

# Florida

## Local litigation firms

### Highly recommended

Akerman Senterfitt
Bilzin Sumberg Baena Price & Axelrod
Colson Hicks Eidson
Hunton & Williams
Kenny Nachwalter
Kozyak Tropin & Throckmorton
Podhurst Orseck
Stearns Weaver Miller Weissler Alhadeff & Sitterson

### Recommended

Astigarraga Davis
Bedell Dittmar DeVault Pillans & Coxé
Carlton Fields
Greenberg Traurig
Hogan Lovells
Holland & Knight
Page Mrachek Fitzgerald & Rose
Richman Greer
Squire Sanders
Weil Gotshal & Manges
White & Case
Wicker Smith O'Hara McCoy & Ford
Zuckerman Spaeder

## Local litigation stars

Name	Firm	Location	Biography	Antitrust	Appellate	Bankruptcy	General commercial	Insurance	Intellectual property	International arbitration	Product liability	Securities	White-collar crime	Other
Rudolph Aragon	White & Case	Miami				✓			✓					
José Astigarraga	Astigarraga Davis	Miami				✓			✓					
Hilarie Bass	Greenberg Traurig	Miami				✓				✓				
Raoul Cantero	White & Case	Miami		✓		✓								
Dean Colson	Colson Hicks Eidson	Coral Gables								✓				Personal injury
Henry Coxé	Bedell Dittmar DeVault Pillans & Coxé	Jacksonville				✓								
Richard Critchlow	Kenny Nachwalter	Miami				✓					✓			Professional liability
Samuel Danon	Hunton & Williams	Miami				✓							✓	
Barry Davidson	Hunton & Williams	Miami		✓		✓		✓	✓					
Alvin Davis	Squire Sanders	Miami				✓								
John DeVault	Bedell Dittmar DeVault Pillans & Coxé	Jacksonville				✓								
Mark Dikeman	Stearns Weaver Miller Weissler Alhadeff & Sitterson	Miami				✓	✓		✓					

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Name	Firm	Location	Biography	Antitrust	Appellate	Bankruptcy	General commercial	Insurance	Intellectual property	International arbitration	Product liability	Securities	White-collar crime	Other
Lewis "Mike" Eidson	Colson Hicks Eidson	Coral Gables								✓				Personal injury
Joanne Erde	Duane Morris	Miami												Professional liability
Alan Fein	Stearns Weaver Miller Weissler Alhadeff & Sitterson	Miami				✓								Professional liability
Jack Fernandez	Zuckerman Spaeder	Tampa				✓							✓	
Lee Fugate	Zuckerman Spaeder	Tampa				✓							✓	
Katherine Giddings	Akerman Senterfitt	Tallahassee		✓		✓								
Ervin Gonzalez	Colson Hicks Eidson	Coral Gables								✓				Personal injury
Marcos Hasbun	Zuckerman Spaeder	Tampa				✓							✓	
William Heller	Akerman Senterfitt	Fort Lauderdale				✓					✓			
Robert Josefsberg	Podhurst Orseck	Miami				✓							✓	
Thomas Julin	Hunton & Williams	Miami	✓			✓		✓						First Amendment
John Kozyak	Kozyak Tropin & Throckmorton	Miami				✓								
Michael Kreitzer	Bilzin Sumberg Baena Price & Axelrod	Miami				✓	✓	✓			✓			Construction
Thomas Lauria	White & Case	Miami				✓								
Roberto Martinez	Colson Hicks Eidson	Coral Gables								✓			✓	Professional liability
Joseph Matthews	Colson Hicks Eidson	Coral Gables								✓				Personal injury
James Miller	Akerman Senterfitt	Miami				✓								
Edward Moss	Shook Hardy & Bacon	Miami								✓				
Louis Mrachek	Page Mrachek Fitzgerald & Rose	West Palm Beach				✓		✓						
Michael Nachwalter	Kenny Nachwalter	Miami				✓								Professional liability
Tracy Nichols	Holland & Knight	Miami											✓	
Dennis O'Hara	Wicker Smith O'Hara McCoy & Ford	Miami				✓				✓				Personal injury
Christopher Pace	Weil Gotshal & Manges	Miami												
Michael Pasano	Carlton Fields	Tampa	✓	✓		✓								Professional liability
Aaron Podhurst	Podhurst Orseck	Miami				✓				✓				
David Pollack	Stearns Weaver Miller Weissler Alhadeff & Sitterson	Miami	✓			✓					✓			
Peter Prieto	Podhurst Orseck	Miami	✓			✓				✓			✓	
Benjamin Reid	Carlton Fields	Tampa				✓								
Gerald Richman	Richman Greer	West Palm Beach				✓				✓				
Stephen Rosenthal	Podhurst Orseck	Miami		✓										
David Ross	Greenberg Traurig	Miami	✓			✓	✓		✓	✓				

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## Local litigation stars

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			Biography	Antitrust	Appellate	Bankruptcy	General commercial	Insurance	Intellectual property	International arbitration	Product liability	Securities	White-collar crime	
Gary Sasso	Carlton Fields	Tampa		✓	✓	✓					✓	✓		Employment
Elliot Scherker	Greenberg Traurig	Miami		✓										
Mark Schnapp	Greenberg Traurig	Miami				✓						✓	✓	
Jay Shapiro	Stearns Weaver Miller Weissler Alhadeff & Sitterson	Miami	✓			✓		✓				✓		
Mark Solov	Stearns Weaver Miller Weissler Alhadeff & Sitterson	Miami				✓								
Edward Soto	Weil Gotshal & Manges	Miami	✓			✓						✓		Professional liability
Eugene Stearns	Stearns Weaver Miller Weissler Alhadeff & Sitterson	Miami		✓		✓		✓				✓		
Marty Steinberg	Bilzin Sumberg Baena Price & Axelrod	Miami				✓						✓	✓	
Charles Throckmorton	Kozyak Tropin & Throckmorton	Miami				✓								
Harley Tropin	Kozyak Tropin & Throckmorton	Miami				✓								
Robert Turken	Bilzin Sumberg Baena Price & Axelrod	Miami	✓			✓								
Stanley Waklshlag	Kenny Nachwalter	Miami				✓						✓		
Sylvia Walbolt	Carlton Fields	Tampa	✓	✓		✓	✓			✓	✓			Construction, Employment
Morris Weinberg	Zuckerman Spaeder	Tampa				✓							✓	
Mitchell Widom	Bilzin Sumberg Baena Price & Axelrod	Miami				✓	✓							Construction, Environmental

## Future stars

José Ferrer  
Bilzin Sumberg Baena Price & Axelrod

Michelle Gervais  
Duane Morris

Marcos Hasbun  
Zuckerman Spaeder

Eduardo Ramos  
Holland & Knight

Mark Romance  
Richman Greer

# Florida



During the well documented financial crisis that ravaged Florida's housing market in 2009, attorneys noted that new litigation slowed to a trickle, as companies did not want to devote their resources to anything that wasn't producing revenue, and the reality of the dire economy made them less emotionally driven to engage in lawsuits. But the fortunes of Florida's economy are turning around with increasing momentum. Miami in particular is becoming an attractive magnet for cash-flush beneficiaries of the booming economy in Latin America, which is reached from Miami with relative ease, who are moving in to scoop up distressed properties, sometimes several at a time, at bargain basement prices. This influx of wealth from abroad is also driving Miami's hospitality industry, which is surging as of late. Not surprisingly, the city is also becoming an increasingly popular venue for international arbitration issues. It isn't all sunshine and roses (or water hyacinths), however; the courts are still experiencing severe backlogs due to budget constraints, judges are forced to endure an endless grind of foreclosure cases with heart-wrenching tales of woe from residents who've lost their homes during the crisis, adverse effects of the BP/Deepwater Horizon oil spill still plague many Gulf Coast residents, foreclosures are still rampant throughout the state, and many of those who can afford to stay in their homes are making the appalling discovery that their homes were constructed with a grade of defective Chinese drywall that corrodes the walls from within, upending the lives of those living in them and driving class-action lawsuits all over the Southeast.

## Highly recommended firms

### Akerman Senterfitt

Akerman Senterfitt remains a force in the Southeast, and Florida in particular benefits from its legal services. The firm has deep roots in Florida and now has 10 offices located throughout the state, including Miami, Jacksonville, Tampa, Tallahassee, Fort Lauderdale, Palm Beach, West Palm Beach, Boca Raton, Orlando, and, as of February 2011, Naples. Peers in the state are vocally appreciative of the firm's litigation acumen. "Akerman has great resources that serve this region but their real ace in the hole is their capabilities and presence on the international stage. They get into matters all over the world, especially Latin America, and have the litigators ready to handle them." In one such matter within the last few years, Akerman attorneys even found themselves adverse to the government of Venezuela.

A frequent mention of peers, Tallahassee-based Katherine Giddings maintains a robust appellate practice, which has earned her recognition not only in Florida but all throughout the Eleventh Circuit. A peer confirms, "Kathi Giddings is whip-smart and sassy, not in an obnoxious or flippant way but in a manner that allows her to distill the details of a case down to the essence, making the argument palatable and relatable to the judges. When working in the appeals capacity, with limited time in which to make your argument, you can bet this serves her well." Within the last year, Giddings provided representation of Realauction.com, obtaining reversal of a jury verdict, with a

monetary value of about \$1.8 million, in favor of Grant Street Group. The court held that Grant Street failed to establish tortious interference with a business relationship and defamation claims against Realauction.com. The November 2011 reversal came with directions that judgment be entered in Realauction.com's favor. Securities chair Brian Miller is noted for his representation of inVentiv Health and its board of directors in defending pending class-action litigation in connection with a \$1.1 billion going-private merger transaction in which the plaintiffs allege that the directors breached their fiduciary duties by failing to negotiate for the highest price and by failing to disclose all material information regarding the shareholder vote. After convincing arguments from Miller in the Delaware and New Jersey Chancery courts, plaintiffs elected to dismiss the action with prejudice.

### Bilzin Sumberg Baena Price & Axelrod

From its sole office in Miami, Bilzin Sumberg Baena Price & Axelrod is enjoying a soaring profile all throughout the Sunshine State and beyond. One client enthuses, "The Bilzin Sumberg team members are all very detailed and excellent in their areas and do a great job treating the attorney/client relationship as a partnership in dealing with matters. They deliver great communication and work product overall." Peers agree; "For a firm with a relatively small bench (12 partners strong), the depth is there." The firm made a sizeable addition to its litigation capacity within the last year with the auspicious addition of Marty Steinberg, formerly a

litigation star with Hunton & Williams. Steinberg is no stranger to high-level plaudits in Florida, and indeed one peer raves, "This is a hell of a coup for Bilzin Sumberg – Marty is a great trial lawyer! He also likes to manage, and I suspect Bilzin will give him more flexibility to do this, whereas Hunton did not because Marty is close to retirement age. But Marty is not the type to go gently into that goodnight. He wants to stick around for a while longer!" Steinberg provided lead trial counsel and argued all substantive motions in representing Bacardi USA in a case involving multi-state distributors of Bacardi. In an effort to consolidate its distribution chain, Bacardi terminated the distributors' entities pursuant to the terms of various distribution agreements, leading to the distributors suing Bacardi for violations of the federal antitrust laws and another state's franchise act. Steinberg and his team brought declaratory judgment claims in federal court in Miami – Bacardi's primary business territory – based on forum selection clauses in the various distribution agreements to secure jurisdiction and venue in Miami. Bacardi prevailed.

Robert Turken led the firm's antitrust team in the prosecution of the claims of bankruptcy estate of All American Semiconductor against the major worldwide manufacturers of DRAM computer chips for violation of the federal antitrust laws. Turken's team alleged that DRAM suppliers conspired to control production capacity, raise prices or slow their decline, allocate customers, and otherwise unlawfully overcharge their DRAM customers, which caused All American damages in excess of \$100 million. A peer purports, "This is the biggest antitrust case EVER! Bob Turken is like lord of the manor around there now." Future star José Ferrer leads the firm's Latin American and international arbitration capacity, for which demand in south Florida is skyrocketing. On a local level, Ferrer represented Redwood Recovery Services and Elevenhome Limited as plaintiffs for breach of contract in connection with various loans totaling more than \$65 million. The defendants asserted allegations that they had been extorted and forced under duress into signing one of the contracts. After more than two years of litigation, and a week-long trial, the court awarded the clients more than \$17 million in damages, the exact total the plaintiffs had asked for in their lawsuit.

### Colson Hicks Eidson

Coral Gables-based boutique Colson Hicks Eidson is revered for its personal injury, product liability, white-collar crime and

commercial litigation services. Its attorneys most often act as plaintiff counsel, and competitors in both the defense and plaintiff capacities rave, “This is the firm to beat. They are doing a bang-up job taking on what were thought to be untouchables.” Beyond Florida, the firm handles matters across the United States, the Caribbean, and Central and South America.

Ervin Gonzalez is unanimously acknowledged by his Florida peers, on both the defense and plaintiff sides. One champion Gonzalez’s cause fiercely: “Everyone in town knows Ervin. He’s been making headlines and making millions for his clients. He is the toast of south Florida. And he doesn’t do ‘BS’ plaintiff work. He takes on valid cases that he believes in and puts his all into them. If he takes on a case, it’s serious, and the defendants will have their hands full.” Gonzalez has been actively litigating cases in Florida, Louisiana and all over the Southeast concerning defective and toxic Chinese drywall. In one such case, Gonzalez successfully sued a development entity that knowingly used the tainted drywall in construction of homes, and obtained a \$55 million settlement from the developers on behalf of a group of Florida homeowners who bought homes that included the tainted drywall. In addition to his expertise with the Chinese drywall cases, Gonzalez has also recently been appointed to the steering committee for the BP oil spill cases. A peer sums up Gonzalez’s gravitas with, “He is like ‘Superman’ to a certain contingent of people around here now. You can practically hear people cheer and applaud when he wins – chalk one up for the good guys.”

#### Hunton & Williams

The Miami office of national firm Hunton & Williams continues to garner support from enthusiastic peers within the Florida community. Within the last year, the firm did lose local litigation star Marty Steinberg, who jumped ship to join Bilzin Sumberg, but peers speculate that “Marty was reaching Hunton & Williams’ retirement age and there’s no way he was ready to retire – he likes his job too much. Plus Marty likes to manage, and Hunton likes to rotate its management at the top. So I’m sure the parting of ways was amicable, although Bilzin will definitely gain from having Marty on board.”

In Steinberg’s stead, litigation head partner Samuel Danon and First Amendment and appellate specialist Thomas Julin have emerged as the firm’s most prominent talent in Florida. The pair is representing Banco Santander in a series of class-action lawsuits arising out of investments related to Bernard Madoff Investment Securities and filed on behalf of foreign individuals who invested in the Optimal Strategic US Equity Fund and allege various federal and state law claims based on alleged investment losses resulting from the Madoff fraud. Julin handled the

**“Ervin Gonzalez [of Colson Hicks Eidson] is like ‘Superman’ to a certain contingent of people around here now. You can practically hear people cheer and applaud when he wins – chalk one up for the good guys.”**

appeal, which went to the Eleventh Circuit. Julin also a recently wrapped up a case in US Supreme Court, which began in 2006, for IMS Health, a company that links information from pharmacies and sells it to pharmaceutical manufacturers for use in marketing to doctors as far as what drugs their patients should be taking. Julin challenged the constitutionality of the sale of this information in a case that went up through the First and Second Circuit courts to the Supreme Court and eventually decided in the client’s favor. A peer observes, “That case, that was a milestone! Tom is one of the few First Amendment lawyers in the state but in that case he took it all the way up to the highest level – that’s definitely a cherry for him. His stock as an appellate lawyer went through the roof after that.”

#### Kenny Nachwalter

Some Florida attorneys consider litigation boutique Kenny Nachwalter to be the standard towards which all Florida firms should aspire. One peer claims that “they are highly regarded for good reason; they are highly skilled.” Formed in 1978, the firm concentrates on commercial litigation, involving antitrust, intellectual property and securities, in both the plaintiff and defense capacities. With 23 attorneys, the firm’s relatively small size allows its partners to swiftly take on cases referred to them by larger firms who have become saturated with work. “They get a lot of referrals, and rightfully so,” says one competitor.

Within the firm, Richard Critchlow and Stanley Wakshlag earn unanimous peer praise for their work in complex business litigation. One competitor raves “they are both known throughout the state as superior litigation talent,” while another attests “[Critchlow and Wakshlag] are two of the best in town, and Kenny Nachwalter is great as a firm overall. Richard Critchlow is a lawyer’s lawyer. A consummate professional. If I needed a lawyer, I would go to him. I had a

case against him a couple of years ago and he wound up even convincing me!”

#### Kozyak Tropin & Throckmorton

Founded in 1983, Miami boutique Kozyak Tropin & Throckmorton receives a near-unanimous spate of peer feedback heralding the firm’s prowess in litigating commercial and bankruptcy matters. The firm is often name-checked alongside of descriptors such as “outstanding litigators” and “bankruptcy titans.”

Name partners John Kozyak and Harley Tropin are seen as “top-tier, two of the most influential and persuasive litigators in town” by one competitor, who adds, “That’s not a well kept secret in Florida.” Kozyak is referred to as a “senior statesman” and regularly plays a major role in bankruptcy courts across the nation, representing business owners, lenders, creditors’ committees, and major creditors, and he has been appointed a trustee and receiver in major cases. He is called “suave” and “someone who cultivates a lot of influence” by his contemporaries. Tropin, acknowledged by peers as the more “hard rock” litigator at the firm, concentrates his practice on high-risk business litigation and national class actions, and acts most often in the plaintiff capacity.

#### Podhurst Orseck

Miami-based trial and appellate boutique Podhurst Orseck continues to generate a striking level of peer enthusiasm. One competitor goes on to say, “For a long time, it was a Florida lawyer’s dream to work there, but it was so hard to get in! They are a very elite group, one of the finest in the country.” Indeed, another peer states bluntly, “Podhurst is where a young lawyer can go if they want to make a lot of money, but believe me you will work for it – you will not be coddled the way you can be at a big firm, you will be hustling and on your toes ready to try cases at any moment. It’s a high-risk, high-reward existence. There’s a reason this firm is so small and why all of them there are so good. There are no slouches in the ranks there.” The firm maintains a niche practice in aviation law, handling contentious and complex litigation arising out of crashes and other air accidents, but Podhurst lawyers also attend to commercial, appellate, and even white-collar matters, in both the plaintiff and defense capacities.

While peers speculate that founding partner and pillar of Florida litigation Aaron Podhurst may be playing a less active role in cases these days, Podhurst’s recent involvement as plaintiff lead class counsel in the litigation against Bank of America concerning checking overdraft fees litigation was enough to make major headlines in November 2011 when BoA agreed to a \$410 million settlement. A few competitors were caught off guard and at least one was forced

to re-evaluate their assessment of Podhurst. “This was a big case – massive. And Aaron was on that! He may be slowing down, but it would be wrong to write him off as a spent force. There’s still sap in his trunk, and he’s got enough experience for 10 lawyers.” Peter Prieto is seen by many to be “the heir apparent” at Podhurst. Prieto is known for his prowess in commercial, securities and white-collar matters, as well as a no-nonsense courtroom demeanor. A peer attests, “You don’t want to go there with Peter – he’s got a hard nose and will get in your face with it. If you have a slightest inkling that your case is weak and you see Peter on the other side of you, back off.”

#### **Stearns Weaver Miller Weissler Alhadeff & Sitterson**

Stearns Weaver Miller Weissler Alhadeff & Sitterson is a full-service law firm with 120 attorneys serving clients throughout Florida. With offices in Miami, Fort Lauderdale, Tampa, and Tallahassee, the firm focuses on

even in the occasional commercial plaintiff cases he takes on.

Beyond Stearns, commercial litigator **Mark Solov** is tipped by peers, as is civil litigator **Alan Fein**, who has developed one of the state’s premier sports law practices. In this capacity, Fein has represented the Miami Heat, among other major- and minor-league athletic organizations. “Alan Fein, he’s on the case, I think highly of him,” enthuses a peer.

#### **White & Case**

The Miami office of national firm White & Case was established in 1987 and is the hub of its active Florida and Latin American practices. Due to enthusiasm on the part of peers and clients alike, the firm ascends to highly recommended status in this edition. Peers state, “White & Case have really got some first-rate people over there. Keep an eye on them.” A client, meanwhile, testifies, “I have seen them deal with laymen, other attorneys and elected officials, and they adapt to those with whom they are dealing, such

twist, servicing clients from Europe and Latin America as well as the US. One such client confirms, “We have used Rudy Aragon for approximately 15 years, both at White & Case and at his predecessor firm. Rudy is our attorney of choice for litigation in Miami. He is an efficient and effective trial lawyer.”

#### **Recommended firms**

##### **Astigarraga Davis**

Astigarraga Davis is a Miami-based boutique firm focused on commercial litigation and arbitration. The firm handles financial services litigation, with an emphasis on predatory lending, which has become particularly problematic in Florida. **José Astigarraga** is known by peers as “one of the best Spanish-speaking litigators in the state and tremendous in international arbitration.” **Edward Davis** focuses his practice on representing individual, corporate and institutional victims of fraud throughout the Americas and the Caribbean.

##### **Bedell Dittmar DeVault Pillans & Cox**

The website of Jacksonville-based boutique Bedell Dittmar DeVault Pillans & Cox flashes its mission statement in the firm’s slogan: “Strictly Litigation. That’s All We Do.” Tracing its roots in the state to 1865, the firm limits its practice to state and federal trial and appellate work, which now includes alternative dispute resolution by mediation and arbitration. A large percentage of the firm’s practice is obtained through referrals from other lawyers throughout the state and nation. **John DeVault** devotes all his practice to complex commercial litigation and legal malpractice. **Henry Cox** is noted as a very good criminal defense lawyer handling both white-collar and traditional criminal cases.

##### **Carlton Fields**

With six offices in Florida and one in Atlanta, Carlton Fields handles high-stakes class action, commercial, intellectual property and mass tort litigation for clients based all throughout the Southeast. **Michael Pasano** is acknowledged by peers as “tremendous, a real trial lawyer” for his work on complex criminal and civil litigation at the trial and appellate levels. **Gary Sasso**, called “one of the best lawyers in the state, and certainly Tampa’s best” by one peer, represents clients in securities and consumer fraud class actions and other complex litigation. **Sylvia Walbolt** receives recognition for her “excellent appellate work,” although it is noted that she no longer heads the practice. In her stead, the appellate torch has been passed to **Wendy Lumish**, who is responsible for an April 2011 reversal of an order granting a new trial after a defense verdict in medical malpractice case finding no error in jury selection.

##### **Greenberg Traurig**

Formed in Miami, Greenberg Traurig has generated an international footprint but

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**“Gene Stearns [of Stearns Weaver] is a relentless advocate that just keeps coming at you – he is driven by his passion for his craft and takes protecting his clients very seriously.”**

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commercial litigation, real estate, labor and employment, bankruptcy, and securities. The firm jumps to highly recommended status in this year’s rankings largely due the sharply elevated profile of litigation chairman **Eugene Stearns** over the last year. Always a consistent mention among Florida peers and someone viewed as “a visionary, with a true wealth of local experience” for decades, Stearns has this year found himself also in the national spotlight due to his landmark victory defending Bank Atlantic Bancorp at the appeals level in a securities class action from which Bank Atlantic emerged the victor, with no settlement to be paid. This case, for which trials are exceptionally rare, was originally announced a massive victory for the plaintiffs in 2011. Undaunted and convinced his client had a case, Stearns appealed and achieved a stunning reversal at the Eleventh Circuit in July 2012. This case made national headlines due to the rare instance of a bank fighting back and bucking a settlement out of principled conviction, and had Stearns’ many Florida fans, who felt his firm’s elevated ranking was long overdue, awestruck and vocally appreciative. “Gene Stearns is a legend. He is a relentless advocate that just keeps coming at you and coming at you – he is driven by his passion for his craft and takes protecting his clients very seriously. He is as skilled and dead serious a litigator as they come.” Stearns is a rare, and some would argue dying, breed of generalist litigator that is known for trial acumen across the board,

that they are understood, respected and become instantly well liked because of their deportment.”

This office has been generating a buzz lately due to several of its more prominent personnel. One of these is bankruptcy specialist **Thomas Lauria**, about whom peers note, “Tom is based in Florida but frankly it would be short-sighted to refer to him as only a ‘Florida litigator.’ His cases take him everywhere, mostly New York, and these cases are very high-profile.” One such restructuring dispute in Lauria’s recent canon includes Chrysler, where he represented holders of portions of Chrysler’s \$7 billion in first-lien secured debt in opposing the reorganization of Chrysler through a sale of substantially all of Chrysler’s assets. Lauria pressed the dispute to the US Supreme Court where he eventually won the vacating of the Second Circuit’s ruling regarding the sale. A peer comments on Lauria’s colorful presence, calling him “a bankruptcy badass” and noting, “He’s got that flair, that image – it’s something I can’t pull off and not many of us can. He’s just a star.” White & Case’s appellate presence in Florida is further bolstered by **Raoul Cantero**, who is also captaining the firm’s dispute representation in Latin America. Cantero has at least four major representations as appeals counsel over the past year to his credit, and he is touted by peers as, “a smooth, smart presence, very persuasive.” **Rudolph Aragon** is cheered for his commercial practice with an international

remains, as peers say, “home-grown,” with offices in Fort Lauderdale, Palm Beach, Tampa, Orlando and Tallahassee. The firm is a “full-service” operation, with a team of lawyers prepared to address almost any legal issue. Recently, the firm’s appellate capacity has received a flurry of feedback, with **Barry Richards** and **Elliot Scherker** receiving several peer nominations. **Hilarie Bass** is regarded by peers as a “tremendous litigator” and “top of the pack.” She concentrates her practice on complex commercial litigation and securities cases. Recent clients include Hilton Hotels and Microsoft.

#### Hogan Lovells

Washington DC-based Hogan Lovells, the new name for what was formerly Hogan & Hartson, has more than 1,100 lawyers practicing in 27 offices worldwide. While the firm no longer maintains a presence in West Palm Beach, its Miami office has grown extensively since opening in 2000. **Daniel González** is co-director of the firm’s international litigation and arbitration practice in Florida. He practices principally in the areas of complex commercial litigation and arbitration in the United States, Latin America, and Europe. He represents owners, developers, contractors and design professionals on all aspects of construction disputes, including engineering, procurement, construction contracts, and design/build contracts.

#### Holland & Knight

While a national firm, Holland & Knight has a significant local footprint and is firmly entrenched in the Florida litigation market. The firm did suffer the loss of commercial and white-collar litigator Peter Prieto, who departed to join Podhurst Orseck in March 2010, which peers agree is a “huge loss for [Holland & Knight.]” However, peers also maintain that “while losing Prieto was a major blow, the firm will survive, it still has excellent litigators.” **Tracy Nichols** is acknowledged by peers as “the best securities litigator in the state.”

#### Page Mrachek Fitzgerald & Rose

Page Mrachek Fitzgerald & Rose is endorsed by peers endorse it as “a great law firm, worthy of mention.” With offices in West Palm Beach and Stuart, Page Mrachek has carved a niche for itself by focusing strictly on trial work in a niche regional market. The firm helped client Citigroup settle 26 separate cases filed by opt-out plaintiffs from the Worldcom class action. **Louis Mrachek** is praised by peers for his complex commercial litigation practice.

#### Richman Greer

With one office in Miami and another in West Palm Beach, Richman Greer operates as a full-service shop that maintains an impressive litigation bench, which often



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represents city governments and officials as well as other Florida law firms, in addition to a standard client base of individuals and corporations. The firm also acts on the plaintiffs’ side against governments as well, as it did recently in a class action case against a sheriff in Broward County who was illegally conducting strip searches. Firm president **Gerald Richman** in the West Palm Beach office litigated this case and achieved an \$11.5 million settlement victory on behalf of his clients. Peers suggest “keep an eye on this firm, as they have a lot of potential ‘future stars’ candidates. Including **Mark Romance** – check *him* out!”

#### Squire Sanders

Global firm Squire Sanders & Dempsey serves Florida through offices in three key markets throughout the state. In March 2011, the firm scored an important cross-border victory when a Florida appellate court rejected a legal end run by two former bankers from the Republic of Ecuador accused of defrauding the Republic of more than \$660 million. **Alvin Davis**, who served as the managing partner of the firm’s Miami office from 2005 to 2010, focuses on complex litigation in the areas of products

liability, securities class actions, environmental claims, regulatory proceedings and a host of sophisticated contractual disputes. Peers consider Davis to be “still on top of his game; he was someone who has been a mentor to quite a few of us Florida litigators.”

#### Weil Gotshal & Manges

Opened in 1981, the Miami office of international firm Weil Gotshal & Manges handles litigation and regulatory responsibilities. Miami partner **Edward Soto** recently led its client UnitedHealth Group to victory in a multi-district litigation lasting seven years. The case concerned allegations made by a class of more than 600,000 physicians claiming that the largest companies in the managed care industries had conspired and engaged in industry-wide fraud concerning reimbursements owed to them. Weil Gotshal stood firm with UnitedHealth and achieved dismissal of the claims. **Christopher Pace** is also noted for his white-collar and appellate acumen. Soto and Pace both helped secure an important pre-trial ruling on behalf of Procter & Gamble in a multidistrict litigation brought by an alleged user of its popular denture cream, Fixodent, who claimed to have developed neurological injuries as a result of her excessive use of the product. Soto and Pace triumphed on having the plaintiff’s claims dismissed.

#### Wicker Smith O’Hara McCoy & Ford

Wicker Smith O’Hara McCoy & Ford is observed by peers as “an old-line firm with a tremendous products liability practice.” With seven locations throughout the state, the firm counts 7-Eleven, Black & Decker, and the Miami Heat as clients. One peer calls **Dennis O’Hara** “as good a litigator as anyone else in town.” He has served as lead counsel or sole attorney in numerous civil jury trials involving medical malpractice, products liability, general negligence, automobile liability and aviation law.

#### Zuckerman Spaeder

The Tampa office of Zuckerman Spaeder is growing in the firm’s Florida profile largely on the reputation of **Morris “Sandy” Weinberg**, who made news in the early 1980s as a plaintiff’s lawyer working on the commodities trading fraud case that eventually brought billionaire financier-turned-fugitive Marc Rich to justice. “Sandy means business,” confirms one ardent fan in the community. Weinberg currently represents a former top executive of a major public health care insurance company in connection with an extensive federal criminal investigation into alleged Medicaid fraud. The Tampa office is also home to other peer-nominated members of Weinberg’s team, **Jack Fernandez**, **Marcos Hasbun** and **Lee Fugate**.

## AKERMAN SENTERFITZ



**Website:** www.akerman.com **Chairman & CEO:** Andrew Smulian

**Litigation Practice Group Chair:** James M. Miller

#### About Akerman

Akerman Senterfitt is a leading transactions and trial law firm known for its core strengths in middle-market M&A, within the financial services and real estate industries, and for a diverse Latin America practice. With more than 500 lawyers and government affairs professionals, and a network of 19 offices, we are ranked among the top 100 law firms in the US by *The National Law Journal NLJ 250* and recognized as the 2012 law firm of the year for diversity – South by *Benchmark Litigation*. We are intensely focused on innovating pragmatic, customized solutions to our clients' most complex legal challenges.

#### Commercial Litigation

Akerman offers a leading trial team that includes more than 200 litigators across the US. Our lawyers are recognized for vast experience in a wide range of civil and criminal litigation, including actions involving the banking, insurance, real estate, and health care sectors. Akerman litigators represent clients in a variety of areas including class action defense, financial institutions commercial litigation, consumer finance litigation, securities litigation and white collar defense, product liability and mass torts, healthcare litigation, intellectual property litigation, employment litigation, bankruptcy, and general business disputes.

Obtaining precedent-setting decisions, Akerman appellate lawyers have served as counsel of record or lead counsel in both federal and state appellate courts. Our appellate team is comprised of distinguished appellate lawyers and former appellate judges, including a former Chief Judge for the United States Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit and former Florida Supreme Court Justice.

#### International Litigation & Arbitration

Akerman is recognized by *US News – Best Lawyers* as a national tier one law firm for International Arbitration and by *Chambers Latin America* as a leading international arbitration law firm across all of Latin America. Our lawyers represent US-based businesses and foreign entities as parties to litigation before US federal and state courts, and in arbitration proceedings under the auspices of a wide range of arbitral bodies. In addition, Akerman lawyers have significant experience in domestic and international dispute resolution for the construction industry, with experience in energy and public infrastructure projects.

#### Offices

Akerman has offices in Florida, New York, Washington, DC, California, Texas, Colorado, Nevada, Utah, Wisconsin, and Virginia.



#### BILZIN SUMBERG BAENA PRICE & AXELROD LLP

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**Number of Attorneys:** 120

#### About Bilzin Sumberg

Bilzin Sumberg is a commercial law firm serving domestic and international clients with timely and efficient counsel, and unmatched depth and breadth of experience in a variety of industries. The firm views each of its clients and the matters in which it represents them as unique and of paramount importance, shouldering each issue as its own. The firm has been recognized for its practice in the areas of corporate and tax, environmental, government relations and land development, litigation, real estate, and restructuring and bankruptcy.

#### Litigation Overview

Bilzin Sumberg's Litigation Group is a nationally recognized practice with broad civil trial experience in planning and analysis, ADR (including arbitration and mediation), trial and appeal.

The team handles cases involving antitrust, business torts, class actions, contract disputes, construction, eminent domain, ILSA, product liability, international arbitration, real estate disputes, securities litigation and white-collar defense.

In addition, the group has significant experience representing clients in regulatory disputes before various federal and state agencies. The Litigation Group is an integral component of Bilzin Sumberg's International practice, a multidisciplinary team that represents domestic and international clients ranging from individual investors to large, privately held and publicly traded companies. The team, which also includes attorneys from the Corporate & Tax, Government Relations, Real Estate, Restructuring & Bankruptcy and Wealth Preservation Groups, routinely handles complex cross-border corporate transactions; tax and wealth preservation planning; environmental, permitting and other regulatory activities; and cross-border litigation matters and international disputes before US courts and international arbitration panels.

Most recently, the firm has expanded its trial practice to include a group of attorneys who will complement the existing team of litigators, and focus their practice on class action defense, governance and securities, internal investigations, white-collar defense, health care fraud and abuse investigations and international arbitrations.

The Litigation attorneys are often engaged in appellate work, and have argued appeals in all Florida appellate levels, including the Florida Supreme Court, as well as numerous federal circuit courts of appeals throughout the United States. Notably, Bilzin Sumberg's appellate attorneys handled the trial and appeal that set the standard for diversity jurisdiction in class action cases in the Eleventh Circuit in relation to the amount in controversy by plaintiffs.

The firm's attorneys are regularly recognized by national legal rankings, including *Chambers USA*, *The Best Lawyers in America* and *Benchmark Litigation*.

# ASTIGARRAGA DAVIS

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## THE POWER OF FOCUS®

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Astigarraga Davis is a boutique law firm focused on international and other business disputes. The firm has an extensive cross-border practice, its lawyers having handled business disputes emanating from virtually every country in the Western Hemisphere as well as elsewhere in the world. Its clients include primarily multinational companies, financial institutions, other public and non-public companies, as well as sovereign states and their instrumentalities. The firm's strengths focus on international arbitration, international litigation and financial services litigation including creditors' rights, bankruptcy, and class actions. It has an international arbitration practice handling cases before the major international arbitral institutions, including the International Chamber of Commerce and the International Centre for Dispute Resolution. As a testament to its dedication to its clients, in 2011 the firm was presented with the Outstanding Client Service award for the *Chambers Latin America* region. With its international network of lawyers worldwide, the firm manages complex disputes in foreign jurisdictions for its clients, including in developing and executing strategies for multi-jurisdictional cases and high-profile controversies, particularly in Latin America and the Caribbean. The firm has an asset recovery team that seeks to pursue fraudsters and corrupt officials around the world to recover misappropriated assets, particularly from fraudulent transactions originating in Latin America and the Caribbean.

### International Litigation

Astigarraga Davis litigates in U.S. federal and state courts, prosecutes and defends arbitrations in the U.S. and abroad, and supervises litigation in courts outside the United States. It often represents foreign litigants in obtaining discovery assistance from U.S. federal courts pursuant to 28 U.S.C. Section 1782, which authorizes discovery in the U.S. for use in foreign proceedings. The firm presently is involved in multiple Section 1782 proceedings in federal courts for the purpose of obtaining evidence and testimony in connection with pending proceedings in Brazil, Ecuador, Mexico, Canada and elsewhere.

The firm's lawyers know the foreign systems, their rules, and the right questions to ask in connection with disputes pending in Latin America. Using its extensive international experience, multi-lingual capabilities, multi-cultural background, and broad network of contacts in the region, the firm also manages substantial disputes in Latin America and supervises business litigation pending in courts there.

### International Arbitration

The firm has an international arbitration practice handling cases before the major international arbitral institutions. The firm's work was recognized when it was awarded the worldwide prize for Niche or Regional Practice that Impressed in 2011 by *Global Arbitration Review*. The firm's lawyers are active in arbitration initiatives. José Astigarraga, for example, was one of ten delegates appointed by the United States Government to advise the NAFTA Commission on the development and use of international arbitration and dispute resolution. He serves as Vice President of the London Court of International Arbitration, is a member of the American Arbitration Association's International Rules Advisory Committee and has lectured extensively on international litigation and arbitration.

### Asset Recovery & Fraud Prosecution

The firm's work includes a practice in asset recovery and fraud prosecution. Working with its international network of lawyers and contacts developed over the years, the firm seeks to recover fraudulently obtained assets. Practice head Edward H. Davis, Jr. is a certified fraud examiner and has lectured extensively on fraud prosecution and international asset recovery. Currently, Astigarraga Davis acts as co-general counsel to the Joint Liquidators of Stanford International Bank Limited, in connection with the liquidation of the Antigua-based bank at the centre of a multi-billion fraud affecting more than twenty-thousand victims. The firm has been involved in liquidation-related activities and litigation throughout the world. The firm has also represented a number of governments in pursuing stolen assets in high-profile grand corruption cases.

### Financial Services Litigation

Astigarraga Davis has extensive litigation experience representing lenders, creditors, banks and other financial institutions in disputes in the United States and abroad. As well, the firm represents investors in disputes arising out of investments and other financial transactions.

The firm represents lenders and creditors domestically in bankruptcy courts in Florida and other states, and internationally in Latin America, including in multi-jurisdictional insolvencies. Practice head Gregory Grossman has broad bankruptcy experience, having handled a diverse array of cases in a number of domestic bankruptcy courts and has lectured on a variety of insolvency related topics. The firm has litigated with, and on behalf of, foreign trustees seeking to enlist the aid of U.S. bankruptcy courts to bar its creditors from seizing collateral or other assets in the U.S. The firm's recognized experience in this area led the World Bank to engage José Astigarraga as a consultant to assess the region's insolvency systems.

### Other Litigation

The firm also has extensive experience in intellectual property litigation, with capabilities including trademark, trade secret, internet, e-commerce, and media law disputes both domestically and abroad. Edward Mullins, a former chair of the Florida Bar Media and Communications Law Committee, has represented newspapers, magazines, radio and television stations, and television networks in numerous lawsuits involving libel, slander, invasion of privacy, intentional infliction of emotional distress, tortious interference with advantageous relationships, trademark infringement, copyright infringement and other publication disputes. The firm's deep knowledge allows it to represent its corporate clients in domain name disputes, intellectual property infringement claims based on the internet, and similar publication claims.

**SAMUEL A. DANON****HUNTON & WILLIAMS LLP**

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Sam Danon is the firm's Head of Litigation which includes a team of over 220 lawyers located around the United States. Sam's practice focuses on business litigation and Sam has led the defense of leading multinational financial institutions, consumer products companies and petroleum companies in numerous lawsuits and arbitrations. In addition to his experience in federal and state courts, he has counseled his clients through multi-jurisdictional disputes. For instance, Sam lead the team that defended Banco Santander in a series of class action lawsuits filed in Federal Courts in New York and Miami, and arbitration proceedings in the US and Europe arising out of investments related to Bernard L. Madoff Investment Securities. A group of cases were consolidated by the Juridical Panel on Multi District Litigation and ultimately dismissed. Similarly, the purported class action filed in the Southern District of New York was dismissed. A third lawsuit was dismissed by the District Court after enforcement of a contractual arbitration provision.

Sam has also represented Diageo in a number of disputes relating to the company's operations in Latin America. These disputes involve claims by the government of Colombia and disputes with distributors located in the region. Sam also represents other leading consumer products companies in various commercial matters including Trademark and Patent disputes.

Sam has been recognized by key legal and business journals and ratings agencies including BTI as a "Client Service All-Star, Benchmark Litigation, "Leader in the Field" by *Chambers USA*, "Key Partner" by the *South Florida Business Journal*, "Top Lawyer" by *The South Florida Legal Guide*, and is listed in *The Best Lawyers in America*, *Florida Super Lawyers*, and *Florida Trend's* "Legal Elite" amongst other regional and practice focused publications.

Sam is a member of the American Bar Association, the Cuban American Bar Association, the Hispanic National Bar Association and the Dade County (Florida) Bar Association. He is admitted to practice in the U.S. District Courts for the Southern, Middle and Northern Districts of Florida. After earning his law degree, Sam served as a law clerk for the Honorable K. Michael Moore in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Florida.

Sam received his JD from University of Pennsylvania Law School and his BA from University of Pennsylvania, and is a member of the Florida State and District of Columbia Bars.

**HUNTON &  
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**THOMAS R. JULIN****HUNTON & WILLIAMS LLP**

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Thomas R. Julin has been counsel in litigation resulting in more than 220 reported decisions. Tom appears regularly in state and federal trial and appellate courts, but is best known as an advocate for free speech rights of both large and small clients. Early in his career, he persuaded the Florida Supreme Court to enjoin Sunshine Law violations by the University of Florida College of Law. He later defended a national television network, a local television station, and a national magazine against multimillion-dollar libel claims. Most recently he led challenges in three New England states against laws restraining the speech of major healthcare companies and defended a national news reporter subpoenaed to testify in a high profile Texas criminal case.

Recently, Mr. Julin and team won a milestone US Supreme Court decision recognizing First Amendment protection for data mining and targeted marketing. It has broad ramifications for laws advocated by the FTC, Commerce Department, and White House and now being considered by Congress to regulate targeted marketing by Internet companies.

Mr. Julin has been recognized in *Chambers USA* and *The Best Lawyers in America*.

Mr. Julin is admitted to practice before the US Supreme Court, the US Courts of Appeals for the First, Second, Fifth and Eleventh Circuits, and all US District Courts in Florida and the District of Columbia.

Mr. Julin received his JD from the University of Florida Levin College of Law, where he was chief tax editor of the law review.

**HUNTON &  
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**ROBERT C. JOSEFSBERG**

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Bob was born September 23, 1938, in Brooklyn, New York. He received his BA Degree from Dartmouth College in 1959. He graduated from the Yale Law School in 1962, and was admitted to the Florida Bar in 1962 and to the US Supreme Court in 1970.

Bob is one of Dade County's premiere trial lawyers. He has been listed annually since 1987 in the *Best Lawyers in America* in two categories—Business Litigation and Criminal Law. For 2013, he was selected by *Best Lawyers in America* as the *Miami Criminal Defense White Collar "Lawyer of the Year"*. Since 2003, he has been listed in Chambers and Partners as one of the top four commercial litigators in Florida. In 2006, he was listed #1 Trial Lawyer in Florida by Super Lawyers. He has received the Dade County Bar David Dyer Professionalism Award, the Bnai Brith Professionalism Award, the Florida Defense Lawyers Rodney Thaxton "Against All Odds" award, the American Bar Association Senior Section Pro Bono Award and the Florida Bar Tobias Simon Pro Bono Service Award in 2009 and 2010. In 2012, Bob was inducted into the Trial Lawyers Hall of Fame. He also received the Greater Miami Jewish Federation's Honorable Ted Klein Special Recognition Award, the Dade County Bar Association Criminal Justice Award, and The Florida Bar Criminal Law Section's Selig Goldin Award.

He is past President and Dean of the International Academy of Trial Lawyers, a fellow of the American College of Trial Lawyers, past President of the Peter T. Fay American Inns of Court, and a member of the American Board of Trial Advocates. He has served on the American Bar Association Standing Committee on the Judiciary, as Chairman of the Southern District of Florida Judicial Evaluation Committee, served as a member of the Florida Federal Judicial Nominating Commission and the Florida State University Law School Board of Visitors. In addition to extensive involvement in the firm's commercial practice, Bob handles the firm's white-collar criminal defense work—an outgrowth of his background as an assistant US Attorney for the Southern District of Florida; as Special Counsel to the Dade County Grand Jury; and as a member of numerous commissions and task forces in the area of criminal law, including the US Supreme Court Advisory Committee on Criminal Rules and Chairmanship of the Florida Bar's Criminal Law Certification Committee. He served as General Counsel to Governor Robert Graham in 1980. Bob has lectured extensively throughout the United States on substantive issues, ethics, professionalism and civility. His 1994 article on civility has been reprinted in more than 20 legal journals and periodicals. Bob is extensively involved in community activities, with particular emphasis upon the prevention of drug and alcohol abuse by young people.

Bob has also been recognized by the following organizations: Florida Trend's *"Legal Elite"* (2007-2012) and South Florida Legal Guide *"Top Lawyers"* (2007-2012).

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**AARON S. PODHURST**

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Aaron Podhurst has been a distinguished trial lawyer for more than forty years. He received his BA from the University of Michigan and his Juris Doctorate Degree from Columbia University, where he was a Harland Fiske Stone Scholar. Aaron is admitted to the Florida and New York Bars.

Aaron's distinguished career has brought him honors and offices from virtually every major legal organization, including the presidencies of the International Academy of Trial Lawyers and The Florida Justice Association, fellowship in the American College of Trial Lawyers, member of Board of Governors of American Association for Justice, membership in the International Society of Barristers and the Inner Circle of Advocates, member of the Cuban American Bar Association and chairmanship of various aviation committees of the American Bar Association, American Association for Justice and The Florida Justice Association.

Although Aaron made his reputation as one of the nation's premiere plaintiff's aviation lawyers, and continues to hold that status, he has guided the firm in recent years to its status as one of the major commercial litigation firms in South Florida. At the same time, he has managed to devote countless hours to community service, including the presidency of the Greater Miami Jewish Federation and membership in many other civic organizations. He is the recipient of the Medallion of Honor from the National Conference for Community and Justice and the 1999 Jurisprudence Award from the Anti-Defamation League, and the 2010 recipient of the "Legal Legends" award presented by the Eleventh Judicial Circuit Historical Society and the Historical Museum of South Florida.

Aaron has been listed annually in *"Best Lawyers of America"* since 1983 in the areas of Personal Injury Litigation, Commercial Litigation and Bet-The-Company Litigation. In 2009 and for 2013, he was selected by *Best Lawyers in America* as the *Miami Personal Injury Litigation "Lawyer of the Year"*. He has also been recognized by the following organizations: Florida Trend's *"Legal Elite"* (2007-2012) and South Florida Legal Guide *"Top Lawyers"* (2007-2012).

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## PETER PRIETO



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For almost 25 years, Peter Prieto has focused his practice on complex commercial litigation, including class actions, and white-collar criminal defense. He has represented clients—both individual and corporate—in a wide array of civil litigation, including business disputes, health care, antitrust, product liability, RICO and class-action litigation. Peter has also represented individual and corporate clients in criminal investigations and prosecutions involving business, banking and health care fraud, public corruption, aviation, environmental violations, antitrust and money laundering.

During his career, including several years as a federal prosecutor, Peter has obtained substantial trial and appellate experience. He has tried over 25 criminal and civil cases and has argued over a dozen appeals before the Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals. He has been recognized as one of the “Top Lawyers in South Florida,” according to the *South Florida Legal Guide*, and is listed in *The Best Lawyers in America*, *Florida’s Legal Elite*, and *Chambers USA*, which has praised Peter for being “thorough in his advice” to clients, and for his “trial experience and plain speaking good judgment.”

Peter currently serves as a member of the Judicial Nominating Commission for the Third District Court of Appeal and previously served, pursuant to appointments by Governors Lawton Chiles and Jeb Bush, as a Commissioner on Florida’s Commission on Ethics. He serves on the Advisory Board of the University of Miami School of Law’s Center for Ethics & Public Service and on the Alumni Advisory Board of the University of Miami *Law Review*. Peter is also a member of the Board of Trustees of St. Thomas University.

Prior to joining the firm, Peter was a federal prosecutor, first with the United States Attorney’s Office for the Southern District of Florida, and later with the Office of Independent Counsel in Washington, DC where he worked on the criminal investigation of the late Secretary of Commerce, Ronald H. Brown. For over a decade, he was also a partner and trial lawyer with the firm of Holland & Knight LLP.

Peter has been recognized by the following organizations: *Best Lawyers in America* (2005-2013); *Chambers USA* (litigation; 2007-2012); South Florida Legal Guide “Top Lawyers” (2007-2012) and Florida Trend’s *Legal Elite* (2007-2010).

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## STEPHEN F. ROSENTHAL



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Stephen has been a partner in the firm since 2006. His practice consists of a combination of complex trial and appellate litigation. He has argued more than 30 appeals in federal and state courts, including the Florida Supreme Court, and has tried multiple cases to jury. The subject-matter of his work covers a broad sweep. On the plaintiff’s side, he has handled numerous aviation mass tort, product liability and consumer class-action cases. For the defense, Stephen has been retained by individuals and companies in a range of significant commercial disputes.

Stephen has also developed considerable experience in election law. He was appointed to serve as the lead lawyer for President Obama’s re-election campaign in Florida, a position he also held in the 2008 election. While his representation of campaigns is typically *pro bono*, he has also been retained by senior elected officials for certain important litigation.

Prior to joining the firm in 2001, Stephen spent six years in government service. He spent his first two years out of law school as a federal law clerk, first to Judge Mark Wolf on the US District Court for the District of Massachusetts (in Boston) and then to Judge Rosemary Barkett of the US Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit (in Miami). After serving briefly in the Appellate Section of the US Attorney’s Office for the Southern District of Florida, he joined the Department of Justice in Washington, DC, where he served as a trial attorney in the Civil Division’s Federal Programs Branch.

He is a graduate of Harvard Law School (*cum laude*, 1996) and Harvard College (*magna cum laude*, *Phi Beta Kappa*, 1992). He also had the fortune of spending an additional year of study in England as a Rotary Foundation Ambassadorial Scholar. He was salutatorian of his high school class in Miami.

Married with two children, Stephen maintains an active role in community and civic affairs. He presently serves on the leadership committee of the fund-raising arm of Legal Services of Greater Miami. He has been active in and served as President of the American Constitution Society’s South Florida Chapter (2005-2006), as a board member of the Florida Justice Association (2008-2010), and of the American Jewish Committee’s South Florida ACCESS Program, and as an advisor to the technology company, Linxter, Inc.

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TRIAL & APPELLATE LAWYERS



## WEIL GOTSHAL & MANGES

**Litigation Department Chairs:** James W. Quinn and David J. Lender

**Headquarters:** 767 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10153

**Main Telephone:** 212-310-8000

**Web:** <http://www.weil.com>

**Offices:** The firm has US offices in Boston, Dallas, Houston, Miami, New York, Princeton, Providence, Silicon Valley, Washington, DC and Wilmington, and international offices in Beijing, Budapest, Dubai, Frankfurt, Hong Kong, London, Munich, Paris, Prague, Shanghai, and Warsaw.

### Firm Profile

Weil is a leader in the marketplace for sophisticated, global legal services. Our pioneering “one firm” approach, which integrates approximately 1,200 attorneys across 21 offices and multiple practice areas, allows the firm to partner with many of the world’s most successful organizations on matters as complex and interconnected as the businesses themselves.

### Weil’s Litigation Department

Featuring approximately 400 lawyers in more than a dozen practice areas and specialties, Weil’s litigation practice is one of the largest, most diversified, and highly respected in the legal industry. Weil provides clients with solutions to complex, multi-faceted legal challenges, including business disputes, regulatory actions and investigations, financial distress, and other potentially enterprise-changing circumstances. Weil’s litigators partner with clients not just to address immediate concerns, but to integrate legal strategy into the wider framework of their current and future business objectives.

**Complex Commercial Litigation.** Weil is a one-stop firm for commercial litigation matters, and has achieved victories in recent high-profile disputes for The Walt Disney Company, Procter & Gamble, Deutsche Bank, StubHub, The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, Exxon Mobil Corporation, and UnitedHealth Group, among others. The group specializes in high-stakes breach of contract, fraud, tortious interference, unfair competition and other business tort claims, class actions, and litigations arising under RICO and numerous other statutes. The firm’s comprehensive services, recognized track record, efficiency, and extensive worldwide experience makes it a favored choice at any and every stage of the litigation process, regardless of the scope or nature of the matter.

**Securities Litigation.** Weil’s securities litigation group has handled numerous high-stakes, precedent-setting assignments over the past decade, including those relating to the insolvency or restructuring of major financial institutions, high-profile SEC enforcement proceedings, white-collar securities prosecutions, proxy contests, busted-deal litigation, class action and derivative litigation, and litigation arising out of accounting restatements. The group continues to tackle complex litigation and investigations arising out of the financial crisis for clients like AIG, Archstone, General Electric, and Lehman Brothers Holdings; derivative litigation related to executive compensation, sub-prime mortgage exposure, and other issues; and shareholder suits arising out of large, sophisticated M&A transactions for a range of companies, such as Kinder Morgan and Providence Equity Partners.

**Intellectual Property.** Weil’s IP lawyers are internationally recognized for their skills and experience litigating large, complex cases in connection with evolving areas of law, technology, and business. The group’s work in the area of digital media has been trailblazing, touching on multiple areas of commercial significance including e-commerce, digital rights management, and digital content licensing. The group also is recognized for its involvement in false advertising, music licensing, television/motion picture and other content distribution, and privacy/data protection, among other IP disciplines.

**Antitrust Litigation.** Weil is regularly retained by some of the largest corporations in the world to handle their antitrust litigation matters. Our antitrust litigators advise clients on the inter-relationship between antitrust, intellectual property, trade, and unfair competition laws and regulations, and litigate and try those cutting-edge issues in a wide range of civil and criminal cases before juries and judges in multiple jurisdictions. Representative clients include American Airlines, Johnson & Johnson, MasterCard, and Panasonic.

**Patent Litigation.** Our patent litigation group is known for winning commercially significant disputes in the life sciences, semi-conductor, electronics, and computer technology areas. We have received extensive recognition from clients, peers, and the press as a best-in-class practice, and regularly represent industry leaders, such as Cisco Systems, Inc., eBay, General Electric, Merck, Micron Technology, Yahoo! and Microsoft.

**Product Liability.** The group handles significant product liability and complex mass tort matters, including nationwide class actions, MDL proceedings, and joint state/federal litigations. Our group has won some of the largest consumer fraud class actions involving alleged product defects in the US, and has handled one of the single-largest product recalls in European history. Its experience extends to a broad range of areas, including automotive products, industrial chemicals, medical devices, toys, food and beverage, PCBs, pharmaceuticals, OTC consumer products, building products, heavy equipment, and airlines.

**Employment.** Consistently ranked as a leading firm nationwide in employment litigation and employment counseling, Weil litigates and advises clients on the full spectrum of employment issues, focusing on complex, multi-disciplinary problems such as class and mass actions, large-scale reductions in force, executive compensation, separation and employment agreements, ERISA litigation, and restrictive covenant and trade secrets litigation. Notable clients include UnitedHealth Group, Merrill Lynch & Co., Avon Products, Marsh USA, Forest Laboratories, and Gate Gourmet.

**White Collar Defense & Investigations.** Led by an elite group of highly ranked criminal defense lawyers with extensive government experience, Weil’s white-collar practice conducts complex internal investigations and handles an array of criminal, civil, and regulatory investigations and parallel litigation arising out of accounting issues, allegations of insider trading, market manipulation, and cartelization, and allegations related to US criminal and regulatory laws with international and extra-territorial dimensions, such as the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act.

**International Arbitration and Trade.** Weil’s international arbitration and trade practice possesses vast experience – having been involved in more than 200 major international disputes – including scores of arbitrations – dealing with the laws of dozens of different nations. Leading multinationals involved in important international disputes repeatedly turn to Weil for its business-oriented approach, extensive government and trade experience, and recognized skill in handling complex investment and commercial arbitrations before all major arbitral institutions, including the ICC, AAA, LCIA, ICSID, and WIPO.

# WHITE & CASE

## Supporting Our Clients Around The Globe

White & Case is a truly global law firm, uniquely positioned to help our clients achieve their ambitions in today's G20 world.

As a pioneering international law firm, our cross-border expertise and diverse team of local, US and English-qualified lawyers consistently deliver results for our clients.

In both established and emerging markets, our lawyers are integral, long-standing members of the community, giving our clients insights into the local business environment alongside our expertise in multiple jurisdictions.

We work with some of the world's most respected and well-established banks and businesses, as well as start-up visionaries, governments and state-owned entities.

## Local Knowledge, Global Resources

While the concept of "going global" may be a new one for many law firms, it is familiar ground for us.

Our lawyers are adept at working in multiple systems, distinguishing subtle, cultural nuances and identifying local concerns, while managing larger multijurisdictional issues.

## Litigation Overview

Our litigation practice includes more than 200 US litigators and a team of nearly 400 litigators in 19 countries. We successfully represent clients in a wide range of cases, including complex business, financial, antitrust and securities disputes; consumer and commercial class actions; regulatory actions and criminal matters; and cutting-edge patent, trademark and technology disputes.

Our litigators have considerable experience representing clients in most industries and before all types of trial, appellate, regulatory and alternative dispute resolution tribunals, as well as government agencies, including the SEC, the US Attorney General's Office, the New York Stock Exchange, the US Department of Justice, the US Departments of State, Commerce and Treasury, the US Patent & Trademark Office, the IRS, the Federal Trade Commission and the International Trade Commission.

Our litigators include former in-house counsel from leading companies, a US District Judge, a Florida Supreme Court Judge, the US Deputy Attorney General, a presidentially appointed US Attorney, a Senior Associate Counsel to the President and Legal Advisor to the National Security Council, former trial counsel for the SEC and numerous former state and federal prosecutors.

Recent representations include *Stolt Nielsen S.A.*, in a Supreme Court victory denying class arbitration of antitrust claims, *Pfizer Inc.* in a patent infringement litigation which resulted in Pfizer's exclusive market for Lyrica® until December 2018 and *Sandoz Inc.* in the long-running AWP litigation pending in various state and federal courts around the country. On July 13, the Alabama Supreme Court reversed a US\$78 million jury verdict and entered judgment in favor of Sandoz.

## Recognition

National and international legal ranking services have recognized White & Case lawyers:

- TNumber One Global Law Firm *Law360 2012*
- TInternational Arbitration (Commercial) Law Firm of the Year *U.S. News & World Report – Best Lawyers 2011 – 2012*
- TAntitrust Group of the Year *Law360 2012*
- TThis firm's disputes practice offers considerable geographical spread, with highly regarded offices on both US coasts, as well as across Europe and in Japan. *Chambers Global 2011*
- T"Global Elite in Antitrust/Competition" *Global Competition Review 2011*
- TWhite & Case's International Arbitration Practice has risen to Band One in *Chambers Global*, one of only two firms worldwide to be ranked in the highest category. *Chambers Global 2011*
- TA "Class Action Law Firm of the Year" *Law360 2011*
- T"Top 10 US Firm" *American Lawyer 2011*

## RUDY F. ARAGON



### WHITE & CASE

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Mr. Aragon maintains a diverse commercial litigation and trial practice in state and federal courts throughout Florida and elsewhere in the United States. He has represented regional and national clients, as well as clients from Latin America, Europe and Asia. Throughout his career, he has tried more than 80 cases, including in excess of 35 jury trials. He has also argued numerous appeals in state and federal courts, including cases before the Florida Supreme Court. Some of his most significant matters include the representation of corporate and individual defendants in litigation arising from the failures of Premium Sales, Amerifirst Savings & Loan, Sunrise Savings & Loan and Southeast Bank.

In the area of financial litigation, Mr. Aragon has advised, represented and served as lead trial counsel for banks and other financial institutions in matters involving alleged lender liability, major loan defaults, distressed real estate scenarios, fraudulent transactions, and threatened or actual bankruptcy and insolvency matters.

Mr. Aragon has an active practice advising, representing and serving as lead trial counsel for accounting firms and large law firms in professional liability litigation. Among his accounting clients are two of the Big Four accounting firms, and two of the largest Florida accounting firms. His law firm clients include various regional and national law firms that have been sued in Florida and elsewhere. He represented the accounting firm sued in connection with the failure of Southeast Bank and the law firm sued in connection with the collapse of Amerifirst Savings & Loan.

In the area of intellectual property litigation, Mr. Aragon has served as trial counsel in various trademark and patent disputes, including representation of Cordis Corporation in patent litigation involving coronary stents. He has also represented, counseled and served as trial counsel for Cox Radio, Inc. and other news outlets in libel and First Amendment cases, and has represented individual and corporate plaintiffs and defendants in defamation cases filed in state and federal courts.

Mr. Aragon has also served as lead trial counsel in various complex contract disputes, securities litigation and healthcare litigation. Additionally, he has served as lead and local counsel in several national class actions, and has represented accounting firms, law firms, charitable foundations, banks and other financial institutions in class actions alleging securities fraud, professional negligence, the Electronic Funds Transfer Act, the Telephone Consumer Protection Act, usury and regulatory violations.

From 1970 to 1976, Mr. Aragon served as an intelligence officer with the United States Air Force, including assignments in Vietnam and Panama. Mr. Aragon received his BA from Indiana University (1971) and his JD from Yale Law School (1979).

# WHITE & CASE

**RAOUL G. CANTERO****WHITE & CASE**

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Former Justice Raoul G. Cantero is a partner in the Firm's Commercial Litigation Practice. Mr. Cantero leads the Miami Appellate Practice, in addition to focusing on cross-border disputes relating to Latin America. Since 1995, he has been board-certified by the Florida Bar in appellate practice. He is also a certified arbitrator for the American Arbitration Association and the International Centre for Dispute Resolution. Mr. Cantero's representative clients include Wells Fargo Bank, The Florida Senate, Honeywell International and QBE Insurance Company. He has been with the Firm since October 2008.

Appointed to the Florida Supreme Court in 2002, Mr. Cantero was the first justice of Hispanic descent and one of the youngest ever to sit on the Court. In his six years as a justice, he heard hundreds of appeals and authored well over 100 majority, concurring and dissenting opinions, by definition involving precedent-setting and evolving areas of law. Mr. Cantero authored the Court's opinion invalidating the gaming compact executed by Governor Charlie Crist with the Seminole Tribe of Florida and its unanimous opinion holding that the waiver of the Florida homestead exemption in an unsecured agreement is unenforceable. He was also the sole dissenter in a decision of the Court holding that under the Federal Arbitration Act, a party may avoid arbitration by arguing that the contract in which the arbitration clause is contained is illegal—a decision the United States Supreme Court later reversed.

Mr. Cantero chaired the Florida Supreme Court's Commission on Professionalism for six years. He also has been an adjunct professor at Florida State University College of Law.

Before his Court appointment, Mr. Cantero was in private practice for 14 years in South Florida, specializing in civil and criminal appeals, during which he handled more than 250 appeals and more than 100 oral arguments in all five District Courts of Appeal of Florida, the Florida Supreme Court and several US Courts of Appeals.

In 2007, Mr. Cantero was honored by the Cuban American Bar Association (CABA) with the creation of an endowment in his name, The Justice Raoul G. Cantero, III Diversity Enhancement Scholarship at Florida State University.

**Representative Appeals as counsel**

- *Chalfonte v. QBE Ins. Co.*, 37 Fla. L. Weekly S395 (Fla. 2012)
- *In re Legis. Reapportionment*, 37 Fla. L. Weekly S319 (Fla. 2012)
- *Florida Gaming Centers v. DBPR*, 71 So. 3d 226 (1st DCA 2011)
- *Austin Building Co. v. Rago, Ltd.*, 63 So.3d 31 (3d DCA 2011)
- *General Star Indemn. v. Atlantic Hosp.*, 57 So.3d 238 (3d DCA 2011)
- *Buckley Towers v. QBE Ins. Co.*, 2010 WL 3551609 (11th Cir. 2010)
- *Penzer v. Transportation Ins. Co.*, 29 So. 3d 1000 (Fla. 2010)
- *Penzer v. Transportation Ins. Co.*, 29 So. 3d 1000 (Fla. 2010)

**Community Recognition**

Florida Legal Elite (Appellate Practice), Florida Trend 2011  
Chambers USA – Band 1 Florida Litigation–2011, 2012  
*Benchmark Litigation*–Litigation Star 2011, 2012

**WHITE & CASE****THOMAS E. LAURIA****WHITE & CASE**

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Thomas Lauria is the global head of the Financial Restructuring and Insolvency Practice at White & Case, which comprises more than 160 lawyers located in more than 20 countries.

Mr. Lauria has led efforts to restructure more than US\$100 billion of debt in many of the largest, most followed Chapter 11 cases. Notable ongoing or completed representations include: Major League Baseball in connection with the Los Angeles Dodgers' bankruptcy; Dynegy, Inc. in connection with its ongoing restructuring efforts; and the senior lenders in connection with the restructuring of three global shipping companies, including Torm A/S and General Maritime. Since 2010, his practice has completed Chapter 11 representations where (1) creditors and equity investors recovered in excess of US\$3 billion in value, (2) financial and strategic investors closed deals valued at more than US\$7.5 billion, (3) debtor clients successfully restructured more than US\$3.5 billion of claims and (4) lender clients made in excess of US\$1.5 billion in DIP loans.

Mr. Lauria regularly represents debtors, unsecured creditors, strategic and financial investors, sovereigns and foreign representatives in a wide variety of industries and market sectors, and has been involved in some of the largest and most complex restructurings in history, including LightSquared, the Texas Rangers, Chrysler, Lehman Brothers, Washington Mutual, Six Flags, Trump Casinos, Tribune Company, WCI Communities, Delphi, Adelphia Communications, Mirant and Corporación Durango.

Mr. Lauria is admitted to the State Bars of Florida and Texas; the US Courts of Appeal for the Second, Fifth and Eleventh Circuits; and multiple districts of the US District Courts of Florida and Texas. Mr. Lauria has received numerous awards and recognitions, including "Leading Innovative Lawyer" by the *Financial Times* and "Outstanding Restructuring Lawyer" by *Turnarounds & Workouts*. He received his BA and JD, with Honors, from the University of Tennessee. Mr. Lauria is an avid supporter of his alma mater and volunteers his advice and leadership to academic and philanthropic organizations.

**WHITE & CASE**

# HUNTON & WILLIAMS

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## FIRM OVERVIEW:

Founded in 1901, Hunton & Williams LLP is a US law firm with a significant international presence. Hunton & Williams has grown to more than 800 lawyers who work in 19 offices serving clients in over 100 countries in more than 100 separate practice areas.

## LITIGATION OVERVIEW:

Hunton & Williams' Litigation practice is recognized as one of the major litigation groups in the country. The practice encompasses virtually every area of law, including eDiscovery and data intrusion, antitrust, appellate, business crimes defense, complex business litigation, corporate governance and mergers and acquisitions, intellectual property and patent litigation, international arbitration and dispute resolution, product liability, securities and corporate governance, toxic tort, bankruptcy, restructuring and creditors' rights.

We have the capabilities and proven track record to successfully litigate matters involving most legal disciplines, including antitrust and competition; banking and finance; bankruptcy and restructuring; construction; corporate governance; ecommerce; energy and development; environmental and regulatory matters; insurance coverage; IP and patent, trademark and copyright litigation; labor and employment; mergers and acquisitions; product liability and mass tort; securities; and tax.

Our lawyers represent corporate leaders across many industry sectors, including financial services, energy and natural resources, health care, pharmaceuticals, telecommunications, technology, ecommerce, manufacturing, and many others. Our clients range in size from Fortune 5 to Fortune 500 companies.

Our litigators work from all of the firm's US offices in New York, California, Texas, Washington, DC, Florida, Virginia, North Carolina, and Georgia. We can also staff international matters from five offices located in London, Brussels, Beijing, Tokyo, and Bangkok.

Our trial lawyers frequently team with firm colleagues who are at the forefront of their practice areas, including patent, securities, environmental, and other areas requiring specialized knowledge. Our interdisciplinary approach gives our clients an edge in court. We are able to draw upon talented lawyers with the precise skill sets our clients need, regardless of their location.

## OFFICES:

Hunton & Williams has offices in Atlanta, Austin, Bangkok, Beijing, Brussels, Charlotte, Dallas, Houston, London, Los Angeles, McLean, Miami, New York, Norfolk, Raleigh, Richmond, San Francisco, Tokyo, and Washington, DC

## DENNIS M. O'HARA



### WICKER SMITH O'HARA MCCOY & FORD P.A.

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Dennis M. O'Hara is a Managing Partner in the firm's Fort Lauderdale office. In his 30+ year career, Mr. O'Hara has served as lead counsel or sole attorney in numerous civil jury trials involving medical malpractice, product liability, general negligence, automobile liability and aviation law.

Mr. O'Hara has been involved in Aviation Law since the late 1970s. Over the years, he has handled both commercial and general aviation cases, representing clients such as AIG Aviation, Allianz Aviation, American Airlines, Delta Air Lines, Global Aerospace, Starr Aviation, USAIRWAYS, United States Aviation Underwriters and XL Aerospace. He has been involved in major aviation air disasters, including acting as lead counsel for Valujet in the multi-district litigation for the Valujet crash in the Florida Everglades on May 11, 1996, and the Bahamas crash of the Cessna 402 carrying the entertainer, Aaliyah. He also served as lead counsel for Chalks in the incident involving the crash of their Grumman Mallard seaplane that occurred in Miami harbor on December 19, 2005, and he was involved as counsel for Comair and Delta Air Lines in the Lexington, Kentucky crash which occurred on August 27, 2006. He has handled many general aviation matters on behalf of aircraft manufacturers, fixed base operators, and owner/operators, including the Miami Heat.

In his medical malpractice work, he has defended health care providers, pharmaceutical companies and other health care related clients in cases related to wrongful death, infant death, brain damage, paralysis, surgical and nursing issues both in Pennsylvania and Florida. Mr. O'Hara serves as counsel for the Swiss Hoffmann-La Roche companies, namely F. Hoffman-La Roche Ltd and Roche Holdings Ltd. He also served as counsel for NutriSystem, Inc. in the class action litigation involving over 300 lawsuits concerning the NutriSystem Weight Loss Centers.

AV® Preeminent™ rated by Martindale-Hubbell, Mr. O'Hara has received numerous accolades throughout his career. He is one of only six Florida attorneys named to the list of International Who's Who of Product Liability Defense Lawyers in 2011. He has been named among "Florida's Legal Elite" by *Florida Trend* magazine, and "Top Lawyers" by the *South Florida Legal Guide* from 2005 to 2012, as well as Florida Super Lawyers from 2006 to 2012 and Best Lawyers in America from 2007 to 2012. In 1999, he was inducted into the International Academy of Trial Lawyers (IATL).

## About Wicker Smith

Founded in 1952, Wicker Smith is a full-service trial firm deeply experienced in handling significant and complex litigation in over 20 different practice areas for a broad variety of clients, ranging from multinational corporations to individuals. Although over its history the firm has changed in size and scope, the goal of providing exceptional legal representation has remained the same. With seven offices, over 140 attorneys, and an experienced support staff of legal assistants, paralegals, investigators, nurses, and a physician, Wicker Smith can provide legal services for its clients throughout the entire State of Florida and beyond.

**WICKER SMITH**  
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