



Introduction

At Connelly & Collier LLP, we provide trial law services in the areas of complex business litigation, personal injury, medical malpractice, and insurance coverage. Our firm is composed of six skilled trial lawyers who have the knowledge and experience to take cases into the courtroom on our clients' behalf. We strive to offer the finest trial representation available.

Connelly & Collier has served clients throughout the region since 1978. While many law firms offer a variety of transactional and litigation services, Connelly & Collier limits its practice to trial law, and we endeavor to provide the best trial representation available anywhere. As more and more litigation cases are settled out of court, there are fewer attorneys available with the expertise necessary to actually prepare a case and go to trial. Connelly & Collier's mission is to be a leading firm of trial lawyers, offering experienced and aggressive representation in the courtroom.



Business Litigation

The business litigators at Connelly & Collier LLP have been resolving disputes involving business since the inception of the firm. We represent individuals, companies, governmental agencies, public institutions, and other business entities, both in the profit and not-for-profit sectors, in the resolution of our clients' business disputes. Our clients have included publicly traded companies such as Chrysler Motors LLC, Norfolk Southern Corp., Libbey, Inc., KeyBank, Owens Corning, Owens-Illinois, PNC, and Pilkington, N.A., as well as privately owned regional companies such as Rudolph/Libbe, Inc., GEM Industrial, Inc., and Willis Day Properties, Inc.

Our business litigation mission and philosophy at Connelly & Collier is to serve our clients, both large and small, with a personal touch. We are large enough to provide the knowledge, technology, and depth necessary to adequately maintain and track multiple document cases, while being small enough to understand the business goals and culture of our clients. We represent each and every client vigorously, while at the same time being as cost-effective as possible.

The types of business disputes we have handled vary widely and encompass a number of areas including conflicts between shareholders, particularly with respect to shareholders of closely-held corporations; breach of contract; employment matters, including covenants not to compete; predatory lending; and fraud. We have extensive experience in matters arising under statutes such as the Uniform Commercial Code, the Fair Housing Act, Title VII, the Family and Medical Leave Act, and the Americans with Disabilities Act.

We represent clients not only in Lucas County, but throughout Northwest Ohio. Our proven trial experience involving complicated business disputes has enhanced our clients' ability to achieve prompt, cost-effective, and efficient results.



Personal Injury

Connelly & Collier LLP has a proven record of obtaining substantial jury verdicts and settlements for our clients who have suffered wrongful death or personal injury.

Throughout Northwest and North Central Ohio, we have represented injured people on claims involving motor vehicle accidents, premises liability, products liability, and employer-intentional torts. We pride ourselves on representing each client zealously, regardless of the severity of the injury.

We are a small, focused firm, and that means that your claim will get the personal attention that it might not enjoy at a larger firm. And that personal attention can mean the difference between fair compensation and no compensation when you present your claim to a jury.

Many cases are referred to the firm by other lawyers, which demonstrates the respect Connelly & Collier enjoys in the Northwest-Ohio legal community.

If you have been injured or someone in your family has been injured or killed due to the negligence of someone else, you should call us now so that we can help you receive fair compensation.



Insurance Coverage

Attorneys at Connelly & Collier LLP represent policyholders to obtain insurance coverage for a wide range of liabilities and losses. Our insurance coverage clients include organizations and individuals involved in banking, construction, food service, manufacturing, medicine, law, government, and warehousing.

Our work in obtaining insurance coverage for liabilities and losses facing our clients arises in many contexts: asbestos, environmental contamination, professional and fiduciary liability, business interruption, construction, fire, directors and officers liability, mold damage, property damage, and intentional torts. Our emphasis is upon obtaining the maximum benefits to which our clients are entitled under the applicable insurance policies. When possible, this means working with the insurance companies to procure fair and reasonable settlements without litigation. When litigation cannot be avoided, Connelly & Collier has prosecuted insurance-coverage lawsuits in federal and state trial courts, courts of appeals, and the Supreme Court of Ohio. For some clients, our efforts include the search to identify historical insurance coverages and to maximize their application to the client's present liabilities. This work involves knowledge of how multiple layers of coverage over many years can be accumulated to provide the best protection possible for a particular client.

We pride ourselves on our depth of experience in these wide-ranging areas and the breadth of the clients we represent. We have represented Owens Corning, Pilkington, N.A., Toledo-Lucas County Port Authority, Lake Local School District, and others, for insurance coverage issues.

Our experience has taught us that on occasion, insurance carriers have denied coverage to clients when, in fact, coverage was warranted by the existing insurance policy. Without the guidance our lawyers can offer, clients might be inclined to accept these denials. Clients who seek our advice have often found that the insurance carrier's initial coverage denial was misplaced and the client is entitled to receive the protection provided by the insurance for which premiums were paid. We are available to assist attorneys and their clients with an analysis of insurance policies to determine coverage obligations, whatever the circumstances or policies.



Medical Malpractice

Connelly & Collier LLP has extensive experience in evaluating and litigating medical malpractice cases. Medical malpractice cases are often complex and, therefore, require careful analysis and review. We have contacts with health-care professionals to assist in the initial case analysis.

If you or a family member has suffered an injury which you believe may be related to medical negligence, you should contact an attorney immediately. Generally, a medical malpractice case must be filed within one year from the date of the malpractice, so call us or another attorney right away.

If you have a valid claim, we work with medical experts who can effectively, and forcefully, help a jury understand why you are entitled to compensation. Medicine is both science and art, so the opposing party will no doubt be able to find an opposing expert. As a result, you need to find an attorney with the resources and contacts to employ only the best expert witnesses.

Your attorney must also have the experience to deal effectively with the sometime “hide-the-ball” tactic in medical malpractice cases. We have evaluated and tried enough cases to know how to find the ball. Many of our medical malpractice cases were referred to us by other attorneys: that means you can rest assured that we have a reputation in the legal community for ethical, aggressive, and thorough representation of our clients.

If you or a family member has been injured by medical negligence, or you are an attorney with a medical claim beyond your present expertise, call us, so we can help you.

Sample Cases

- Lucas County - Failure to diagnosis and appropriately treat thyroid cancer
- Lucas County - Failure to diagnose cervical cancer despite three different pap-smears
- Lucas County - Failure to diagnose brachial artery occlusion resulting in below the elbow amputation
- Lucas County - Failure to diagnose pulmonary embolism
- Lucas, Seneca, Hancock, Allen Counties - Birth injury cases
- Lucas County - Negligently performed breast replacement surgery
- Seneca County - Negligently performed bilateral carpal tunnel surgery resulting in permanent injury
- Allen County - Failure to surgically resect cancerous lung tumor
- Allen County - Negligent injection caused permanent damage to arm
- Seneca, Allen Counties - Negligently performed laparoscopic cholecystectomy



Alternative Dispute Resolution

Going to court is only one way to resolve a dispute. Another method, which has become increasingly popular over the past few decades, is what is called “Alternative Dispute Resolution” or “ADR.” ADR can take many forms – arbitration, mediation, early neutral evaluation, are just a few. The common element to virtually all ADR processes is that it is administered by a third party, who is neutral. This neutrality allows the third party to impartially assess each side’s strengths and weaknesses, and convey those impressions to the parties.

Participation in an ADR process is usually voluntary, though some courts do require litigants to engage in some sort of ADR process. ADR’s popularity owes to several appealing features. First, ADR gets results – the success rate in helping the parties reach a resolution is significant. Second, ADR also provides a confidential alternative to the public forum that a courtroom entails. Third, ADR often proves more efficient and cost effective and protracted litigation. Fourth, given the variety in the types of ADR processes that are available, and the adaptability of the processes themselves, creative processes and solutions can be utilized.

All of the attorneys at Connelly & Collier LLP are well-versed in the use of ADR. Further, Steven P. Collier offers mediation services for a variety of disputes.

William M. Connelly

William M. Connelly graduated *cum laude* from John Carroll University with a Bachelor of Science and received a Juris Doctor from The Ohio State University. He was admitted to practice law in 1964 and has been senior partner of Connelly & Collier LLP since 1978.



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Education

John Carroll University, B.S.S. 1961
The Ohio State University, J.D. 1964

Bar Admissions

Ohio
U.S. District Court, N.D. of Ohio
U.S. Court of Appeals, Sixth Circuit
U.S. Supreme Court
U.S. District Court, W.D. of Michigan

Practice Areas

Complex Business Litigation

From 1964 to 1969, Mr. Connelly was an associate with Eastman & Smith where his practice was limited to litigation primarily involving insurance defense law. For the next three years, Mr. Connelly was an Assistant United States Attorney for the Northern District of Ohio, in charge of the Toledo, Ohio office. While so employed, he was specially assigned by the United States Department of Justice as a Prosecutor in the case entitled United States of America v. Berrigan, which trial gained national attention. For his efforts, Mr. Connelly received a special commendation from the Attorney General of the United States. From 1968 to 1975, Mr. Connelly was on the adjunct faculty of the University of Toledo College of Law, teaching Trial Practice. Since 1972, Mr. Connelly has been engaged in the private practice of law concentrating his practice in personal injury, medical malpractice, complex business litigation, and federal white collar criminal defense. Mr. Connelly was an adjunct professor at the University of Toledo Medical Center from 1986 to 1992. In 1992, he was appointed to the University of Toledo Medical Center's Board of Trustees and served as Chairman of its Board of Trustees from 1999 to 2001. In April of 2001, he was appointed Vice President and General Counsel of the University of Toledo Medical Center, where he served until May 2004.

Mr. Connelly has been a lecturer at seminars hosted by the Ohio State Bar Association, Toledo Bar Association, and the Ohio Association for Justice. He is a member of the American Board of Trial Advocates, the American, Ohio State, and Toledo Bar Associations. Mr. Connelly is a Fellow of the American, Ohio and Toledo Bar Foundations. In 1995, he received the University of Toledo Law Alumni Association Distinguished Toledo Lawyer Award. Since 1987, Mr. Connelly has been listed in *The Best Lawyers in America*, a referral guide of attorneys in the United States. He is also a member of the Million Dollar Advocates Forum.



Steven P. Collier

Steven P. Collier graduated from Wittenberg University cum laude and from the University of Cincinnati College of Law, with honors. He was admitted to the Ohio Bar in 1981. He is a member of the Toledo, Ohio State, and American Bar Associations and is a Fellow of the Ohio and Toledo Bar Foundations.



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Education

Wittenberg University, B.A. 1977
University of Cincinnati, J.D. 1981

Bar Admissions

Ohio
U.S. District Court, N.D. of Ohio
U.S. Court of Appeals, Sixth Circuit
U.S. District Court, E.D. of Michigan

Practice Areas

Personal Injury
Medical Malpractice
Product Liability
MDL – Pharmaceutical
Mediation Services

Mr. Collier is a nationally known trial lawyer who has been recognized since 1995 in *The Best Lawyers in America*, a referral guide to the legal profession in the United States. The publication Ohio Super Lawyers has recognized Mr. Collier since its inception in 2004. He is certified as a Civil Trial Advocate by the National Board of Trial Advocacy and is an Associate in the American Board of Trial Advocates. He focuses his practice in the areas of personal injury, wrongful death, and medical malpractice. Mr. Collier is a member of the Million Dollar Advocates Forum whose membership is limited to trial lawyers who have demonstrated exceptional skill, experience, and excellence in advocacy by achieving a trial verdict, award or settlement in the amount of One Million Dollars or more. He has also briefed and argued cases before the Ohio Supreme Court.

Widely respected by his peers, Mr. Collier was chosen to serve as President of the Ohio Association for Justice from 2001-2002. He has been a Trustee of the Ohio Association for Justice since 1989 and a Fellow since 2003. Mr. Collier also served as President of the Ohio Chapter of the American Board of Trial Advocacy. He has been Chair of the Lawyers and Doctors Committee of the Toledo Bar Association. He is a member of the American College of Legal Medicine. In 2005, Mr. Collier authored the Minority Report for the Ohio Medical Malpractice Commission, a nine-member panel appointed to study the effects of the Medical Malpractice Bill (S.B. 281). Mr. Collier has lectured extensively throughout Ohio for the Ohio Association for Justice, local bar associations, Ohio Legal Center Institute, and the National Business Institute in the areas of personal injury and medical malpractice. He has served as Co-Chair of the Annual Fundraising Campaign for LAWO and ABLE which provides assistance for those who cannot afford attorneys. Also, he has been appointed by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Ohio to serve on a task force to formulate guidelines for court reporter certification.

Since 1992, he has been on the adjunct faculty at the University of Toledo Medical Center teaching Law & Medicine. He was on the adjunct faculty of the University of Toledo College of Law teaching Trial Practice from 1997 to 2004. In 2014, Mr. Collier received the Robert A. Kelb Distinguished Service Award from the Toledo Bar Association.

Steven R. Smith



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Education

Miami University, B.A. 1975
The Ohio State University, M.A.. 1977
University of Toledo, J.D. 1980

Bar Admissions

Ohio
U.S. District Court, N.D. of Ohio
U.S. Court of Appeals, Sixth Circuit
U.S. District Court, E.D. of Michigan
U.S. District Court, S.D. of Ohio

Practice Areas

Complex Business Litigation
Insurance Coverage Litigation

Steven R. Smith is an honors graduate of Miami University and the University of Toledo College of Law. Mr. Smith holds a Masters degree from The Ohio State University. He was admitted to the Ohio bar in 1980 and has been a partner with Connelly & Collier since 1986. Mr. Smith is a member of the Toledo and Ohio State Bar Associations and is a Fellow of the Ohio and Toledo Bar Foundations. He has served as a Trustee of the Toledo Bar Association from 1997 to 2005, and as President of the Toledo Bar Association for the term commencing July 2004. Mr. Smith has been President of the Toledo Junior Bar and Chair of numerous bar association committees. He is also a member of the Million Dollar Advocates Forum.

Mr. Smith devotes his time to business litigation with a concentration on representing policyholders in insurance coverage matters. He is one of only fourteen lawyers to be certified by the Ohio State Bar Association as a specialist in insurance coverage law. He has asserted claims for coverage under commercial general liability, property, directors and officers, legal malpractice and business interruption policies. In this regard, he has prosecuted litigation and appeals in state and federal courts on insurance coverage issues, negotiated settlements with insurance companies for claims, and conducted coverage reviews for clients facing liability claims from third parties.

He has also tried and prosecuted appeals of lawsuits involving construction, securities, lender liability, and shareholder disputes. Mr. Smith has defended directors and officers against regulatory agencies. He has served as a lecturer for the Federal Bar Association (Northern District of Ohio Chapter), Ohio State Bar Association, Ohio Association for Justice, Ohio Prosecuting Attorneys Association, and the Toledo Bar Association.

Janine T. Avila



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Education

Miami University, B.A. 1972
University of Toledo, J.D. 1991

Bar Admissions

Ohio
Michigan
U.S. District Court, E.D. of Michigan
U.S. District Court, N.D. of Ohio
U.S. Court of Appeals, Sixth Circuit
U.S. District Court, W.D. of Michigan
U.S. Supreme Court

Practice Areas

Personal Injury
Insurance Litigation
Employment Litigation
Complex Business Litigation

In her 25th year of practice, Janine T. Avila is a partner of Connelly & Collier LLP, proudly representing her clients in the areas of complex civil and personal injury litigation, insurance coverage disputes, employment law, and business disputes. The Supreme Court of Ohio has accepted several prominent cases on which she worked including *Federal Insurance Co. v. Executive Coach Luxury Travel*; *Ronald Ameigh, etc., et al. v. Baycliffs Corporation, et al.*; *Harold R. Clagg et al. v. Baycliffs Corp., et al.*; and *Earlin E. Worley v. Cooper Tire & Rubber Co. et al.* Avila has also been at the forefront of litigation in the Ortho Evra multi-district litigation.

In 2003, Avila was awarded membership in the Million Dollar Advocates Forum, a membership limited to trial lawyers achieving a trial verdict, award or settlement of one million dollars or more. She has also been awarded membership in "Who's Who in Toledo Area Law" and been repeatedly named as one of Ohio's "Super Lawyers".

Avila is a published author, including "Kissing Cousins: The relationship of the dual-capacity doctrine to workers' compensation" in the Tort Law Journal of Ohio. She has also authored and given numerous speeches, such as "The Basics of Insurance Coverage" for the Ohio State Bar Association Insurance Seminar. The Ohio Prosecuting Attorneys Association, the Ohio Association for Justice, and the Ohio State Bar Association have also requested her more advanced "Insurance Coverage" presentation.

Avila graduated from Miami University *cum laude* and is a *summa cum laude* graduate of the University of Toledo College of Law. A trial and appellate attorney since 1991, she is admitted to practice in Ohio and Michigan. She is a long-time member and officer of the Toledo Women's Bar Association, where she served as President in 2009-2010, and currently serves as Secretary. Her professional association memberships include the Ohio State Bar Association and the Toledo Bar Association. Avila served as Trustee for the Ohio Association for Justice for nine years and is a past President of Harbor Behavioral Health and the Alzheimer's Association of Northwest Ohio.

When not practicing law, Ms. Avila is a swimmer and pianist, the mother of three grown children, and the grandmother of two.

Tammy G. Lavalette



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Education

Ohio University, B.A. 1992
University of Toledo, J.D. 1999

Bar Admissions

Ohio
U.S. District Court, N.D. of Ohio
U.S. District Court, S.D. of Ohio

Practice Areas

Business Litigation
Employment Litigation
Insurance Litigation

Tammy G. Lavalette is an experienced attorney who focuses her practice on complex commercial and business litigation. She has handled cases in a wide variety of areas including employment, contracts, public housing, shareholder disputes, real estate, securities, probate litigation, civil rights and insurance coverage. She possesses both first and second chair trial experience, and has successfully handled numerous appeals.

Ms. Lavalette graduated cum laude from Ohio University in 1992, and graduated magna cum laude from the University of Toledo College of Law in 1999. Ms. Lavalette was admitted to practice in Ohio in 1999. She is also admitted to practice in the U.S. Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals, the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Ohio, and the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Ohio.

Ms. Lavalette is a member of the Ohio State Association, and the Toledo Bar Association. She serves as chair of the Newsletter Committee, and Secretary of the Court of Appeals Committee for the Toledo Bar Association.

H. Buswell Roberts, Jr.



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Education

State University of New York
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University of Toledo, J.D. 1975

Bar Admissions

Ohio
Virginia
U.S. District Court, N.D. of Ohio
U.S. District Court, S.D. of Ohio
U.S. District Court, W.D. of Michigan
U.S. District Court, E.D. of Michigan
U.S. District Court, E.D. of Virginia
U.S. District, W.D. of Virginia
U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit
U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit
U.S. Tax Court

Practice Areas

Commercial Bankruptcy
Commercial Litigation
General Business

H. Buswell Roberts, Jr. has more than 35 years of experience representing corporations and secured and unsecured creditors in bankruptcy proceedings. In addition, he regularly provides general business advice to corporations. He is admitted to practice law in Ohio and Virginia as well as the federal courts in Ohio, Michigan, Virginia and the U.S. Tax Court. He is board certified in business bankruptcy by the American Board of Certification.

His background in the practice of corporate bankruptcy, insolvency, workouts, restructuring and general corporate and commercial litigation complements Connelly & Collier's ongoing emphasis on trial practice and its focus on complex business litigation, plaintiffs' personal injury and medical malpractice cases.

Mr. Roberts graduated cum laude from the University of Toledo College of Law in 1975 and received his B.S. degree in Management with High Honors from the State University of New York at Buffalo in 1972. He was Editor-in-Chief of the University of Toledo College of Law Review and served as a law clerk to the United States District Court for the Northern District of Ohio Western Division from 1975 through 1977. He was also a bankruptcy trustee for 12 years.

Mr. Roberts also maintains a practice in Blacksburg, Virginia, while serving Ohio clients in his capacity with Connelly, Jackson & Collier. His firm was named a "Super Lawyers Tier One Top Law Firm" in Virginia for solo practice in business and transactions in 2012 and was recently listed as one of the Best Law Firms by US News and World Report.

He is a member of the Virginia and Ohio Bar Associations. Mr. Roberts is also a member of the American Bankruptcy Institute.