

# Joseph B. VanFleet

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**“Mr. VanFleet concentrates his practice in business, banking, commercial, real estate, and construction litigation.”**

Mr. VanFleet began his career at one of the world's largest law firms, representing banks and Fortune 100 companies in a variety of financial, white-collar, and real estate based investigations and litigation. He left the relative stability of an international firm to form his own boutique law firm where he became a nationally recognized trial lawyer, focused on providing sophisticated cost-effective representation for his broad spectrum of banks and corporate clients. After merging his firm with Howard & Howard in 2016, his practice now ranges from small businesses and community banks to the Fortune 100 publicly traded entities and large-scale lenders he has always represented. Mr. VanFleet brings an innovative, practical, and solution-based approach; has represented clients throughout the country and in numerous complex and multidistrict cases; and has obtained victories in well over 100 trials, appeals, and alternative disputes.

## Business Litigation

- Financial Institutions
- Construction & Development
- Business Bankruptcy & Creditors' Rights
- Business & Corporate

## Representative Matters

- Represented a lending institution in a Qui Tam Whistleblower Action and obtained a Rule 12(b) dismissal of a Qui Tam action against seventeen banks sued in a federal district court in the Northern District of Texas. Over 60 attorneys appeared in the case and all defendants entered into a Joint Defense Agreement. Our representing attorney was one of five attorneys selected to speak at the full-day dismissal hearing. The matter was dismissed with prejudice in its entirety.

- Represented a business and real estate purchaser in an action seeking specific performance. While summary judgment for specific performance is rarely granted, we obtained such relief on behalf of our client and successfully defended the judgment on appeal.
- Successfully foreclosed on a \$20MM housing development of a multi-building apartment complex for a New York-based lender, preserving deficiency and obtaining full recovery of legal fees.
- Successfully represented a financial institution and obtained dismissal with prejudice and award of attorneys' fees against customer who alleged negligence and fraud by allowing a rogue employee to cash checks and convert over \$1MM of the customer's funds.
- After the U.S. Department of Justice and Internal Revenue Service served subpoenas and seized computers and documents from a Fortune 100 company, we were retained to represent one of the corporate officers who was concerned that he may be a target of an investigation. No charges were ever filed against the officer.

## Education

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- University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, College of Law, 1990
  - J.D.
  - *Law Review*, Editor
- University of Illinois College of Commerce and Business Administration, 1987
  - B.S., highest honors, Finance

## Memberships

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- Litigation Counsel of America
  - Trial Law Institute
  - Diversity Law Institute
  - Order of Centurions, Barrister
  - Order of Certus, Advocate
- Peoria County Bar Association
- Illinois State Bar Association
- American Bar Association
- Federal Bar Association
- The Abraham Lincoln Court
- Illinois Creditors' Bar Association

## Admissions

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- Illinois, 1990
- Supreme Court of the United States, 2012
- U.S. Court of Appeals, Seventh Circuit, 2010
- U.S. District Court, Central District of Illinois, 1998
- U.S. District Court, Northern District of Illinois, 1990
- Illinois Supreme Court, 1990

## Professional Achievements

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- Litigation Counsel of America, Fellow
- Illinois *Leading Lawyers*, 2009-2021
- *Chicago Lawyer Magazine*, "40 Illinois Attorneys Under 40 Years Old to Watch," 2000
- Martindale-Hubbell® AV Preeminent® Peer Review Rating
- Eureka College, "Outstanding Lecturer," as voted by students
- University of Illinois, "Outstanding Lecturer," as voted by students