



GREGORY J. BLACKBURN
Civil Trial Lawyer

Mr. Blackburn obtained his doctorate of law from the Stetson University College of Law where in 1991 he graduated *cum laude* in the top ten percent of his class of 130 students. While at Stetson University College of Law, Mr. Blackburn was a member of the *Stetson Law Review* and elected to its editorial board as Articles and Symposia Editor. While a member of the *Stetson Law Review*, Mr. Blackburn published a commentary in the *Stetson Law Review* on the United States Supreme Court's decision in a landmark First Amendment establishment clause case, *County of Allegheny v. ACLU*, 492 U.S. 573, 109 S.Ct. 3086, 106 L.Ed.2d 472 (1989). That commentary, *Government, the Holiday Season, and the Establishment Clause A Perspective on the Issues*, 20 STETSON L. REV. 217 (Fall 1990), has since been widely cited in the legal academic literature.

While a student at Stetson University College of Law, Mr. Blackburn served as a judicial intern for the Honorable Elizabeth A. Kovachevich, United States District Judge, Middle District of Florida, Tampa Division, where he concentrated in the area of civil litigation. While in law school, Mr. Blackburn was appointed a Cecil and Augusta Bailey Scholar, Charles A. Dana Scholar, and Stanley Milledge Award recipient for academic excellence, named to the school's honor roll in each of his three years of study, received the American Jurisprudence Book Awards in civil procedure, professional responsibility and conflicts of law, and maintained membership in the Trial Advocacy Society, and the American Bar Association.

Mr. Blackburn received his Bachelor of Science degree in criminology with honors from the University of Tampa in 1988, graduating with a 3.893 grade point average. While at the University of Tampa, Mr. Blackburn was a member of the Alpha Chi Honor Society, named to the school's dean's list in each semester of his studies, and, on nomination by his professors, received the National Collegiate Criminal Justice Award among other honors.

Prior to attending law school and while still enrolled as an undergraduate, Mr. Blackburn worked in radio and television as a producer and board operator at radio stations WWQT-AM and WHBS-FM in Clearwater, Florida and as a technical director with the Home Shopping Network. Mr. Blackburn also spent five years from 1983 to 1988 with Honeywell Incorporated, first working with the Space Shuttle Main Engine Controller program and later on secret programs associated with the Strategic Defense Initiative, more commonly known as President Reagan's "Star Wars" program.

Born in Tampa, Florida, on October 13, 1963, Mr. Blackburn is a member of the Florida Bar, and is admitted to and has practiced before the United States District Court for the Middle District of Florida and the United States Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit. Mr. Blackburn is also an active member of the Hillsborough County Bar Association and is a past member of the Ferguson-White American Inn of Court in Tampa, Florida. Mr. Blackburn is or has in the past been a member of the American Bar Association's Torts and Insurance Practice Section, the Defense Research Institute, and the Medical Claims Defense Network.

Mr. Blackburn has been invited to speak to trade, professional claims, and underwriting associations on a variety of insurance issues and to university students on Florida's motor vehicle no-fault insurance law.



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Mr. Blackburn's practice over the last twenty years has included professional and medical negligence defense, nursing home defense, commercial lines defense, first- and third-party property and casualty defense, business and personal auto defense, defense coverage disputes, subrogation matters, employment litigation representing employers and employees, commercial litigation, and arbitration of securities industry and commercial disputes before the NASD and AAA. Mr. Blackburn has tried over thirty cases to jury trial verdict in both state and federal court, has tried multiple bench trials to judgment, and has gone to final arbitral decision before the NASD.

In addition to practice at the trial court level, Mr. Blackburn has substantial experience in state and federal appellate work. In one of Mr. Blackburn's most significant appeals, *Rodante v. Fidelity Nat'l Ins. Co.*, 725 So. 2d 1151 (Fla. 2d DCA 1998), a case presenting an issue of essential first impression in the state courts of Florida, Mr. Blackburn successfully preserved the trial court's dismissal of a bad faith action for untimely filing of the statutory notice of insurer violation. In addition to briefing and argument in the United States Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit, the United States Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit, the Florida First, Second, and Fifth District Courts of Appeal, Mr. Blackburn has also briefed in matters before the Supreme Court of Florida.

Mr. Blackburn is politically active and has worked as a volunteer on campaigns at the local, state, and national levels.