

Jared Zola | Partner

Insurance Recovery

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Jared Zola is a partner in Blank Rome’s policyholder-only insurance recovery practice, formerly the insurance practice of Dickstein Shapiro LLP. One of the nation’s preeminent policyholder trial lawyers, his work litigating high-stakes cases across the country for blue chip corporate clients has earned him consistent praise. Recent accolades include:

- Jared was recently named one of the “Top 500 Leading Litigators in America” by *Lawdragon*.
- He is also ranked highly in insurance based on client feedback, including by *Chambers USA* (Nationwide and New York), as a *Legal 500* “Leading Lawyer” (one of 17 nationally in the Insurance Policyholder category), and as a top litigator by *Benchmark Litigation*.
- Lexology, Inc. named him the 2020 “Exclusive Winner of the Client Choice Award for Insurance & Reinsurance for the USA” (finalists can only be nominated by corporate counsel).
- The *New York Law Journal* named Jared a “New York Trailblazer” in its inaugural list (the only insurance lawyer across all practices).
- In its most recent editions, *Who’s Who Legal* named Jared a “Global Leader” and a “Thought Leader.”
- Before Jared turned 40 years old, *Law360* named him a “Top Attorney Under 40” in four consecutive years for his work on behalf of insurance policyholders—he is the only attorney to ever be named a “Rising Star” more than once in the insurance category.
- Jared is a Fellow of the invitation-only American College of Coverage Counsel.

Jared is a frequent analyst for the *Financial Times*, *Washington Post*, NBC News,

CBS News, *Business Insurance*, *Insurance Business America*, and *Law360*.

During the past 24 months, Jared took a lead role presenting witnesses' direct testimony and cross-examining witnesses at a successful insurance recovery arbitration for a *Fortune* 500 company involving major international product liability losses; he took a lead role presenting witnesses' direct testimony and cross-examining witnesses at a high-profile insurance recovery jury trial in New York federal court involving property damage and business interruption losses; he successfully argued for summary judgment on the applicable "number of occurrences" issue in a significant insurance recovery litigation in Minnesota federal court for a *Fortune* 500 company involving an underlying medical device product liability MDL; he successfully argued in opposition to summary judgment and reconsideration in a closely watched insurance recovery litigation in New Jersey state court for a publicly traded REIT involving pollution liability coverage from COVID-19; he defeated an insurer's motion to dismiss the counterclaim seeking insurance coverage filed in California federal court for the largest bakery company in the United States; and he settled an insurance recovery case in Ireland for a Global 500 company involving an underlying advertising loss.

Jared's industry recognitions span more than 10 years. Recent commentary includes:

- *Chambers USA: Chambers 2024* quotes clients stating that: "Jared is an exceptionally knowledgeable attorney who is gifted at framing and then presenting arguments and very fast at assimilating new knowledge and applying it to the matter at hand," and he "is very experienced and a strategic thinker who is calm, measured but also assertive." Recent *Chambers* editions cite the following client feedback: "Jared is extremely practical and business-oriented" and he "doesn't get overly technical and is great at making complex ideas simple." Clients also note his "expert handling of complex, high-stakes and often sensitive coverage disputes," saying that he "not only is an excellent attorney but also fantastic adviser, thinking through all the strategic elements of the issue," is "sought out by policyholders to provide representation on several complex coverage claims," and "is very well connected and a strong advocate."
- *Legal 500: Legal 500 2024* recognizes that: "In New York, Jared Zola focuses on high-stakes litigation and corporate transactions." In 2024, clients are quoted as saying that: "I cannot say enough about Jim Murray and Jared Zola. A lot of large law firms, of course, have the expertise to litigate. However, Jim and Jared along with their litigation expertise put their clients first and try to find ways to resolve matters in the best interests of the client. They have a common-sense approach to litigation that some others do not. ...[I]t is not practical to litigate all cases to death and Jim and Jared have that rare combination of legal expertise, common sense, and loyalty to the interest of the client that make them ideal for any policyholder that needs a coverage lawyer."
- Lexology 2020 Client Choice (client comments): Jared "knows how to make complex topics easily understandable," he "always makes sure to put his

clients' urgent matters first." "Jared is practical, quick and accurate" and he "has a very good sense of nuanced strategy."

- *Who's Who Legal: Insurance & Reinsurance* (client comments): Jared is an "outside-the-box thinker and expert negotiator" who "combines high technical expertise with a client-friendly approach" and is praised for his "outstanding work in the practice area."

Outside The Firm

Jared actively supports Clemson University's P.A.W. Journey, which is a leadership initiative that holistically develops Clemson Football scholar-athletes through personal growth, life skills, and professional development. P.A.W., an acronym for "Passionate About Winning," encourages football student leaders to maintain a continually competitive posture towards all aspects of the journey of life. Jared works with Clemson's P.A.W. Journey professionals to connect with football alumni in New York City.

Additionally, Jared actively supports several charities. He raises money for and rides in the annual "Cycle for Survival" event, which is Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center's national fundraising movement to beat rare cancers.

Jared is a regular fixture in spin classes at SoulCycle's West Village studio.

Select Engagements

Jared advocates for commercial insurance policyholders in high-stakes, complex litigation and corporate transactions. He represents policyholders against their insurance companies as lead counsel in precedent-setting lawsuits across the nation and at the deal table as insurance counsel on multi-billion dollar mergers and acquisitions. Jared uses his courtroom and real world experience to provide clients with practical, business-focused solutions to complex legal issues. He has helped clients secure more than \$1.5 billion in insurance recoveries.

- A *Fortune* 500 manufacturing company, presently seeking billions of dollars of coverage for damages incurred defending and settling underlying environmental property damage and bodily injury claims across the world.
- A *Fortune* 500 manufacturing company, as co-lead counsel in 2023 conducted a multi-week product liability coverage arbitration hearing involving major international product liability losses.
- A *Fortune* 500 manufacturing company, as lead counsel in 2022 conducted oral argument in Minnesota federal court securing partial summary judgment on the "number of occurrences"—an issue worth tens of millions of dollars.
- An Irish subsidiary of a Global 500 company as lead counsel seeking coverage for a creative agency's losses related to the cancellation of a commercial when the starring artist became involved in situation that brought her into public contempt and ridicule.
- A well-known chocolate company, as co-lead trial counsel in 2022

conducted a multi-week jury trial in New York federal court involving insurance coverage for property damage and business interruption losses.

- A public REIT owning several dozen retail shopping centers, as lead counsel in a coverage litigation pending in New Jersey state court seeking more than \$20 million from its pollution liability insurers for business interruption losses. Successfully argued in opposition to the insurer's motion for summary judgment, which the court denied in 2023.
- One of the country's largest automotive dealership groups, as lead counsel in litigation in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Florida seeking coverage from its insurers.
- A *Fortune* 500 global commercial real estate services company as lead counsel seeking \$25 million of coverage from its Professional Liability insurer for alleged negligent oversight of capital improvement projects leading to contractor overpayments.
- An automotive industry company, which is a portfolio company of a large private equity firm, as lead counsel successfully obtaining contribution of insurance proceeds from its D&O insurer to resolve an underlying lawsuit alleging misappropriation of confidential and proprietary information by former employees.
- A renewable energy company, which is a portfolio company of a large private equity firm, as lead counsel seeking coverage from its D&O insurer for the Loss incurred responding to a grand jury subpoena.
- A company focused on the outdoor and consumer industries and its CEO, as lead counsel in a coverage litigation pending in the U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Florida seeking coverage from its insurer.
- A staffing and solutions company, which is a portfolio company of a large private equity firm, as lead counsel seeking coverage from its D&O insurer for the Loss incurred responding to a search warrant.
- A *Fortune* 500 global systems integration company, as lead counsel seeking coverage from its Professional Liability and Cyber Liability insurers for allegations asserted in a pending data breach MDL.
- A *Fortune* 100 manufacturing company, as lead insurance coverage counsel for the buyer in a seven-billion-dollar acquisition deal.
- Petroterminal de Panama, S.A., as lead counsel successfully presented oral argument and obtained partial summary judgment against six London and Bermuda maritime insurers in a property damage coverage litigation in New York federal court.
- The Diocese of Duluth, successfully presented oral argument and obtained partial summary judgment rejecting an insurer's attempt to avoid sexual abuse coverage based on a policy exclusion in Minnesota federal court.
- A real estate investment trust, seeking more than \$150 million of damages from the REIT's property insurance broker for breach of contract and negligence, among other allegations, in connection with coverage for a major flood loss to a mall in Tennessee.
- One of the world's largest diamond companies, seeking coverage for the loss of a multimillion-dollar rare blue diamond in Milan, Italy.
- An international Am Law 50 law firm, as lead counsel auditing its insurance portfolio including enhancements to its cyber, management liability, and

professional liability insurance programs.

- A former big-law partner, as lead counsel obtaining disability insurance coverage for mental disability; reversing the insurer's prior denial of coverage and affirmance of its denial prior to our involvement.
- A real estate investment trust, representing the owner of two large shopping centers in Puerto Rico seeking insurance coverage for property damage and business interruption losses arising from Hurricane Maria.
- A *Fortune* 100 manufacturing company, lead insurance coverage counsel for the buyer in a \$2 billion acquisition deal.
- A pump manufacturer, successfully presented appellate oral argument on a complex allocation issue arising in an asbestos coverage lawsuit against more than 90 insurance companies, which preserved \$250 million of insurance policy limits for the client.
- A *Fortune* 500 systems integration company, recovered more than \$50 million of insurance proceeds from 7 of the company's professional indemnity insurers for a claim involving alleged False Claims Act and Anti-Kickback Act violations.
- A real estate investment firm, as lead counsel recovering more than \$20 million of commercial property insurance proceeds for losses caused by a fire.
- A media company, lead counsel obtaining a settlement after filing a motion for summary judgment in a New York federal court litigation involving coverage involving publication of a constitutionally protected news report and video excerpts.
- A major international law firm, lead counsel seeking coverage under an employment practices liability insurance policy for a claim of age discrimination.
- A NFL player, obtained a settlement under a Loss of Value insurance policy after an unforeseen injury in college negatively impacted his NFL draft position.
- A major alcohol beverage distributor, as lead counsel seeking coverage for contingent business interruption losses arising from Hurricane Irma.

Admissions

- United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit
- United States Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit
- United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit
- Connecticut
- District of Columbia
- New York
- U.S. District Court - District of Connecticut
- U.S. District Court - Eastern District of New York
- U.S. District Court - Southern District of New York
- United States Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit
- United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit

Education

- Clemson University, BA
- Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law, Yeshiva University, JD

Recognitions

- 2024, “Top 500 Leading Litigators in America,” listed in *Lawdragon*
- 2013–2024, Insurance: Dispute Resolution: Policyholder Law, listed in *Chambers USA*
- 2020–2024, “Future Star,” listed in *Benchmark Litigation*
- 2020, “Exclusive Winner of the Client Choice Award for Insurance & Reinsurance USA,” by Lexology
- 2019, “New York Trailblazer,” listed in the *New York Law Journal*
- 2018–2024, listed in *Who’s Who Legal – Insurance & Reinsurance*
- 2019–2024, Thought Leader in Insurance & Reinsurance, listed in *Who’s Who Legal*
- 2019–2023, Global Leader in Insurance & Reinsurance, listed in *Who’s Who Legal*
- 2012, and 2017–2024, listed in *The Legal 500 United States*
- 2022–2024, “Leading Lawyer,” listed in *The Legal 500’s Guide to Outstanding Lawyers Nationwide*
- 2018–2023, New York Metro “Super Lawyer” in Insurance Coverage, listed in *Super Lawyers*
- 2021, “Next Generation Partner,” listed in *The Legal 500’s Guide to Up-and-Coming Lawyers Nationwide*
- 2017–2020, “Next Generation Lawyer,” listed in *The Legal 500’s Guide to Up-and-Coming Lawyers Nationwide*
- 2018, listed in Capital Pro Bono Honor Roll
- 2014–2017, “Rising Star,” listed in *Law360*
- 2017, “Under 40 Hotlist,” listed in *Benchmark Litigation*
- 2011–2017, New York Metro “Rising Star” in Insurance Coverage, listed in *Super Lawyers*
- 2016, “Rising Star,” listed in the *New York Law Journal*

Professional Activities

Jared recently served on two prestigious boards. He was appointed to the Rutgers Cybersecurity Advisory Board. Board membership consists of a diverse, innovative, and well-connected network of top-flight executives who have been invited based on personal and professional accomplishments. He was also appointed to *Law360’s* Insurance Editorial Advisory Board, whose purpose is to get feedback on *Law360’s* coverage and to gain insight from leaders in the field on how best to shape future coverage.

Jared is a founding member of Blank Rome’s Severe Weather Emergency Recovery Team (“**SWERT**”), which helps companies and individuals recover from

severe weather events, including insurance recovery.

Jared also represented—on a pro bono basis—the Queens Comprehensive Perinatal Counsel, obtaining a favorable settlement on the opening day of trial. He received correspondence from that client, which stated: “You provided QCPC, Inc. with stellar pro bono legal assistance. You were professionally responsive; provided clarity throughout the process; and [were] committed to a legal resolution.”