



**Carlton A. Bober, Esq.**  
Managing Attorney

Vernis & Bowling of Broward,  
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Carlton Bober was born in Miami, Florida. He graduated from Emory University in 1986 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in both Economics and Political Science. While at Emory, Carl's honors included being selected for the Dean's List and ranking in the top 20% of his class. He subsequently obtained his Juris Doctor from the George Washington University National Law Center in 1989, which he attended after receiving a full academic tuition scholarship for all three years of law school. At George Washington, Carl was elected by his fellow students to serve as a representative to the Student Bar Association.

Carl is recognized as an AV® Preeminent™ Peer Review Rated by Martindale-Hubbell, its highest possible rating awarded based upon excellence in legal ability and ethical standards, and is listed in the Bar Register of Preeminent Lawyers as well as A.M Best's Recommended Insurance Attorneys. He was also named in "South Florida's Top Rated Lawyers" by Legal Leaders, a publication assembled from peer review ratings. He maintains an extensive trial practice in both federal and state court as lead counsel for major corporate, insurance defense and governmental clients. His experience includes the handling of lawsuits involving claims of wrongful death, serious personal injury, premises liability, insurance coverage, first and third party property claims, auto negligence, construction defects and construction law issues, negligent supervision/security, professional malpractice, product liability and employment discrimination. Carl also defends major insurance companies in significant property coverage claims including issues of breach of contract, declaratory relief, bad faith, arson, fraud and hurricane claims. His representation of employers in federal discrimination suits includes matters arising under Title VII, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and the Florida Civil Rights Act. He has personally defended his clients as first-chair attorney in over fifty jury trials.

Carl, who is fluent in Spanish, is a former Assistant Public Defender for Miami-Dade County in the Felony Trial Division. He is also a Past President of Broward County Hispanic Bar Association and served for many years on its Board of Directors. Carl has been awarded the Hispanic Community Awareness Award by the Nova Southeastern University Law School Hispanic

## VERDICTS AND DISPOSITIONS

*Marie Henriquez & Alfonso Martinez v. Citizens Property Insurance Corporation*

*James Davis v. Uber, Steel Fabricators, et al.*

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Cyber Security

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SIU/Suspicious & Fraudulent Claims

Wrongful Death

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Law Students Association. He was also appointed by the President of the Florida Bar to the Juvenile Court Rules Committee as well as to Florida Bar Grievance Committee 17F, and is a member of the Broward and Miami-Dade County Bar Associations, the Cuban American Bar Association, and the Florida Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers. Carl joined VERNIS & BOWLING of Broward in October 2002 as managing attorney of its Liability Department. He is admitted to practice in all State Courts in Florida, the United States District Court for the Southern District and Middle District of Florida, the United States Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit, and the District of Columbia.

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## LANGUAGES

Spanish

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Kimble McKay began working at Vernis & Bowling in the summer of 2012. He was born and raised in Tampa, Florida. In 2010, he graduated from the University of Florida with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Criminology. While at the University of Florida, he was a member of the Phi Alpha Delta Pre-Law Society.

Kimble then attended the Florida Coastal School of Law in Jacksonville, Florida. Florida Coastal School of Law conferred a Juris Doctorate upon him in 2013. Some of his academic memberships and activities while at Florida Coastal include Business Law Society, Sports Law Society, and volunteering at the Family Nurturing Center.

Since graduating from Florida Coastal School of Law in 2013, Kimble has been working at Vernis & Bowling of the Gulf Coast as an attorney handling general insurance defense matters with a specific focus on construction defect litigation and bodily injury claims. Kimble is an avid Florida Gators fan. In his spare time he enjoys playing sports, boating, fishing, and other outdoor activities.

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Thomas W. Paradise was born in Houghton, Michigan and raised in Boca Raton, Florida. He graduated in 1988 from Tulane University, A.B. Freeman School of Business with a B.A. Degree in Management, Accounting Major. While at Tulane, Tom was awarded for academic achievement and was the Vice-President of the Beta Alpha Psi Honorary Fraternity. He then attended Stetson University College of Law and received his Juris Doctorate in 1991.

Tom Paradise is an AV® Preeminent™ Peer Review Rated by Martindale-Hubbell, which is an award that identifies attorneys with the highest legal ability and signifies expertise, experience, integrity and overall professional excellence. He is also listed in the Bar Registry of Preeminent Lawyers, A.M. Best's Recommended Insurance Attorneys and named in "South

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Florida's Top Rated Lawyers". Tom specializes in civil litigation with an emphasis in the areas of personal injury, premises liability, automobile accidents, negligent security and supervision, commercial trucking accidents, governmental tort liability, product liability and insurance subrogation. His practice includes formulating policies/procedures and managing risk concerns for major corporations and governmental entities. He also defends insurance companies in first party property claims which covers a wide array of issues such as breach of contract, appraisals, declaratory actions, fraud, arson and bad faith. Tom has been a speaker at numerous conferences and has presented legal/educational seminars for insurance companies, third party administrators and self-insureds throughout the United States.

He was admitted to the Florida Bar in 1991, and practices before all Florida State Courts, including the Third and Fourth District Court of Appeals. Tom also has an active Federal Court practice and is admitted in the United States District Court for the Southern District of Florida, the United States District Court for the Middle District of Florida, and the United States Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit.

Tom began his practice with a prominent Miami civil defense firm where he worked in the areas of insurance defense, personal injury, commercial litigation, and in complex litigation involving shoddy home construction and Hurricane Andrew. His practice at that time included several class actions involving catastrophic property damage and significant insurance subrogation. Tom joined Vernis & Bowling as a Managing Attorney in October 2002.

Tom has participated in the Broward Community Development Corporation and the Dade County Bar Association Put Something Back Program. He is a current or past member of the Broward County Bar Association, Miami-Dade County Bar Association, American Bar Association, Defense Research Institute, Counsel for Litigation Management and the South Florida Claims Association where he served as President in 2012.

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**Florida Bar Certified in City, County and Local Government Law**

Dirk M. Smits was born in Boca Raton, Florida. He attended and

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graduated from Tulane University with a bachelor's degree in accounting. During his years at Tulane, he was a member of Beta Alpha Psi Accounting Honor Society and on the Dean's List three (3) semesters. Mr. Smits attended law school at the University of Miami and graduated *Cum Laude*. While in law school, he received honors including Dean's List and an honors scholarship.

Mr. Smits' practice is concentrated primarily in City, County and Local Government Law and he has been certified as an expert by the Florida Bar for those areas. He serves as a Monroe County School Board Attorney, City Attorney for the City of Layton, Board Attorney for the Florida Keys Mosquito Control District, and Board Attorney for Key Largo Fire & EMS District. Mr. Smits formerly served as City Attorney for the City of Marathon and as a special counsel for Monroe County.

In service of the numerous government clients, Mr. Smits has handled every aspect of the practice. Matters include a range of routine meeting issues to complicated land use, acquisition and even eminent domain questions. Mr. Smits regularly drafts legal documents, resolutions, ordinances, contracts and legal opinions for his government clients.

Additionally, Mr. Smits has extensive jury trial experience at both the Federal and State level. In addition, Mr. Smits has appellate experience in the Third, Fourth and Fifth State District Courts of Appeal, as well as the Supreme Court of Florida.

Mr. Smits serves on the board of Habitat for Humanity of the Upper Keys as Vice President. Dirk is also a lector, Eucharistic minister and member of his parish's finance counsel. He founded Friends of San Pedro Catholic Church which is an endowment to provide for the capital needs of the church.

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Scott C. Black was born in Nuremberg, Germany in 1973. For the past 35 years he has lived in the Florida Keys. He majored in Criminology/Criminal Justice and minored in Business at Florida State University, where he graduated in 1995. Prior to attending Florida State. Mr. Black earned a scholarship to attend his local Florida Keys Community College. Mr. Black graduated from FKCC in 1993 after making the Deans List and being named to Who's Who Among American Junior Colleges. While attending Florida State University, Mr. Black was on the Deans List and was elected to the Golden Key National Honor Society.

Mr. Black graduated from Stetson University College of Law in December of 1998. During law school he participated in Stetson's legal argument competitions and made the Honor roll. While at Stetson, Mr. Black received his Florida Bar certification and worked as a State Prosecutor for St. Petersburg State Attorney's Office. After admission to the Florida Bar, Mr. Black began practicing with Vernis & Bowling of the Florida Keys. While practicing in the Florida Keys, Mr. Black has litigated in Federal, State and County Court. He has tried multiple cases both civil and criminal before the local County and Circuit courts. Mr. Black has also argued before the Third District Court of Appeals on multiple occasions and has argued before the Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals. Mr. Black is on the Monroe County School Board legal staff, as well as providing representation for the City of Layton and the Florida Keys Mosquito Control District. Mr. Black is currently a member of the Florida Bar, and the American Bar Association.

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