



Michael J. Abrams

Partner

Kansas City

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First and foremost, Mike Abrams is a trial attorney in Kansas City who does his best work in the courtroom — obtaining noteworthy court decisions on behalf of companies in a wide range of industries, taking a stand for businesses fighting to keep their doors open, and exacting justice for exonerated individuals.

Named a "[Litigation Trailblazer](#)" by the *National Law Journal* for his procurement of influential legal decisions, Mike was also recognized by *Missouri Lawyers Weekly* for the [Top Defense Verdict](#) of 2018. *Nostrum Laboratories v. Balboa Capital Corporation* dealt with controversies involving capital leases related to sophisticated pharmaceutical research, development equipment and lab construction. After deliberating for only 48 minutes, the federal jury returned a defense verdict denying a \$7 million counterclaim against Mike's client and allowing it to keep the disputed equipment. One of the jurors was so impressed with Mike's courtroom presence that he requested representation in his own business matters.

A member of the firm's Business Litigation team and former member of Lathrop Gage's Executive Committee, Mike has dedicated his 25+-year legal career to fighting for clients in a variety of litigation matters.

Mike has successfully defended and prosecuted jury and bench trials involving business torts, fraud, consumer protection claims, trade secrets, covenants not to compete, and professional liability and insurance coverage. Many of his insurance matters have resulted in written decisions in federal court, with several cases being cited numerous times in briefs and rulings in courts across the nation.

Mike is also a pioneer in recovering [financial restitution for exonerated prisoners](#) from the insurance carriers representing the public entities that wrongfully prosecuted and imprisoned them. He recently helped represent three Mississippi men who spent decades in prison for a rape and murder for which they were

Areas of Focus

Services

[Insurance Recovery & Counseling](#)

[Litigation](#)

[Class Action Defense](#)

[Closely Held & Family Businesses](#)

[Non-Compete, Non-Solicit, Trade Secrets & Other Restrictive Covenants](#)

[Environmental Insurance Analysis & Recovery](#)

[Appellate](#)

[Civil Rights Insurance Recovery](#)

[Accountant Liability & Risk Management](#)

[General Business & Complex Commercial Litigation](#)

Sectors

[Content, Media & Entertainment](#)

[Energy](#)

[Agribusiness & Food](#)

eventually exonerated. After pursuing law enforcement agencies and employees for their wrongful acts, Mike's team secured a \$16.5 million insurance settlement years after the prisoners' convictions. "This is the most meaningful work we do," he emphasizes. "Getting justice makes a huge difference for the exonerated and their families. And it makes police departments and communities better." Mike's civil rights insurance recovery work makes up about 20 percent of his practice.

With a deep commitment to advocating for justice and building strong communities, Mike also serves in leadership positions for several nonprofit organizations, including the Midwest Innocence Project, the Independent Citizen Advisory Board for Racial Profiling and Non-Biased Policing, and the Jewish Federation of Greater Kansas City.

Experience

- *Parks v. Wells Fargo Bank, N.A.*, 2017 WL 411362 (D. Kan. 2017)
- *Breck & Young Advisors, Inc. v. Lloyds of London Syndicate 2003*, 2017 WL 2179111 (10th Cir. 2017)
- *Travelers Indemnity Co. v. Forrest County*, 2006 F. Supp. 3d 2016 (S.D. Miss. 2016)
- *Hart v. Wells Fargo Home Mortgage, Inc.*, 2016 WL 5923429 (W.D. Mo. 2016)
- *IPFS v. Carrillo*, 2016 WL 2904773 (D. Nev. 2016)
- *Foliar Nutrients, Inc., et al. v. Nationwide Agribusiness Insurance Co.*, 133 F. Supp. 3d 1372 (M.D. Ga. 2015)
- *Hartford Fire Ins. Co. v. Vita Craft Corp.*, 911 F. Supp. 1164 (D. Kan. 2012)
- *Bank of America, NA v. UMB Financial Services, Inc.*, 618 F.3d 906 (2010)
- *Peak North Dakota, LLC v. Standing Bear Traders, LLC, et al.*, 2010 WL 2813508 (D.N.D. 2010)
- *Clay County Realty v. City of Gladstone*, 254 S.W.3d 859 (Mo. 2008)
- *Safeco Ins. Co. of America v. Stephenson*, Slip Copy, 2008 WL 351006, W.D. Mo., February 6, 2008 (No. 06-4294-CV-C-NKL)
- *Maxus Realty Trust, Inc. v. RSUI Indem. Co.*, Slip Copy, 2007 WL 4468697, W.D. Mo., December 17, 2007 (No. 06-0750-CV-W-ODS)
- *Building Owners & Managers Ass'n of Greater Kansas City v. City of Kansas City*, 231 S.W.3D 208, 2007 WL 1672489, Mo. App. W.D., June 12, 2007 (No. WD 66618)
- *Safeco Ins. Co. of America v. Stephenson*, Slip Copy, 2007 WL 1558585, W.D. Mo., May 25, 2007 (No. 06-4294-CV-C-NKL)
- *First Specialty Ins. Corp. v. NAIS, Inc.*, 459 F. Supp. 2d 1094, 2006 WL 3059920, D. Kan. October 27, 2006 (No. 05-2399-JWL)
- *Star Ins. Co. v. Berry Ins. Agency*, Not Reported in F. Supp. 2d, 2006 WL 2460646, D. Kan., August 23, 2006 (Civil Action No. 01-21280-CM)

Credentials

Education

- Emory University School of Law, J.D., 1991
- Brandeis University, B.A., Politics, 1988, cum laude

Bar Admissions

- Kansas
- Missouri
- North Dakota

Court Admissions

- U.S. District Court for the District of Colorado
- U.S. District Court for the District of Kansas
- U.S. District Court for the District of North Dakota
- U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan
- U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Missouri
- U.S. District Court for the Western District of Missouri
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit
- U.S. Court of Federal Claims
- U.S. Tax Court

Recognition

- *Benchmark Litigation, the Guide to America's Leading Litigation Firms and Attorneys*, "Local Litigation Star," 2011, 2013, 2016-2018, 2020-2025

- *Missouri Lawyer Weekly*, "The POWER List – Commercial & Consumer Law," 2020-2024
- *Chambers USA: America's Leading Lawyers for Business*, Missouri Insurance, 2020-2025
- Selected among *The Best Lawyers in America*®, 2018-2025
 - "Lawyer of the Year," 2020-2021
- *Missouri & Kansas Super Lawyers*, 2008-2024
- Named an "Influential Appellate Advocate" for one of the most significant appellate decisions of the year, Missouri Lawyers Media, 2020
- *Missouri Lawyers Weekly*, "Top Defense Verdict of 2018," 2019 Missouri Lawyers Awards
- *National Law Journal*, "Litigation Trailblazer," 2018, 2019
- Litigation Counsel of America, Fellow

Accolades



Presentations

- Co-presenter, "Securing Insurance Coverage for Wrongful Conviction Lawsuits," Public Risk Management Association (PRIMA) Annual Conference, San Antonio, June 6, 2022
- Presenter, *How to Bring Excess Carriers to the Settlement Table*, Risk Insurance Management Society (RIMS) Annual Conference & Exhibition, Boston, 2019
- Speaker, *Insurance Recovery in the Wake of Superstorm Sandy*, National Law Journal Crisis Litigation Forum, May 2013
- Speaker, *Insurance Hot Topics: Practical Advice for Corporate Counsel*, January 14, 2009

Publications

- Author, *Review of Missouri Privacy Law*, Media Law Resource Center, 1995-2018
 - Co-Author, *Review of 10th Circuit Libel, Defamation and Privacy Law*, Media Law Resource Center, 1994-2018
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Professional Activities

- Missouri Bar Association
- Kansas Bar Association

Community Involvement

- Independent Citizen Advisory Board for Racial Profiling and Non-Biased Policing, Board Member
- Jewish Federation of Greater Kansas City, Board Chair
- Midwest Innocence Project, Advisory Board
- Jewish Community Relations Bureau/American Jewish Committee, Past President
- Village Shalom, Past President
- Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce Centurions, 1999-2001
- U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, Kansas Advisory Committee, Past Member