



Burch, Porter & Johnson, PLLC
130 North Court Avenue | Memphis, TN 38103
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Lawrence J. Laurenzi

Senior Attorney

Email: l Laurenzi@bpjlaw.com
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Fax: 901.524.5024

PRACTICE AREAS

- Commercial & Business Litigation
- Healthcare Law
- White Collar & Government Investigations



As a former United States Attorney, Mr. Laurenzi assists companies and individuals who are under investigation by government entities or who have been sued or charged by prosecutors or other regulators. He brings extensive litigation experience in criminal, civil, and regulatory matters in both federal and state courts.

Mr. Laurenzi focuses his criminal practice on white collar investigations and indicted cases in federal court. His engagements include the defense of a corporate executive of a publicly traded company who was under investigation by DOJ in the Southern District of New York and the SEC which resulted in no charges being brought. He represented a Tennessee state senator charged with stealing more than \$600,000 in federal funds; after a three-week jury trial, she was acquitted on most charges and found responsible for less than \$4,000. He has represented numerous healthcare practices and individuals, as well as hospital systems, in connection with state and federal investigations concerning allegations of healthcare fraud, COVID-19 Relief Fund fraud, compounding pharmacy matters, drug diversion, false claims, and anti-kickbacks.

Mr. Laurenzi also has a diverse civil practice. He represents individuals and corporations in myriad commercial litigation disputes, including tort matters, business disputes, and breach of contract litigation, as well as regulatory matters and qui tam actions. Recent civil cases include the representation of a corporate executive who was sued in federal court on a million-dollar surety guaranty; the court dismissed the complaint. He represented members of an LLC in a multi-million-dollar breach of contract claim and has represented individuals and corporate entities in both seeking recovery as well as defending tortious claims.

Before joining BPJ, Mr. Laurenzi was with the Department of Justice for 36 years. During that time, he served as United States Attorney from 2008 to 2010 and was Acting United States Attorney on three other occasions. He was the First Assistant United States Attorney for 16 years and the Chief of the Criminal Divisions for 10 years. In his multiple positions within DOJ, Mr. Laurenzi offered keen insight in defending against governmental investigations and prosecutions. He worked closely with many federal and local law enforcement agencies, including the FBI, IRS, HHS, FDIC, and HUD.

Mr. Laurenzi has served as lead counsel on numerous complex trials and grand jury investigations, including cases involving healthcare fraud, bank fraud, mail and wire fraud, tax offenses, securities fraud, controlled substance offenses by medical professionals, and civil false claims. He was recognized for his litigation work with one of the highest honors DOJ can bestow: the National Director's Award.

Mr. Laurenzi is a Fellow in the American College of Trial Lawyers and was selected as a "Best Lawyer" in the category of Commercial Litigation and Criminal Defense – White Collar.



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REPRESENTATIVE MATTERS

- Defended a corporate executive of a publicly traded company that was under investigation by DOJ SDNY and the SEC for securities and healthcare violations. No charges filed by DOJ or the SEC.
- Represented corporate executive in federal court for anti-kickback violations.
- Represented individuals and hospitals under investigation by DEA for Drug Diversion with favorable outcomes.
- Lead counsel for the Western District of Tennessee into corruption and financial abuse in the federally subsidized "childcare industry." After a two-year investigation and a five-week trial, principals for overseeing the federally-funded program were found guilty and sentenced to prison. (United States v. John Madison and Willie Ann Madison)
- Lead counsel with the Securities and Exchange Commission into the investigation and prosecution of Lee Bradford Arberg, a registered Investment Advisor with Hemisphere Trading Company. Lee Bradford Arberg pled guilty to multiple counts of securities violations and sentenced to prison. (United States v. Lee Bradford Arberg)
- Lead trial counsel in the investigation and prosecution of the principals of First American Monetary Consultants, a commodities firm with offices in Tennessee and Colorado. After a six-week trial, Charles Bates, the president and CEO, along with his two sons and daughter-in-law were found guilty for their involvement in a twenty million dollar investment fraud. (2017, United States v. Charles L. Bates, et al.)
- Qui Tam action sought against a California medical device company for making "kickbacks" to physicians for the use of the companies' medical equipment. Substantial recovery by the United States under the False Claims Act.
- False Claims action by the United States against Joseph Woodbury, a local dermatologist for up-coding for services provided to Medicare and Medicaid patients. Favorable settlement for the United States. (United States v. Joseph Woodbury)
- International investigation into the USDA Step II Agricultural Program. Three-year investigation into illegally obtained subsidies by American exporters of cotton to Asian countries. Investigation resulted in multiple settlements under the False Claims Act, as well as criminal convictions. (United States v. W. D. Mask Inc.)
- Lead counsel in a medical malpractice case against a urologist for failure to diagnose prostate cancer timely. Case settled the day of trial for a nominal sum. (2018, Dennis James v. United States)
- Lead counsel in the prosecution of Claude Conley, the owner and chairman of the Board of the Bank of Alamo for his involvement in illegal banking transactions, which lead to the failure of the Bank of Alamo. Worked extensively with FDIC in the investigation and prosecution. (United States v. Stephen Sims)
- Lead counsel in a wrongful death action brought against the Veteran Administration for negligent care received by Danny Laden in the emergency room. Treatment in the emergency room resulted in the death of the patient. Case settled for substantially less than demanded in the complaint. (Danny Laden v. United States)
- Lead counsel in a month-long trial against deputy jailers at the Shelby County jail were convicted of unjustifiably beating inmates housed at the facility. The jailers used riot batons to beat the inmates in an effort to retaliate against the inmates for an assault on a fellow deputy jailer. (United States v. Belinda Marshal, et al.)
- Lead counsel in the investigation and prosecution of Ron Blackwood of the Blackwood Brothers gospel group. Blackwood was convicted on multiple counts of defrauding aspiring singers out of hundreds of thousands of dollars. Blackwood used his connection to the music industry as well as his church



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affiliations to persuade aspiring artists to pay for what they believed were recording and promotion contracts. (United States v. Ronald Blackwood)

- Lead counsel in a contested jury trial against Michael Allan for intentionally setting fire to a local church located in Shelby County. Two firefighters lost their lives battling the blaze. The trial required extensive expert testimony concerning the fire's causation. Allan was sentenced to life imprisonment. (United States v. Michael Lee Allan)
- Successfully tried and convicted a Shelby County Deputy Sheriff for the murder of a young man during his arrest. Case required extensive expert testimony on the cause of death and police practices during arrest. (United States v. Sherman Boyland, et al.)
- Lead counsel in eight-day jury trial against Michael Lilley for sex trafficking minors. Lilley was found guilty of recruiting girls from local high schools, some as young as fifteen, to engage in commercial sex acts. He was convicted on multiple counts. (United States v. Michael Lilley)
- Lead counsel in the prosecution of Justin Baker for his violation of the civil rights of students and faculty of the Margolin Hebrew Academy. Baker defaced a Torah and other religious items, while the students were staying at a hotel in Jackson, TN. The case raised a legal issue of whether a hotel conference room is a place of worship under the civil rights statute. (United States v. Justin Shawn Baker)
- Lead prosecutor in the investigation and prosecution of David Bumpus, the sheriff of Henry County. Sheriff Bumpus pled guilty to public corruption charges and was sentenced to prison. (United States v. David L. Bumpus)
- Lead counsel in the investigation and prosecution of Kevin Grothe, the Assistant Athletic Director at the University of Memphis. Kevin Grothe pled guilty to misappropriation of government funds and sentenced to prison. (United States v. Kevin Grothe)
- Lead counsel in the investigation and prosecution of white supremacists in West Tennessee. Defendants found guilty of multiple civil rights violations, gun violations, and threatening the President of the United States.

EDUCATION

- University of Memphis Law School (J.D., 1981)
- University of Memphis (B.A., 1978)

PROFESSIONAL HONORS AND ACTIVITIES

- Honored by Best Lawyers in America for Commercial Litigation and Criminal Defense: White Collar (2020 - 2024)
- Member, National Association of Former United States Attorneys
- Fellow, American College of Trial Lawyers
- Named to the Best Lawyers in America® list in the practice area of Commercial Litigation (2019- 2020)
- Fellow, Memphis Bar Foundation
- Recipient, Department of Justice Superior Performance Awards
- Recipient, Department of Justice National Director's Award for Excellence in Litigation
- Recipient, Department of Justice, and Federal Agencies' Special Act Award
- Letter of Commendation for trial work from Attorney General Richard Thornburgh
- Letter of Commendation from Attorney General Janet Reno
- Recognition, Congressional Record, House of Representatives Vol 164 (2018)



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- Adjunct Law Professor, University of Memphis Cecil C. Humphreys School of Law, Trial Advocacy (2012-2017)
- Lawyer's Journal Club

PUBLICATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS OF NOTE

- Presenter, "Defending Federal Government Investigations," Annual Georgia State Bar Conference (2018)
- Author, "A Tale of Two Investigations – A Comparison of Ken Starr's and Robert Mueller's Investigations into Alleged Presidential Misconduct," Law360 (2018)
- Author, "Is Your Institution Immune from the College Admission Scam?" JDSupra (2019)
- "[United States Attorney Larry Laurenzi Celebrated After 36 Years.](#)" Commercial Appeal (May 2018)

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- Former Chair and Founding Board Member, Tennessee Dangerous Drug Task Force (2008-2018)
- Former Board Member, Memphis Shelby County Crime Commission
- Former Board Member, Multi-Agency Gang Task Force
- Former Board Member, Gulf Coast High Intensity Drug Trafficking Unit
- Former Board Member, Alliance for Drug Endangered Children

CHILDREN REPRESENTATIVE MATTERS

- Defended a corporate executive of a publicly traded company that was under investigation by DOJ in the Southern District of New York and the SEC for securities and healthcare violations. No charges filed by DOJ or the SEC.
- Represented a Tennessee state senator charged with stealing more than \$600,000 in federal funds. After a three-week jury trial, she was acquitted on most charges and found responsible for less than \$4,000.
- Represented the owner of a healthcare corporation under federal investigation for violation of the Covid-19 Relief Fund.
- Represented numerous healthcare practices and individuals, as well as hospital systems, in connection with state and federal investigations concerning allegations of healthcare fraud, including compounding pharmacy matters, drug diversion, false claims matters, and other business practices.
- Represented professionals before the Tennessee Medical Board and the Board of Nursing.
- DUI charges dismissed against two people charged in Shelby County, Tennessee.
- Represented corporate executive in federal court for anti-kickback violations with no charges brought.
- Represented individuals and hospitals under investigation by DEA for drug diversion with favorable outcomes.
- Represented a corporate executive who was sued in federal court on a million-dollar surety guaranty where the court dismissed the complaint.
- Lead counsel for the Western District of Tennessee investigation into corruption and financial abuse in the federally subsidized childcare industry. After a two-year investigation and a five-week trial, principals who



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oversaw the program were found guilty and sentenced to prison. *United States v. John Madison and Willie Ann Madison*

- Lead counsel for the Securities and Exchange Commission into the investigation and prosecution of Lee Bradford Arberg, a registered Investment Advisor with Hemisphere Trading Company. Arberg pled guilty to multiple counts of securities violations and was sentenced to prison. *United States v. Lee Bradford Arberg*
- Lead trial counsel in the investigation and prosecution of the principals of First American Monetary Consultants, a commodities firm with offices in Tennessee and Colorado. After a six-week trial, Charles Bates, the president and CEO, along with his two sons and daughter-in-law, were found guilty in a \$20 million investment fraud. (2017, *United States v. Bates, et. al.*)
- Qui Tam action sought against a California medical device company for making kickbacks to physicians for the use of the companies' medical equipment. Substantial recovery by the United States under the False Claims Act.
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- Lead counsel in a medical malpractice case against a urologist for failure to diagnose prostate cancer in a timely manner. Case settled the day of trial for a nominal sum. (2018, *Dennis James v. United States*)
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- Lead counsel in the investigation and prosecution of Ron Blackwood of the Blackwood Brothers gospel group, who was convicted on multiple counts of defrauding aspiring singers out of hundreds of thousands of dollars. Blackwood used his connection to the music industry as well as his church affiliations to persuade aspiring artists to pay for what they believed were recording and promotion contracts. (*United States v. Ronald Blackwood*)
- Successfully tried and convicted a Shelby County Deputy Sheriff for the murder of a young man during his arrest. Case required extensive expert testimony on the cause of death and police practices during arrest. (*United States v. Sherman Boyland, et al.*)
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- Lead counsel in the investigation and prosecution of white supremacists in West Tennessee. Defendants were found guilty of multiple civil rights violations, gun violations, and threatening the President of the United States. (United States v. Schluselman and Cowart)

ADMITTED TO PRACTICE

United States Supreme Court, 1991

Tennessee, 1981

United States District Court for the Western District of Tennessee, 1981

United States District Court for the Eastern District of Arkansas, 2019

United States District Court for the Eastern District of Tennessee, 2020

United States Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit, 1981

BAR ASSOCIATIONS

American Bar Association

Tennessee Bar Association

Memphis Bar Association