

MICHAEL J. BRADFORD

CO-CHAIR, MARITIME LITIGATION PRACTICE GROUP
SHAREHOLDER



AREAS OF PRACTICE

Maritime Litigation
Property Litigation
Insurance Services – Coverage & Bad Faith Litigation
Commercial Litigation
Architectural, Engineering & Construction
Defect Litigation
Non-Profit D&O
General Liability
Miscellaneous Professional Liability
Lawyers' Professional Liability
Catastrophic Claims Litigation

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ADMISSIONS

Florida
1999

U.S. District Court Middle District
of Florida
1999

U.S. Court of Appeals 11th Circuit
2001

U.S. District Court Northern District
of Florida
2006

U.S. District Court Southern
District of Florida
2006

EDUCATION

Vanderbilt University Law School
(J.D., 1999)

University of South Florida (B.A.,
cum laude, 1995)

OVERVIEW

Mike Bradford is a Board Certified Civil Trial Lawyer. He has significant experience defending the nation's leading insurance companies and Fortune 500 corporations, having tried both bench and jury trials throughout Florida in state and federal court, and handled multiple arbitrations and appeals. Mike focuses his trial practice on the areas of insurance defense, insurance coverage, non-profit D&O, property and casualty, construction negligence, commercial litigation, and admiralty and maritime claims. Additionally, he defends organizations and their board members in directors and officers (D&O) liability matters, including claims involving mismanagement of funds, breach of fiduciary duty, employment practices, regulatory noncompliance, and other alleged wrongful acts.

Mike is rated AV Preeminent by Martindale-Hubbell, the highest peer review rating for professional competence. He has also been selected by his peers to Florida Trend Magazine's Legal Elite "Up and Comers" and Civil Trial lists, and he has been selected a Florida Super Lawyer by the Super Lawyers organization. Michael is also a member of the Maritime Law Association of the United States (MLA), the Propeller Club (Port of Tampa), the Tampa Bay Mariners Club and a member of the Florida Bar Admiralty Committee.

Born and raised in the Tampa area, he served four years in the United States Army prior to attending college. Mike is active in his community and numerous professional organizations. He is a past member of the Board of Directors of the Hillsborough Head Start Community Foundation, a past member of the Board of Directors of Teaching Tools for Hillsborough Schools (formerly A Gift for Teaching of Tampa), and a former volunteer youth coach with the Tampa Metro Area YMCA and East Point Little League. Mike also served seven years as the Cubmaster for Cub Scout Pack 79, Brandon, Florida, Greater Tampa Bay Area Council, and now volunteers as an Assistant Scout Master for Troop 79, of which both of his sons are members.

HONORS & AWARDS

AV® Preeminent™ by Martindale-Hubbell®

The Best Lawyers in America®, Admiralty and Maritime Law; Commercial Litigation; Personal Injury Litigation - Defendants 2022-2026

Florida Super Lawyers 2016-2025

Florida Super Lawyers Rising Star 2009

Florida Trend's Legal Elite - Civil Trial 2019, 2022

Florida Trend's Up & Coming Legal Elite

ASSOCIATIONS & MEMBERSHIPS

American Bar Association (Litigation and Tort Trial & Insurance Practice Sections)

Claims & Litigation Management Alliance (CLM), Vice President, Western Florida Chapter

Defense Research Institute

Florida Bar Admiralty Law Committee, 2021

Florida Defense Lawyers Association

Hillsborough County Bar Association

Maritime Law Association of the United States

The Propeller Club - Port of Tampa

Southeastern Admiralty Law Institute

Tampa Bay Inn of Court

Tampa Bay Mariners Club

YEAR JOINED

2018

THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

98 Marshall Dennehey Attorneys Recognized in the 2026 Editions of The Best Lawyers in America® and the Best Lawyers: Ones to Watch® in America

August 20, 2025

Marshall Dennehey is proud to highlight the firm's 98 attorneys who have been recognized in the 2026 editions of The Best Lawyers in America® and the Best Lawyers: Ones to Watch® in America. Less than 6% of all practicing lawyers in the U.S.

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Eight Marshall Dennehey Attorneys Selected to the 2025 Florida Super Lawyers & Florida Rising Stars Lists

June 26, 2025

Eight attorneys from the Florida offices of Marshall Dennehey have been selected to the 2025 edition of Florida Super Lawyers magazine.

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Five Marshall Dennehey Attorneys Selected to the 2024 Florida Super Lawyers & Florida Rising Stars Lists

June 27, 2024

Five attorneys from the Florida offices of Marshall Dennehey have been selected to the 2024 edition of Florida Super Lawyers magazine.

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Five Marshall Dennehey Attorneys Selected to the 2023 Florida Super Lawyers List

June 26, 2023

Five attorneys from the Florida offices of Marshall Dennehey have been selected to the 2023 edition of Florida Super Lawyers magazine.

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Marshall Dennehey Announces 2022 Florida Super Lawyers & Rising Stars

June 24, 2022

Five attorneys from the Florida offices of Marshall Dennehey have been selected to the 2022 edition of Florida Super Lawyers magazine.

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CLASSES/SEMINARS TAUGHT

Here Comes the Boom: Cranes and Accidents, FDLA 26th Annual Florida Liability Claims Conference, Orlando, FL, June 15, 2023

Community Associations - Exposures Close to Home, Marshall Dennehey Client Presentation, September, 2020

Best Practices For Testifying Experts In Litigation, American Board of Vocational Experts (ABVE) Annual Conference, August, 2020

Crew / Longshore Harbors Workers' Compensation Act / State Worker's Comp Liabilities, Tampa Bay Mariner's Club 2019 Annual Maritime Industry Marine Insurance Seminar, Tampa Bay, FL, May 22, 2019

Property Insurance Law Update, Ft. Lauderdale 10th Annual CE Seminar, Coral Springs, FL, March 2, 2018

PUBLISHED WORKS

"Where Does Florida End? It Depends," *Defense Digest*, September 2018, Vol. 24, No. 3

CERTIFICATIONS

Board Certified Specialist, Civil
Trial, The Florida Bar

RESULTS

Summary Judgment Obtained in an Auto Negligence Case Involving a Peer-to-Peer Car Sharing App

Rideshare Liability

August 31, 2023

We secured summary judgment in an auto negligence case, in which we represented a car sharing app and an individual vehicle owner who rented our his car using the app. The plaintiff alleged that, under Florida's Dangerous Instrumentality Doctrine, the app and the owner were vicariously liable for the renter of the vehicle, who allegedly struck the plaintiff's vehicle. We successfully argued that the Graves Amendment preempts the application of the dangerous instrumentality doctrine and exempts our clients from vicarious liability for the alleged negligence of the driver.

DEFENSE PREVAILS IN JURY TRIAL ON UNDERINSURED MOTORIST CLAIM

Insurance Services – Coverage & Bad Faith Litigation

Automobile Liability

February 16, 2022

We prevailed in a jury trial on a UM claim in Hillsborough County's 13th Judicial Circuit. The plaintiff claimed he suffered permanent and debilitating injuries in a rear-end collision in Tampa, Florida. Liability was admitted, but the extent of the plaintiff's injuries was in dispute. The plaintiff asked the jury to award him \$500,000 for past and future damages. The jury found there was no permanent injury and awarded \$25,000 for past medical expenses only.

Defense prevails in insurance coverage and bad faith case.

Insurance Services – Coverage & Bad Faith Litigation

November 23, 2020

The defense prevailed on a motion for judgment on the pleadings in a declaratory judgment action seeking liability coverage in a catastrophic injury case. The plaintiff was a passenger in a vehicle driven by his wife when she veered off the road and struck a pedestrian, nearly killing him.

SIGNIFICANT REPRESENTATIVE MATTERS

Successfully obtained summary judgment on behalf of our insurance carrier client in a declaratory judgment action seeking a determination that plaintiff was entitled to defense and indemnity under the liability coverage afforded by his homeowner's policy. The Plaintiff was a passenger in a vehicle driven by his wife when she veered off the road and struck a pedestrian, nearly killing him. The pedestrian sued Plaintiff for negligently failing to render aid and assistance because plaintiff allegedly observed the injured pedestrian's condition, but left the scene without doing anything to help. We argued there was no coverage in the first instance because the insured's conduct was not "accidental." In addition, we argued certain exclusions barred coverage, including an exclusion for bodily injury arising from the "use" of a motor vehicle, and exclusions for expected or intended injury and willful or malicious acts. The court agreed and granted final judgment in favor of the Firm's client.

Complete defense victory and successful counterclaim on behalf of a leading heavy civil marine contractor in the trial of a negligent construction claim brought against it after a subaqueous utility strike occurred during the construction of a bridge in Florida.

Complete defense verdict on behalf of one of Florida's largest homeowners' insurers in first party property damage sinkhole claim, believed to be first defense/insurer verdict in a denied sinkhole claim involving a policy that requires "structural damage," since the Florida Sinkhole Statutes significantly changed in May 2011.

Defense jury verdict in a claim of damage to a home from nearby quarry blasting.

Defense jury verdict in a sinkhole trial in which the proper method of repair was disputed.

Defense verdicts in the trials of claims brought by two separate homeowners against their homeowners' insurer as a result of damage allegedly caused by the explosion of a neighboring grow house.

Defense jury verdict in a sinkhole claim of improper partial denial and disputed method of repair.

Defense verdict in personal injury case involving a claim of multiple fractures and reflex sympathetic dystrophy (RSD).

Defense award in arbitration of customer securities claim involving allegations of churning and violations of Florida Blue Sky Law.

Defense judgment in a marine insurance coverage dispute tried in federal court.

Defense verdict in personal injury case involving rear end collision. The plaintiff was awarded past medical expenses, and no future damages. The judgment was less than the amount offered in settlement.

Commercial landlord/tenant dispute tried to conclusion. Settled on favorable terms to the client before a verdict was returned.

Favorable verdict in personal injury claim that a recreational vehicle fell on its owner, who was crawling under the RV, after improper maintenance of the RV's hydraulic jacking system by the defendant.

Favorable final arbitration award in a customer securities fraud/unfair trade practices claim against a financial adviser and firm in connection with the sale of annuities.

Favorable final arbitration award in a case involving allegations of churning and breach of fiduciary duty in a customer's account. Although a small award was made to the claimant, it was a fraction of the multi-million dollar claim asserted.

Favorable judgment after trial in a marine salvage case involving the salvage of a sinking yacht. A small judgment was entered in favor of the salvor, as expected, but it was far less than the amount claimed and less than was offered in settlement.

Successful appeal before the 11th Circuit Court of Appeal in a trade dress infringement insurance coverage claim.