

MICHAEL J. BLACK, ESQ.
BLACK & COASH, P.C.
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EDUCATION:

University of Detroit – A.B. 1968
Detroit College of Law – J.D. 1972

**EMPLOYMENT
EXPERIENCE:**

2002 to present

Black & Coash, P. C.

Prepared and tried complex technical cases involving catastrophic injuries and losses. Handled all aspects of property, excess and surplus lines litigation, casualty insurance defense and major subrogation cases. Experience includes the handling of numerous fraud and arson cases, major fire litigation, defense of contractors' liability cases, defense of major product litigation and personal injury claims involving wrongful deaths, quadriplegic and paraplegic injuries, serious burn injuries, cases involving loss of limbs, and the defense of professional negligence cases. Also responsible for conducting countless Examinations Under Oath and writing innumerable opinion letters on issues involving complex coverage questions pertaining to property, casualty, and inland marine policies.

General Counsel to WYUR and the Yankee Air Force.

1992 to 2002

Buesser, Black, Graham & Buesser, P.C.

1976-1992

Denenberg, Tuffley, Bocan, Jamieson, Black, Hopkins & Ewald, P.C. – Shareholder

HONORS:

Selected by American Lawyer Media and Martindale-Hubbell as 2014 Top Rated Lawyer in Insurance Law

Named by dbusiness as one of the Metro Detroit's Top Lawyers.

AV rated by Martindale-Hubbell

BAR ADMISSIONS:

Admitted to practice: Michigan, United States District Courts in Eastern and Western Districts of Michigan.

Pro Hoc Vice: United States District courts in Nebraska, Indiana, Ohio and Puerto Rico; state courts in Texas, Nebraska, Iowa, Ohio and California.

MEMBER:

Indianwood Country Club and Riverside Sportsmen's Club

**ORGANIZATIONS
& ACTIVITIES:**

American Bar Association

- Tort and Insurance Practice Section

Michigan Bar Association

- Negligence Section

Oakland County Bar Association
Grand Rapids Bar Association
International Association of Arson Investigators
- Michigan Chapter
Association of Defense Trial Counsel
Michigan Defense Trial Counsel
Wayne County Circuit Court Committee
Association of Trial Lawyers of America
Certified as an approved SCOA Mediator
Certified as an Oakland County Mediator
Approved Case Evaluator (Wayne and Oakland Counties)
Member of Claims & Litigation Management Alliance

LECTURER:

Various insurance seminars including Property Loss Research Bureau as panelist at National Convention seminars; Michigan State Arson Schools, Oakland County Police and Fire Association, Michigan Defense Trial Counsel, and many other private seminars for insurance company clients.

RECENT SIGNIFICANT CASES:

Obtained a verdict in excess of \$1,000,000.00 in an insurance contract dispute.

Obtained a verdict of no cause for action on a \$750,000.00 property claim pertaining to a Detroit marina. The jury determined that the fire was intentionally set by the insured (Penn-Star).

Obtained a 1.6 million dollar summary judgment for the insurer on a Jewelers Block Policy (represented Assurance Company of America).

Obtained a 3 million dollar verdict of No Cause for Action against two local prominent medical doctors on a first party property claim (Represented Citizens Insurance Company of America).

Obtained a 1.2 million dollar verdict in connection with a shopping center fire (Represented: Citizens, Auto-Owners, and American States).

Obtained a 1 million dollar settlement in a discrimination case.

Obtained a Directed Verdict against a large subrogation insurer on a claim in excess of \$1 million dollars in the defense of a warehouse, despite a presumption of negligence against the warehouse.

Obtained a \$7.3 million dollar settlement on behalf of the Ford Motor Company and various of its insurers against the designers and installers of fire suppression equipment on behalf of primary and excess insurers.

Obtained a \$3 million mediation award against a residential alarm company. (Represented: Citizens Insurance Company of America.)

Obtained a Judgment in excess of \$1.6 million against a roofing contractor. (Represented Citizens Insurance Company of America.)

OTHER SIGNIFICANT CASES:

Obtained a \$2 million mediation award against a space heater manufacturer. (Represented: LMI Insurance Company.)

Obtained a verdict in excess of \$2 million in favor of various reinsurers against the Ford Motor Company in a salvage dispute. (Represented: Phoenix Assurance, IRI, American Guarantee, Underwriters at Lloyd's, National Union, and the Insurance Company of Pennsylvania.)

Recovered a verdict of no cause for action in a \$2.5 million commercial press pit collapse case on behalf of an insurer. (Represented: Zurich Insurance Company.)

Chief trial counsel for "target" product defendant in San Juan Dupont Hotel tragedy involving 98 deaths and 2,300 claims for personal injury. Largest personal injury case ever tried. Trial commenced on June 27, 1989 and ended on September 28, 1990 in a verdict of "no cause for action." Also served on various committees, including the Chairmen's Defense Committee, the Defendants' Liaison Committee, and the Discovery Committee. (Represented: Aetna Fire and Casualty.)

First chair on multi-million dollar San Francisco crane disaster involving five deaths and 24 injuries and various property damage. Represented subrogated insurers. Served as member of Plaintiffs' Liaison Committee. (Represented: Aetna and Home)

Responsible for investigating and conducting discovery in \$16 million fire involving three historic buildings on the campus of Clarke College in Dubuque, Iowa. Efforts helped lead to largest subrogation recovery in the history of IRM (formerly Improved Risk Mutual.)

First chair in successful defense of "target" defendant in Michigan car storage warehouse fire involving millions of dollars in property damage to warehouse and antique automobiles. A verdict of "no cause for action" against our client led to a wholesale settlement of all remaining claims. (Represented: St. Paul.)

Recovered \$1.6 million in subrogation case arising out of fire in warehouse storage facility operated by Coca Cola Foods, Inc. in Paw Paw, Michigan. (Represented: Sun Insurance Company.)

First chair in multi-million dollar motel fire litigation in Kearney, Nebraska. Suit commenced against Holiday Inns, Inc. and resulted in a successful recovery. Litigation helped influence improvements in Holiday Inns' fire safety program. First chair on the defense of a multi-million dollar claim against the City of Farmington Hills arising out of a motorcycle accident which led to a quadriplegic injury. Successful defense led to a relatively nominal settlement.

Recovered judgment in the amount of \$750,000.00 in a subrogation case arising out of a fire in a truck dealership caused by defective truck wiring. (Represented: IRM and Michigan Mutual.)

Recovered summary judgment in the amount of \$360,000.00 in a subrogation case arising out of a fire in a commercial building caused by a negligent welder. (Represented: St. Paul.)

Successful defense of a major arson fire to a commercial realty building in Dearborn, Michigan. (Represented: American States.)

Successful defense of a major arson fire to a Downriver party store. (Represented: Citizens.)