

Holland & Knight



Joseph H. Varner III

PARTNER

joe.varner@hklaw.com

Tampa

813.227.6703

PRACTICES

Litigation and Dispute Resolution | Class Action Litigation and Arbitration |
Financial Services Litigation | Healthcare Litigation |
Lawyer Ethics, Risk Management and Regulation |
Mergers and Acquisitions Disputes | Product Liability | Securities Litigation |
Shareholder Rights, Relations and Dispute Resolution |
Trade Secrets and Restrictive Covenants

Joseph H. Varner III is a partner in Holland & Knight's Tampa office. He is the Practice Group Leader for the Tampa Litigation Group and serves on the firm's Directors Committee.

Mr. Varner is an accomplished trial lawyer who has focused on civil trial practice in Florida for his entire career. He is a Fellow in the American College of Trial Lawyers, has been named one of the Top 10 lawyers in Florida by *Super Lawyers*, has been Board Certified in Civil Trial Law for more than 25 years, and has received numerous other honors and accolades for his professional achievements.

Mr. Varner is experienced in complex commercial litigation, business torts, securities litigation, professional negligence, and personal injury and wrongful death litigation. He has obtained significant jury verdicts and settlements in commercial and personal injury litigation, and has conducted numerous jury trials in state and federal court. Mr. Varner is also a certified mediator in state and federal court.

Mr. Varner has held numerous positions of bar leadership, including President of the Tampa Bay Chapter of the Federal Bar Association and President of the J. Clifford Cheatwood American Inn of Court. He has also been appointed to several positions of service to the courts, including chair of the Middle District of Florida Local Rules Advisory Committee, the Merit Selection Panel for U.S. Magistrates, the Civil Justice Reform Act Advisory Group for the Middle District of Florida and Special Counsel for the Florida Judicial Qualifications Commission.

In addition to his trial practice and professional activities, Mr. Varner has been active in community and charitable activities his entire career, including Visit Tampa Bay, Copperhead Charities, Chi Chi Rodriguez Youth Foundation, the United Way Keel Club, Voices for Children, Metropolitan Ministries, the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, Leadership Tampa, Leukemia Society/Brooks Brothers Man of the Year, the University of Tampa Board of Counselors, and The Tampa Connection.

Credentials

Education

- University of Virginia School of Law, J.D.

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- Samford University, B.S.B.A., *magna cum laude*

Bar Admissions/Licenses

- Florida

Court Admissions

- U.S. Supreme Court
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit
- U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Florida
- All State Courts in Florida

Memberships

- Visit Tampa Bay, Board of Directors, 2011-2013
- Copperhead Charities, Inc., Board of Directors, 2010-2019
- Chi Chi Rodriguez Youth Foundation, Board of Directors, 2017-2019
- Hillsborough County Bar Association, Active Member and Trial Lawyers Section Director, 2000-2009, 1991-1992
- Hillsborough County Bar Association, Judicial Liaison Committee, Chairperson, 2000-2002
- Hillsborough County Bar Association, Professional Courtesy Committee, 1991-1994
- Hillsborough County Bar Association, Young Lawyers Division President, 1990-1991 and Director, 1988-1990
- Federal Bar Association, Tampa Bay Chapter, Active Member and President, 2001-2002; President-Elect, 2000-2001; Vice President, 1999-2000; Treasurer, 1998-1999; Secretary, 1997-1998
- American Bar Association
- American Association for Justice
- American College of Trial Lawyers, Florida State Committee, 2011-2017
- J. Clifford Cheatwood Inn of Court, President, 2014-2015
- U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Florida, Local Rules Advisory Committee

Honors & Awards

- American College of Trial Lawyers, Fellow
- Thirteenth Judicial Circuit Professionalism Award, Hillsborough County Bar Association, 2017
- Power 100, *Tampa Bay Business Journal*, 2017
- George C. Carr Memorial Award, Tampa Bay Chapter of the Federal Bar Association, 2015
- *The Best Lawyers in America* guide, Bet-the-Company Litigation, Commercial Litigation, 1999-2021; Legal Malpractice Law - Defendants, 2016-2021
- [Chambers USA – America's Leading Business Lawyers](#) guide, Litigation: General Commercial, 2012-2020
- Florida Legal Elite Hall of Fame, *Florida Trend* magazine, 2009-2020
- Florida Legal Elite, *Florida Trend* magazine, 2002-2020
- Florida *Super Lawyers* magazine, 2006-2020
- Florida *Super Lawyers* magazine, Top 10 Lawyers in Florida, 2010, 2013-2015, 2017-2020

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- Florida *Super Lawyers* magazine, Top 100 Lawyers in Florida, 2006-2020
- Florida *Super Lawyers* magazine, Tampa Top 50, 2020
- Hillsborough County Bar Association Michael Fogarty Memorial "In the Trenches Award" for Excellence in Civil Litigation, 2006
- Martindale-Hubbell AV Preeminent Peer Review Rated

Publications

- Clear! Reviving the Right to Removal, Co-Author, *The Federal Lawyer*, June 2017
- I think I know my Client is Lying, *Hillsborough County Bar Association Lawyer Magazine*, December 2008
- A Trial Lawyer By Any Other Name, *Hillsborough County Bar Association Lawyer Magazine*, February 2007
- Expert Testimony Federal Court: The Trial Judge's Role In Weighing Credibility, *Hillsborough County Bar Association Lawyer Magazine*, June 2004
- The Sad Case of the Kurzban Brothers, *Hillsborough County Bar Association Lawyer Magazine*, November 2000

Speaking Engagements

- Direct and Cross Examination, Hillsborough County Bar Association Annual State Court Trial, June 12, 2020
- Appealing to Juries, Tampa Bay Chapter of Federal Bar Association Annual Civil Practice, January 9, 2020
- Recent Developments in Business Litigation, The Florida Bar Trial Lawyers Section, Civil Trial Update & Board Certification Review, February 4, 2019
- Direct and Cross Examination, Hillsborough County Bar Association Annual State Court Trial, June 8, 2018
- Recent Developments In Business Litigation, Florida Bar Trial Lawyers Section, Civil Trial Update & Board Certification Review 2018, February 1, 2018
- Jury Selection, Wm. Reece Smith Inn Of Court, January 30, 2018
- The Effective Cross Examination of Expert Witnesses: An Art Not A Science, American Bankruptcy Institute, 42nd Annual Alexander L. Paskay Memorial Bankruptcy Seminar, January 18, 2018
- Cross Examination of Witnesses to Expose Bias, 21st Annual HCBA Bench Bar Conference: Perception is Reality, October 25, 2017
- Practicing With Professionalism, The Florida Bar Association, August 4, 2017
- Deposition Boot Camp: Basics to Advanced, The Florida Bar, Business Law Section, May 19, 2017
- Accounting Litigation Support: Document Retention Strategies and Traps for the Unwary, Florida Institute of CPAs Mega CPE Conference, June 13, 2014
- State Court Trial Seminar, Hillsborough County Bar Association, June 6, 2014
- Cutting Edge Cross Examination Techniques, Hillsborough County Bar Association Annual Bench Bar Conference, November 2010
- Direct and Cross Examination of Witnesses, Hillsborough County Bar Association Annual State Court Civil Trial Seminar, June 2010
- Privilege Issues - All The Other Privileges, Hillsborough County Bar Association, February 2009
- Taking And Defending Effective Depositions In Florida: Expert Depositions, Lorman Education Services, April 2008

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- Discovery Strategies for Trial Lawyers - Discovery Abuses and Sanctions, Hillsborough County Bar Association, December 2007
- Taking And Defending Effective Depositions In Florida: Expert Depositions, Lorman Education Services, April 2007
- Effective Advocacy In Civil Litigation, Hillsborough County Bar Association, February 2006
- Opening Statements: Plaintiff's Perspective, HCBA Young Lawyers Section Annual State Court Trial Seminar, June 2005
- Do's and Don'ts of Expert Witnesses, Hillsborough County Bar Association, May 2004
- Basic Discovery Practice-Topic: Discovery Abuses-Compliance, Sanctions, and Remedies, The Florida Bar, September 2002
- Commercial Litigation: Litigation of Dissenters Rights Issues, Hillsborough County Bar Association, September 2002
- Expert Witnesses In State And Federal Court: Daubert, Frye, and Beyond, Hillsborough County Bar Association, September 2002
- Trial Techniques-Topic: Cross-Examination of Expert Witnesses, Hillsborough County Bar Association Trial Lawyers Section, April 2002
- Fifth Annual Bench/Bar Conference-Organizer, Moderator and Panel Speaker on Civil Practice and Procedure, Hillsborough County Bar Association, November 2001
- Fourth Annual Bench/Bar Conference-Organizer and Panel Speaker on Civil Practice and Procedure, Hillsborough County Bar Association, November 2000
- Basic Discovery Practice-Topic: Discovery Abuses-Compliance, Sanctions, and Remedies, The Florida Bar, September 2000
- Mass Torts and Class Action Litigation, Tampa Bay Chapter of American Association of Legal Nurses, Annual Meeting, September 2000
- The Emerging Frontier in Trial Practice, Moderator, Hillsborough County Bar Association Trial Lawyers Section, September 2000