



**Robert C. Bowling, Esq.**  
*Managing Partner*

Vernis & Bowling of Miami,  
P.A.  
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#### AREAS OF PRACTICE

Business & Commercial Law  
Commercial Ground Transportation Litigation  
Commercial Litigation  
Employment Law/Employment Litigation  
PIP/Personal Injury Protection Litigation

#### BAR & COURT ADMISSION

Georgia, 1990  
Florida, 1991  
U.S. District Court Southern District of Florida, 1994  
U.S. District Court Middle District of Florida, 1994  
U.S. Court of Appeals 11th Circuit

#### EDUCATION

*Graduate:*  
University of Miami School of Law, Coral Gables, FL 1990 J.D.,  
Doctor of Jurisprudence

*Honors:*  
*Cum Laude*  
*Phi Delta Phi Honorary Legal Society;*  
*Dean's List(1987-1990)*

*Undergraduate:*  
Stetson University, DeLand, Florida, 1987

B.B.A.  
Major: Finance

*Honors:*

Robert C. Bowling was born in Hollywood, Florida. He graduated from Stetson University in 1987 with a B.B.A. (emphasis in Finance). Robert obtained his J.D. from the University of Miami where he graduated *cum laude* in 1990. While in law school, Robert's academic memberships and honors included the Phi Delta Phi Honorary Legal Society and Dean's List (1987 -1990). While at Stetson University, Robert's membership and honors included Honor Roll; Dean's List; member of Publications Board; member of Student Union Board; and member of Inter-Fraternity Counsel. Robert is a member of the Florida Bar and the State Bar of Georgia, His professional memberships include: The American Bar Association (member, Sections on Litigation, on Corporate, Banking and Business Law and on Patent, Trademark and Copyright Law; member, Committees on Class Actions and Derivative Suits, on Business Torts Litigation, and on Commercial and Banking Litigation) and the Dade County Bar Association. Robert is a former member of Stetson University's School of Business Administration Board of Advisors (2002-2005).

Robert's areas of practice include commercial and corporate litigation; commercial ground transportation litigation; employment law; and commercial general liability litigation. Robert's published opinions include the representation of a national insurance company in defense of a class action alleging violations of 627.736; representation at trial and appellate levels in a case of first impression to Florida Supreme Court, Y.H. Investments v. Godales, 690 So.2d 1273 (Fla.1997), in which the Supreme Court permitted consideration of the negligence of a non-party parent or guardian in determining the cause of a minor's injury in a negligence action against a third party tortfeasor; representation of a corporate minority shareholder on the appeal of an interlocutory order to the Supreme Court of Georgia on an issue of first impression, S.C.I. v. H.M. Patterson & Son, Inc., 434 S.E.2nd 455 (Ga.1993); representation of a corporate minority shareholder in shareholder's derivative action; representation of a corporation and its shareholder in an action against former employees alleging tortious, unlawful and unfair competition, tortious interference with contractual and business relationships, usurpation of corporate opportunities, and breaches of duties of loyalty and care; representation in actions alleging breaches of a franchise agreement; representation in cases involving the Criminal Practices Act and of the Deceptive and Unfair Practices Act; representation in debt collection suits; and representation in general commercial litigation involving the

Honor Roll  
Dean's List

sale of goods and services. Robert has been awarded several professional distinctions such as being selected as one of South Florida's Top Lawyers by *the South Florida Legal Guide* and being named a Power Leader in Law by *the South Florida Business Journal*.

Robert enjoys spending time outdoors—especially in the Rocky Mountains—as well as exploring oenology, geology, astronomy, Christian existential philosophy, and all natural sciences. Robert has also been a lifelong fan of the Miami Dolphins, Heat, and Hurricanes. He loves to be involved in his community and currently serves as a Trustee for the First United Methodist Church of Fort Lauderdale and the Director of Charitable Giving for Vernis & Bowling.

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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

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currently a member of the Florida Bar, and the American Bar Association.

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Timothy S. Kazee was born in Galion, Ohio. He graduated cum laude from the University of Toledo in 1999 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science. Before graduating college, Timothy completed course work in business and communications through the Walt Disney World College Program, and he went on to serve as his University's College Program Ambassador. He then completed a Pre-Law Program at Oxford University, England and earned the Program's highest achievement level.

In 2002, Timothy graduated from the University of Toledo College of Law. During law school, he clerked at a local, litigation law firm and served as an Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Legal Intern with Cedar Point Amusement Park, in Sandusky, Ohio.

Timothy is licensed in Florida and Ohio, and he has legal experience in state appellate and federal courts. While at VERNIS & BOWLING of Central Florida, P.A., Timothy has focused his practice on the areas of personal injury litigation and first party

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property claims, including auto liability defense, fraud / misrepresentation, premises liability, wind storm and water damage claims, and Personal Injury Protection litigation. In addition to defense litigation, his practice includes representing insurance companies in conducting good faith examinations under oath and preparing coverage opinions. He has defended community associations in claims arising from management and resident disputes and understands the value of working with residents, communities, and their insurers to explore prompt and meaningful dispute solutions.

Timothy has served his community as a municipal court mediator, as an Arbitrator for the Better Business Bureau, and as a University guest lecturer. He has also presented a wide- variety of Continuing Education seminars for insurance companies throughout the state of Florida.

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**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

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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.

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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 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 11<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court of Appeals.

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