



**George "Chip" H. Rieger  
II, Esq.**

*Department Managing  
Attorney*

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AREAS OF PRACTICE

American with Disability Act Claims (A.D.A)  
Appellate Practice  
Arbitration  
Automobile Liability (PIP/PD/BI/UM)  
Bad Faith/Extra Contractual Litigation  
Civil Litigation  
Commercial Ground Transportation Litigation  
Commercial Litigation  
Condominium and Homeowners' Association Litigation  
Construction and Construction Defect Litigation  
Coverage & Declaratory Judgment Actions  
Director & Officer Liability (D&O)  
Employment Law/Employment Litigation  
Errors & Omissions Liability (E&O)  
First and Third Party Property and Casualty Claims  
Garage and Garagekeepers Liability  
General Liability Defense Litigation  
Liability Defense  
Liquor Liability  
Mediation and Alternative Dispute Resolution  
Negligent Security  
Nursing Home Litigation  
Premises Liability  
Product Liability  
Professional Liability/E & O  
Rideshare Defense  
SIU/Suspicious & Fraudulent Claims

Chip Rieger was born in Indianapolis but spent his formative years in Connecticut before moving to Tennessee in 1983. Chip earned a Bachelor of Science from the University of Tennessee and graduated from the Cecil C. Humphreys School of Law at the University of Memphis. While a law student, he was a member of Phi Alpha Delta (Chief Justice) in addition to serving as a Bankruptcy Court Extern and as Vice President of the Student Bar Association.

Chip is the Department Managing Attorney for the Nashville, TN office of Vernis & Bowling. Prior to joining the firm, he was a partner at a national law firm. Chip was also the founding Member of The Rieger Law Firm and was a founding Member and Managing Partner of Oakley Rieger PLLC. He founded Oakley Rieger after spending the majority of his career as a partner in a large regional litigation defense firm, where he also served as a Managing Partner.

Prior to receiving his *Juris Doctorate*, Mr. Rieger was a Manager of a National Bank, responsible for operations and personnel at the retail level. After Law School, Chip started with a boutique employment law firm in Memphis before moving to Nashville and joining a regional firm. Mr. Rieger subsequently became a partner with his previous firm, where he served as a Managing Member of the Nashville office, overseeing operations and personnel. After 15 years, Chip decided to take his entrepreneurial spirit to another firm with a goal toward developing closer, more personal relationships with his clients by learning their business operations and goals, and partnering with them to achieve those goals.

Chip has a broad range of experience in litigation, including cases involving employment discrimination, FLSA, FMLA, ADA, retaliation, harassment, products liability, premises liability, transportation, personal injury, workers' compensation, insurance law and general civil defense. Chip has extensive experience supervising litigation teams in complex civil lawsuits. A part of his practice is also spent in the representation of management in employment law and related matters, pre-litigation corporate counseling, preventive strategies to avoid discrimination, management training and the creation of human resource tools.

Chip is proud to serve as a founding Board Member of Old School Farm, where he has served since its founding in 2013. Old School

Trucking  
Uninsured/Underinsured Motorist Liability  
Vertical Transportation Defense (Elevator/Escalator)  
Workers' Compensation Defense  
Wrongful Death

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## BAR & COURT ADMISSION

Tennessee Bar  
All Federal Courts in the State of Tennessee  
United States Court of Appeals, Sixth Circuit

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## EDUCATION

*Graduate:*

Cecil C. Humphreys School of Law at the University of Memphis,

*Juris Doctorate*

*Undergraduate:*

University of Tennessee, Bachelor of Science

Farm is a non-profit dedicated to producing quality farm-to-table food while providing vocational training and employment for individuals with disabilities. Old School Farm was founded on the belief that creating a sustainable farm can also produce sustainable jobs while giving back to the community at large.

When Chip is not defending lawsuits or counseling clients, he is a frequent seminar speaker on a variety of industry topics. He is also a regular presenter for The Society of Human Resource Managers, Lorman Education Services and Sterling Education Services. Chip also offers more personal in-house training and counseling for his business clients.

Mr. Rieger is a Member of The Society of Human Resource Managers. He has served on the Employment Law and Civil Rights Committee of the Nashville Bar Association and as the Legal Counsel and Director of the Nashville Area Junior Chamber of Commerce. He has also served on the Board of Directors of the Young Lawyers Division of the Nashville Bar Association and was a Professor of Employment Law and Tort Law at the Southeastern Career Institute. He is a member of the Memphis, Nashville, and Tennessee Bar Associations.

Chip is admitted to practice in all Federal Courts in the State of Tennessee and the U.S. Court of Appeals, Sixth Circuit.

Chip was motivated to go to law school by a friend who convinced him he could take his law degree and apply it in any industry that interested him. That concept holds true today, as Chip gets the most enjoyment out his practice by meeting people in a wide variety of industries, learning what is important to them and helping them to achieve their goals.

Chip is an avid hockey player, snow skier and water skier. He loves to travel the world but lately spends most of his travel visiting his kids at Clemson, Tampa and Tennessee Universities.



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Wrongful Death

Geoffrey Marcus graduated from Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia with a Bachelor of Science in Neuroscience and Behavior

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Biology and a minor in Anthropology. Surprisingly, a single elective course shifted Geoffrey's path from the medical field to the legal field. Thus, Geoffrey continued his education at the University of Miami School of Law, graduating *Cum Laude* in 2019.

Upon graduating from law school, Geoffrey and his wife (who he met in law school) relocated to Charlotte, North Carolina. Geoffrey initially began his legal career at a Plaintiff firm that specializes in employment law and litigation. Thereafter, Geoffrey worked at a civil defense firm in Charlotte, North Carolina, where he handled civil litigation matters, involving the following: third party litigation, including employment law, OSHA investigations and citations, premises liability, vehicle accident defense, trucking defense, wrongful death, construction defects, and the defense of government and municipalities; and insurance coverage/first party litigation.

Geoffrey has represented, among others, a trillion dollar e-commerce company, a multi-billion dollar food and beverage supply company, a multi-million dollar hospitality business, and a multi-million dollar real estate development firm, as well as local health care providers and restaurants. He is experienced at managing all stages of litigation - pre-litigation through appellate work.

Notably, Geoffrey recently prevailed on summary judgment, which was later affirmed by the Fourth Circuit, after oral argument, pertaining to the issue of employer drug testing policy for new and current employees and an employer's related obligations under the ADA and N.C.G.S. § 95-28.2 (lawful use of lawful products statute) when an employee tested positive for THC use. *Anderson v. Diamondback Inv. Grp., LLC*, 117 F. 4th 165 (4th Cir. 2024).

In his personal life, Geoffrey enjoys spending time with his wife, Natasha, and embracing being a "girl dad" to his daughter, Olivia.



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SIU/Suspicious & Fraudulent Claims  
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Uninsured/Underinsured Motorist Liability  
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Workers' Compensation Defense  
Wrongful Death

Thomas is a native of Charleston, South Carolina. He comes from a multi-generational family of legal professionals with deep roots

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in Charleston and the Lowcountry. He attended the University of South Carolina as an Alumni Scholar. During his undergraduate years he served as a page in the South Carolina House of Representatives, an intern in the office of the President of the University of South Carolina, Chief of Staff to the Student Body President and an officer in his fraternity. In May of 1989, he received his Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science, with a minor in History. He enrolled in the University of South Carolina School of Law in August of 1989, where he received his *Juris Doctor* degree in May of 1992.

Upon graduation from law school, Thomas was offered and accepted a judicial clerkship with Judge William L. Howard, Sr., Resident Judge of the Ninth Judicial Circuit for South Carolina. During his year spent in judicial clerkship, he had the opportunity to participate in over forty civil and criminal trials around the State of South Carolina. A most valuable learning experience, affording the opportunity to observe a number of preeminent trial lawyers from around the State.

In November of 1999, Thomas was elected to begin a six-year term as a commissioner of the Commissioners of Public Works for the City of Charleston. Thomas was re-elected 2005, 2011 and 2017. His current term expires in 2023. He has served as chairman of the Commission since 2003. During that time, CWS has been upgraded to a AAA credit rating, one of fewer than thirty combined water and sewer utilities in the Country to receive such designation from both Moody's and Standard & Poor.

Thomas is a Department Managing Attorney in the firm's Charleston, SC office. He is excited and energized by the opportunities to provide quality legal representation to Vernis & Bowling's array of clients and happy to be a part of the team.

Thomas has extensive experience in civil and administrative trial practice as well as experience in appellate practice, having argued before the South Carolina Court of Appeals, South Carolina Supreme Court, United States Court of Appeals, Fourth Circuit and the Multi-District Litigation Panel, having been involved at the earliest stages of EIFS litigation in the Southeast. His primary practice areas include Construction Defect, Personal Injury, Automobile Liability, Premises Liability Dram Shop Liability, Professional Liability, Products Liability and Intentional Torts. He also practices in Insurance Coverage, Mass Torts/Environmental/Toxic Torts, Bad Faith, and Appellate Practice. He is well-versed in all aspects of Insurance Defense and General Civil Litigation.

His extensive civil trial experience includes having tried more than sixty cases to verdict. He has participated in more than two

hundred fifty mediations, both as an attorney for a litigant and/or as mediator. He has tried more than a dozen cases before single arbitrators or arbitration panels.

Thomas is a Certified Circuit Court Mediator by the South Carolina Supreme Court Board of Arbitrator and Mediator Certification, having been first certified in 2011.

Thomas knows the venues, and many of the attorneys and the judges around the State, a knowledge gained through over thirty years of experience and multi-generational legal exposure and is able to share those insights with carriers when assessing individual cases.

## VERNIS & BOWLING

ATTORNEYS AT LAW • EST. 1970



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Ian Neil Matthes was born and raised in Atlanta, Georgia. He graduated *magna cum laude* from Georgia State University with a Bachelor of Arts degree Political Science in 1994 and earned his J.D. from The University of Georgia School of Law in 1997. Ian serves as the Regional Managing Attorney and General Counsel for Vernis & Bowling. Ian provides operation management, support and services to all of the firm's offices throughout the Southeast.

Ian was admitted to the Georgia Bar in 1997, and is licensed to practice law before all state courts in Georgia. He is also licensed to practice before the U.S. District Courts for the Middle and Northern Districts of Georgia. For over 20 years, Ian has represented defendants in general liability, premises liability, automobile liability, bad faith/extra-contractual liability, commercial vehicle liability, insurance coverage, SIU/fraud (including first party arson/property claims and medical provider fraud), and UM/UIM liability matters. He also provides claims/litigation file audit services, and litigation management operations and process improvement consulting.

Ian previously served in-house with P&C insurance companies as a National Litigation Manager and Director of Litigation Management (AIG), managing litigation staff and procedures, as well as class actions and "Bad Faith" claims nationwide. With over 10,000 litigation matters under management, he was also responsible for final trial approval decisions in hundreds of cases

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per year. He regularly and proudly wears his "litigation management" and "home office insurance guy" hats while encouraging efficiency, communication, and delivery of timely results at the firm. This experience has also led to Ian serving as a speaker at numerous seminars throughout the nation, including at national insurance, litigation management and SIU conventions on topics including Premises Liability, Good Faith Claims Handling, Ethical Adjusting Practices, Personal Lines Litigation, SIU/Fraud Best Practices, Negotiation and Settlement Strategies, and Legislative and Case Law Updates.

Ian is a Founding Board Member and Past-President of the National Retail & Restaurant Defense Association (NRRDA), was the Charter Board President of the Georgia Chapter of the National Society of Professional Insurance Investigators (NSPII), and is a member of GDLA, DRI, CLM, ACA and numerous other litigation, claims, insurance and bar related organizations.

Ian and his wife, Stephanie, have two wonderful children, Charlotte (Charlie) and Harrison. Ian is an advocate for special needs children, raises money for Autism-related causes, and is a proud #AutismDad. His other interests include gardening, baking the best sourdough bread in the Southeast, cooking, and watching the UGA Bulldogs. He is always ready to share photos of his kids, plants, his 110+ varieties of fig trees, or why his hydroponic lettuce is better than anything you can buy.