



Christopher J. Blain, Esq.
Managing Attorney

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VERDICTS AND DISPOSITIONS

Coburn, Amy v. Davis, Clifford and Vera
Olivares Garcia, Fatima v. Seminole Towing & Recovery
Galusha, Raymond v. Lowe's-Appeal
Felix Jordan and Marcha Louis as Natural Parents of minor v. Lana Kopec Enterprises et al.
Joseph, Jo-Ann v. All Channel Enterprises, Inc., David Mazure, United Water Restoration Group, Inc., Tyler M. Gilman and USAA
Kelley v. Sun Communities
Savvas v. Wawa
Tonya Oliver v. Foxwood at Trinity Community Association
Rodrigues v. WaWa
Plaintiff v Nativity Catholic Church

AREAS OF PRACTICE

Automobile Liability (PIP/PD/BI/UM)
Bad Faith/Extra Contractual Litigation
Civil Litigation
Commercial Ground Transportation Litigation
Condominium and Homeowners' Association Litigation
Construction and Construction Defect Litigation
Coverage & Declaratory Judgment Actions
Cyber Security
Director & Officer Liability (D&O)
Employment Law/Employment Litigation
Errors & Omissions Liability (E&O)
First and Third Party Property and Casualty Claims
General Liability Defense Litigation

Nationally Board Certified Trial Advocate
Florida Bar Board Certified Civil Trial Lawyer
Florida Supreme Court Certified Circuit Court Mediator

Christopher Blain is the managing attorney of the Tampa, Florida office. He has worked all aspects of the insurance industry. He is an expert in Civil Trial and is Board Certified by the Florida Bar and Nationally Board Certified by the National Board of Trial Advocacy. He was born in Addison, Illinois which is a suburb outside of Chicago. He attended college at Lake Forest College where he graduated in 1996. He continued his education at Barry University, School of Law where he received his *Juris Doctor* in 2002. While in law school, Chris worked under the Honorable Judge Walter Komanski at the Ninth Judicial Circuit, where he researched complex civil litigation issues.

Chris has tried numerous matters to jury verdicts in both State and Federal Courts. He has litigated general liability defense work ranging from handling lawsuits involving claims of wrongful death, premises liability, insurance coverage, auto negligence, negligent security and property claims. Chris has also represented Homeowner/Condominium Associations and their Board Members before HUD, State and Federal Courts regarding disputes arising over deed restrictions, enforcement of those restrictions and alleged discrimination. In addition, Chris has also lectured extensively in these fields where he has been a featured speaker at continuing education seminars around the United States on a variety of insurance defense and litigation topics.

Chris is admitted to practice law in all State Courts in Florida as well as all Federal Courts which include the Northern, Southern and Middle Districts of Florida. He is admitted to practice in the Eleventh Circuit of the United States Court of Appeals. Further, he is admitted to practice in all courts in the State of Illinois.

In his free time, Chris enjoys being active in the Tampa area. He is an assistant soccer coach for his son's team and can also be found cheering on his daughter at her drama class performances.

Government Law
Liability Defense
Medical Malpractice
Negligent Security
PIP/Personal Injury Protection Litigation
Product Liability
SIU/Suspicious & Fraudulent Claims
Subrogation Claims
Trucking
Uninsured/Underinsured Motorist Liability
Wrongful Death

BAR & COURT ADMISSION

Florida Bar
Illinois Bar
U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Florida
U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Florida
U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Florida
U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit
U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit
U.S. District Court of the Central District of Illinois
U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois
U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Illinois

EDUCATION

Graduate:

Barry University School of Law, Juris Doctorate, 2002

Undergraduate:

Lake Forest College, B.A. degree in Political Science, 1996



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First and Third Party Property and Casualty Claims
General Liability Defense Litigation
Government Law
Liability Defense
Medical Malpractice
Negligent Security
PIP/Personal Injury Protection Litigation
Product Liability

Michelle was born and raised in Quincy, Illinois. In 1996, she graduated, with honors, from the University of Southern Mississippi with a Bachelor of Arts degree in English. She attended Tulane University School of Law and received her *Juris Doctor* degree in 1999. She began her legal career with the Office of the Public Defender, First Judicial Circuit, in Pensacola, Florida, in 1999, where she practiced until joining Vernis & Bowling in 2001. Michelle was awarded an AV® Preeminent™ Peer Review

SIU/Suspicious & Fraudulent Claims
Subrogation Claims
Trucking
Uninsured/Underinsured Motorist Liability
Wrongful Death

BAR & COURT ADMISSION

Florida Bar
Illinois Bar
U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Florida
U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Florida
U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Florida
U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit
U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit
U.S. District Court of the Central District of Illinois
U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois
U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Illinois

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Rated by Martindale-Hubbell, which identifies attorneys with preeminent legal ability and is a reflection of expertise, experience, integrity and overall professional excellence. She is recognized in Martindale-Hubbell's Bar Registry of Preeminent Lawyers in America. Michelle has also been awarded an AV Preeminent Peer Review Rating by the Judiciary.

Michelle is the Managing Attorney for Vernis & Bowling of Northwest, Florida, P.A. She has over two decades of trial experience and handles a variety of cases, including automobile liability, trucking and transportation, hurricane, first and third property claims, premises liability (including negligent security and slip and fall), labor and employment, construction defect, director and officer liability, product liability, and wrongful death. Michelle has tried over 50 jury trials in both federal and state court and has conducted countless depositions and argued a wide range of motions. Michelle's most talked about trial continues to be a lawsuit where she successfully defended Hanes regarding a claim of defective manufacturing of a package of men's briefs. The plaintiff claimed that the briefs gaped open during normal wear and caused personal injury, ruining his dream Hawaiian vacation.

Michelle is a member of the Florida Bar, the Alabama Bar, and the Escambia/Santa Rosa Bar Association. She is admitted to practice in all Florida and Alabama State Courts, the Northern and Middle Districts of Florida, the Southern and Middle Districts of Alabama, and the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals.

Outside of the office, Michelle enjoys traveling, boating, scuba diving, and snow skiing with her husband of over 30 years.