2023-2024
    - Awarded in: Immigration, International Business
- Mid-South Rising Star, Super Lawyers®, 2019-2020

Presentations

- **Hiring Foreign National Workers & Immigration Primer**
  University of Arizona Little Rock's Talk to an Attorney Series; October 4, 2023
- **An Afternoon in HR**
  HBS Helping Businesses Succeed Series; September 21, 2023
- **What Every Employer Needs to Know About the Impact of Recent NLRB Rulings and the Challenges Surrounding Immigration Compliance**
  Leading Age 2023 Annual Meeting + EXPO; June 22, 2023

Publications

- **Considering H-1B Sponsorship In 2024? Here's What Employers Need To Know**
  HR Legal & Compliance Excellence; December 29, 2023

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- **New USCIS Guidance for O-1B Visas Has Implications for TV, Movie Industries**
  The Legal Intelligencer; August 2, 2023
- **U.S. Immigration: Navigating the Maze of H-1B Visa Program in 2023**
  HR Legal & Compliance Excellence; February 28, 2023

In the Press

FY 2027 H-1B Cap Initial Registration Period Opens on March 4

February 3, 2026

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (https://www.uscis.gov/) has announced that the initial registration period for the FY 2027 H-1B cap will open at noon Eastern on March 4, 2026, and will close at noon Eastern on March 19, 2026.

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58 HBS Attorneys Recognized as

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The Best Lawyers in America® Award Recipients

August 16, 2024

Hall Booth Smith, P.C. is pleased to announce that 58 lawyers have been included in the 2025 edition of The Best Lawyers in America®

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2024 Lawdragon 100 Leading Immigration Lawyers Honors HBS Little Rock Partner

May 17, 2024

HBS Little Rock Partner George Ernst was recognized for his work in immigration & international business matters in the 2024 Lawdragon 100 Leading Immigrant Lawyers list.

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HR Legal & Compliance Excellence: George Ernst on 2024 H-1B Sponsorship Tips for Employers

January 5, 2024

In an article published on December 29, 2023, for HR.com's HR Legal & Compliance Excellence magazine, Little Rock Partner George Ernst discusses the challenges associated with the H-1B visa program, including restrictions of new visas and the process of sponsoring foreign nationals

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55 Hall Booth Smith Lawyers Recognized as 2024 Best Lawyers®

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Award Recipients

August 21, 2023

We're pleased to announce that 55 lawyers have been included in the 2024 edition of The Best Lawyers in America®.

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The Legal Intelligencer: George Ernst on USCIS Visa Guidance Implications for TV, Movie Industries

August 7, 2023

In an article published on August 2, 2023, in The Legal Intelligencer, Little Rock Partner George Ernst discusses how USCIS guidance affects foreign workers in the the television and movie industries. "The O-1B artist and O-1B MPTV distinction is important because the evidence needed for approval will vary depending on which petition

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a foreign national

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Part B News: George Ernst on How Foreign Doctors Can Fill Hiring Gaps & Potential Difficulties

July 26, 2023

In an article published on July 10, 2023, in Part B News, Little Rock Partner George Ernst discusses how foreign doctors can help fill gaps in hiring through different visa categories but also highlights the difficulties faced. “There’s no limit on the number of visas available, which is helpful,” said George. “After USCIS approves

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George Ernst Honored Among

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Leading Immigration Lawyers by Lawdragon

May 10, 2023

Hall Booth Smith Partner George Ernst has been chosen as one of 2023's 100 Leading Immigration Lawyers by Lawdragon. The listing recognizes the tremendous importance of immigration law and salutes select immigration attorneys – "lawyers on the front lines advocating for immigrant rights while weighing against regulations." George's practice specializes in immigration, international business, and

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Industry Today: George Ernst on What Manufacturers Need to Know About H-1B Visas

April 12, 2023

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The H-1B visa sponsorship process can be tricky for employers to navigate, which is why Little Rock Partner George Ernst's latest column lays out the most important tips for manufacturers. Published in Industry Today, the column focuses on the manufacturing industry, explaining how the visa process works and for which roles it's best suited. The

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HR.com: George Ernst on Immigration & Navigating the H-1B Visa Program

April 11, 2023

In an article published in HR.com's March HR Legal & Compliance Excellence edition, Little Rock, Arkansas, Partner George Ernst provides U.S. immigration tips for employers navigating the H-1B visa program. George explains the important issues that employers should consider when sponsoring a foreign national worker for

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H-1B status and highlights four principles of the H-1B

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HBS Welcomes Three Partners as It Expands Its Immigration & Employment Practices

February 14, 2023

LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS – February 14, 2023 – Hall Booth Smith, P.C. is excited to add seasoned attorneys Misty Wilson Borkowski, George Ernst, and Abtin Mehdizadegan from Little Rock, Arkansas, as the firm grows its immigration and employment practice groups. Immigration & Employment Practices Grow Misty, George, and Abtin join HBS as partners and will

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