

# William J. Schifino Jr.

Board of Directors, Shareholder

Tampa

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813-739-6960



## Practice & Industry Areas

- Business Litigation
- Professional Liability Defense
- Intellectual Property Litigation
- Labor & Employment Law
- Securities Law & Corporate Governance
- Corporate Law
- Toxic Torts

## Education

- University of Florida Levin College of Law, J.D., 1985
- Tulane University, B.A., 1982

## Bar & Court Admissions

- Florida Bar, 1986

## Overview

Bill serves on the firm's board of directors. He is a board certified specialist in the area of business litigation. His practice focuses on business litigation and trial practice, including securities litigation and arbitration, professional malpractice litigation, director and officer litigation, employment litigation, restrictive covenant litigation and intellectual property litigation.

Bill served as President of the Florida Bar for the 2016-2017 term. He is also a member of the board of trustees for the University of Florida Levin College of Law. Bill was selected by Senate President Joe Negrón to serve on the Florida Constitution Revision Commission as one of 37 commissioners responsible for studying, researching and making

recommendations for revising Florida's Constitution. Presently, Bill is a member of the State of Florida Judicial Qualifications Commission.

Bill previously served eight years as a member of the Thirteenth Judicial Circuit Judicial Nominating Commission, appointed by both Governors Jeb Bush and Charlie Crist, and served as its chairman.

Bill is a frequent speaker and lecturer on a number of litigation and trial topics, including deposition strategies and techniques, expert witness procedures and discovery, and trial issues in Florida.

After law school, Bill worked for Taub & Williams, P.A., subsequently establishing Williams, Schifino, Mangione & Steady, P.A. in 1991, where he was a founding shareholder, president and then managing director before the firm combined with Alabama-based Burr & Forman in 2012. In 2018, Bill joined Gunster and assumed the role of managing shareholder of the firm's Tampa office until 2022.

In addition to his law practice, Bill serves on the board of directors for Quantum Capital Partners, a Tampa based venture capital firm, FLMIC, a mutual insurance company serving the legal profession and the advisory board of Plutus Capital Partners, a Tampa based investment firm.

## **Representative Matters**

- Represented the defendants, including a publicly traded company, in a Federal jury trial brought by the SEC alleging multiple securities law violations in which after a four week trial, the jury returned a verdict in favor of the defendants on all counts.
- Successfully represented a California based law firm in a claim for securities law violations in connection with its work in preparing a Private Placement Memorandum and obtained a defense verdict and recovered attorney's fees and costs on behalf of the defendants.
- Lead counsel in defending a large statewide law firm in a legal malpractice claim under the Interstate Land Sales Disclosure Act for claimed damages in excess of \$60,000,000.00. After approximately two years of litigation, the case was settled for a fraction of the claimed damages.
- Represented the defendant, a public company, in the defense of a claim for breach of employment agreement, director/officer conflict of interest, negligence and fraud. Obtained a jury verdict in his client's favor on all counts and ultimately obtained a jury verdict on a counter-claim for civil theft/embezzlement.
- Represented a family-owned multi-state farming operation in heavily litigated matters involving competing family claims to assets in excess of \$250 million. A successful resolution was reached leaving ownership of all of the farming operations with our clients.

- Represented state-wide health care provider in the defense of claims brought by a competing national health care provider for alleged breach of restrictive covenants. After a multi-day evidentiary hearing, the trial court entered an order denying the plaintiffs' motion for a temporary injunction.
- Represented a group of investors in a securities fraud action against multiple defendants, involving a state-wide property insurance company, and after motion practice and discovery, reached a favorable multi-million-dollar settlement.
- Represented an AMLAW 100 national law firm in the defense of a lawsuit claiming \$170 million in alleged damages emanating from alleged malpractice in connection with multiple securities law transactions.
- Represented one of the principal shareholders of a national privately owned company in a shareholder dispute defending against a fellow shareholders effort to divest our client's ownership interest valued in excess of \$1 billion.

## Honors

- AV Preeminent rating as independently determined by Martindale-Hubbell
- Hillsborough County Bar Association, Outstanding Lawyer, 2014
- *Chambers & Partners*, "Leaders in Their Field," Litigation: General Commercial, 2016-22
- *Florida Trend*, "Legal Elite,"
  - "Hall of Fame", 2020-22
  - Commercial Litigation, 2006-2010, 2013, 2015-16, 2019-20, 2022
  - Business Law, 2016, 2018
- Florida *Super Lawyers*
  - Securities Litigation, 2006-21
  - Business Litigation, 2022
- *The Best Lawyers in America*®, Legal Malpractice Law – Defendants "Lawyer of the Year" in Tampa, 2022
- *The Best Lawyers in America*®, Arbitration "Lawyer of the Year" in Tampa, 2021
- *The Best Lawyers in America*®
  - Arbitration, Commercial Litigation, Securities Litigation, 2008-17, 2020-22
  - Litigation-Securities Law "Lawyer of the Year" in Tampa, 2014, 2016
  - Legal Malpractice Law- Defendants, 2022

## Professional Associations & Memberships

- Florida Constitution Revision Commission, 2017-18
- Florida Bar
  - President, 2016-17
  - Thirteenth Judicial Circuit, board of governors , 2008-18

- Trial Lawyer Section
- Business Law Section
- Real Property, Probate and Trust Law Section
- Florida Bar Foundation, fellow
- Hillsborough County Bar Association, president, 2004-05
- Hillsborough County Bar Foundation, president, 2014-15
- American Bar Association
- Florida Justice Association, fellow
- University of Florida Levin College of Law, board of trustees
- Florida Judicial Qualifications Commission

## **Civic & Community Service**

- Florida Guardian Ad Litem Association
- Big Brothers Big Sisters of Greater Tampa
- Boys & Girls Club of Tampa Bay, Inc., director of corporate board
- Tampa Bay Little League, Inc., coach, president and director