



**AMERICAN BOARD OF TRIAL ADVOCATES
SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY CHAPTER
PROUDLY NOMINATES FOR CAL-ABOTA'S 2025
TRIAL LAWYER OF THE YEAR**



MICHAEL F. BALL
McCormick Barstow LLP



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February 10, 2025

Dear CAL-ABOTA Board Members:

On behalf of the San Joaquin Valley Chapter of ABOTA, it is with great pride and distinction that we nominate Mike Ball for the 2025 CAL-ABOTA Trial Lawyer of the Year Award. His career exemplifies the highest standards of trial advocacy, professionalism, and dedication to the legal profession.

EXCELLENCE IN ADVOCACY

Mike Ball has established himself as one of California's preeminent trial lawyers through his extensive experience trying cases across multiple jurisdictions. He has had civil jury trials in courtrooms throughout California, including Fresno, Clovis, Madera, Merced, Visalia, Hanford, Bakersfield, Los Angeles, and Modesto, as well as Las Vegas, Nevada. His practice encompasses medical malpractice, wrongful death, wrongful termination, breach of contract, industrial accidents, products liability, general negligence, insurance agent/broker liability, and premises liability cases.

His advocacy extends into specialized areas of administrative and regulatory law, representing hospitals in privileging matters and professionals in hearings before numerous state boards and agencies, including the Medical Board of California, the Osteopathic Medical Board of California, the State of California Board of Chiropractic Examiners, the California Board of Registered Nursing, the California Department of Consumer Affairs, and the State of California Department of Insurance.

DISTINGUISHED CAREER

Mr. Ball's distinguished legal career is built upon a foundation of academic excellence and professional achievement. After graduating cum laude from the University of Miami in 3 years with his Bachelor of Arts in programs of honored and privileged studies (1981), he continued his academic success at the University of Illinois College of Law, where he earned his Juris Doctor cum laude (1984). He was voted in as an equity partner at his current firm, McCormick Barstow, Sheppard, Wayte and Carruth in 1989, at the age of 28. He has served many years on the firm's Management Committee, and in the past as Managing Partner.

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His professional leadership is demonstrated through active engagement in numerous prestigious organizations. He is a frequent lecturer to health care providers. His expertise in medical professional liability healthcare law is reflected through his long-time membership in the California Medical-Legal Committee and the California Academy of Attorneys for Healthcare Professionals. He has particularly distinguished himself through service on the Board of Directors of the California Society for Healthcare Risk Management, where he served as President (2008-2009) and continued his board service from 2004 through 2023. As a Fellow in the American College of Trial Lawyers (ACTL) as well as the International Academy of Trial Lawyers (IATL), Mr. Ball has certainly, and continues to, stand out in a profession saturated with talent.

In his community, Mr. Ball served on the WASC (Western Association of Schools & Colleges) Accreditation Steering Committee for San Joaquin Memorial High School. He has performed pro bono work for the Fresno County Volunteer Legal Services Program. He has served on the Board of Directors of Catholic Charities for the Diocese of Fresno, and is a member of the Catholic Professional and Business Club in Fresno. Mr. Ball served on the Business Advisory Committee for KVPT Valley Public Television. He has also coached many local baseball and soccer teams. Mr. Ball is a Life Fellow of the American Bar Foundation.

SUPERB REPUTATION OF CIVILITY, ETHICS AND FAIR PLAY

Ball's dedication to maintaining the highest standards of professionalism and civility was formally recognized in 2020 when he received the Civility Award from the San Joaquin Valley Chapter of ABOTA. This prestigious award acknowledged his consistent practice of "continually exemplifying civility, professionalism and integrity in the practice of law while always vigorously, courageously and expertly advocating his clients' causes."

His commitment to professional excellence is evidenced by his long-standing Martindale-Hubbell AV® Preeminent™ rating, AVVO 10.0 Superb rating, and through his active participation in organizations dedicated to maintaining high professional standards. His engagement with honorable organizations reflects a career-long commitment to excellence, ethical practice, and professional development.

OUTSTANDING VERDICTS

Mr. Ball maintains an active and successful trial practice, handling complex medical malpractice defense cases, professional liability matters, and general civil litigation throughout California. His work has earned him selection to the "Top 100" list of the Northern California Super Lawyers 10 times and America's Top 100 Civil Defense Litigators® for 2018-2022, reflecting a sustained record of outstanding results for his clients. He was also recognized by Fresno Magazine as one of the "Top Attorneys as Chosen by Their Peers."

Mr. Ball has 40 civil jury trials in his 40 years of practice. He has successfully tried cases against other highly respected ABOTA members, including past ABOTA Trial Lawyer of the Year recipients Warren Paboojian and Jeffrey Raynes. All of the cases he has tried to a jury defending physicians on medical malpractice claims (19) have resulted in defense verdicts for his clients, many of which where there were seven figure demands.

In the one and only case he has tried on behalf of a plaintiff, he obtained a Judgment in 2012 in excess of \$5,000,000 in conservative Madera County (later reduced on appeal, hence discouraging further attempts on that side!).

In 2021, he obtained a directed verdict for his physician client in a significant exposure case that resulted in a verdict against the co-defendant for \$49,800,000 (\$17,000,000 judgment) in Fresno County Superior Court.

CONTRIBUTION TO ABOTA

Since 2003, Mr. Ball has served ABOTA with distinction. His dedication to the organization is reflected in his service as President of the San Joaquin Valley Chapter (2010), and on the Board of Directors of CAL-ABOTA (2009-2011). He has shared his expertise through ABOTA's educational programs, serving as a featured speaker for two San Joaquin Valley Chapter Masters in Trial programs: a 2013 presentation on pre-trial litigation and a 2005 program covering trial techniques from opening statements through jury deliberations in a sexual harassment case. Mr. Ball remains an active member in ABOTA and through his board service and educational contributions, Mr. Ball has consistently advanced ABOTA's highest principles.

CONCLUSION

Michael Ball exemplifies the highest ideals of ABOTA through his excellence in advocacy, professionalism, and dedication to improving the practice of law. His career demonstrates an unwavering commitment to civil advocacy, professional education, and community service. We believe he is exceptionally qualified to receive the honor of CAL-ABOTA Trial Lawyer of the Year.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas P. Fehér, President



San Joaquin Valley Chapter