

EXCLUSIVE 2020 EDITION

THE TOP 100 ATTORNEYS OF 2020

FEATURING DISTINGUISHED TRIAL LAWYER, ADAM M. MOSKOWITZ



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of The Moskowitz
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Adam M. Moskowitz

A distinguished trial lawyer with over 25 years of experience, attorney Adam M. Moskowitz has received national recognition for delivering justice to millions of class action plaintiffs throughout the country and for generous contributions to his community. His exemplary record includes both courtroom successes and large class action settlements, as he has devoted his entire professional life to advocating for all consumers' rights. As the founding partner of The Moskowitz Law Firm in Coral Gables, Florida, he leads his team's participation in numerous state and national cases, involving teams of different law firms, joined together from throughout the nation. We sat down with him to learn more about him and his new firm.

Tell us a little bit about your background.

I grew up here in Miami, with my mother and my sister, Beth, who is also a lawyer. My mom, who passed away last year, did everything she could to give us every opportunity. I attended a great local private high school, the Alexander Muss High School in Israel Program, and studied abroad in London all because of my mom's hard work and efforts. She was really a great role model.

How did you end up at the University of Miami School of Law?

I actually did not get into any of the top-tier law schools to which I applied, which was an extremely humbling experience. However, I took advantage of that year by working as a waiter and giving back to programs that I loved, such as the High School in Israel Program, and AIPAC in Washington, D.C. When I started at the University of Miami School of Law, I loved it so much that I even sometimes slept in the *Law Review* office. I also worked for the dean of students, who offered me an adjunct professor position right out of school, teaching class action litigation.

After graduation, I worked for my prior law firm for about 24 years, running the class action practice and serving as managing partner for many years. As a first-year associate, I represented farmers across Florida and Costa Rica who had used a DuPont product that killed their plants. One of my first assignments was to visit the hospital where our client was being deposed, although he was suffering from what we alleged was health damage from the product. It was very sad to help defend his deposition by holding up "yes" and "no" signs because he couldn't speak. Such rage and sympathy helped me build my passion for class action litigation as my device for justice. My first just trial resulted in one

of the largest RICO jury trials in Miami-Dade County. We continue to follow the simple lessons: "Always be ethical, never cut corners, and always have a long-term approach. There is no such thing as a quick win by cutting corners, because your reputation lasts a lifetime."

Have you continued to teach law school in addition to serving as an attorney?

I've taught class action litigation at the University of Miami School of Law for more than 26 years now. I continue to hear from many of my former students, which is extremely gratifying, and I donate my salary back to the law school for scholarships. I teach a seminar on the Multi-District Litigation Panel with the Honorable Judge David Proctor, which has been a great honor for me. One of my greatest honors was donating \$1 million from my firm to the Miami Law School with my co-counsel and friends at Podhurst, Orseck and Harke & Clasby to create the first annual University of Miami Class Action and Mass Action Forum. Next year will be our third annual conference, with some of the best lawyers and judges from around the country. Numerous class action settlements have also allowed me and my team to direct court-approved millions of dollars in *cy-pres* contributions to many national and local organizations.

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What is the most difficult obstacle you've had to overcome during your career?

To be honest, it was dealing with my alcohol abuse. I met my best friend and wife, Jessica, about 15 years ago, and she helped me deal with my personal demons. She's the best thing that ever happened to me, along with our four great children: Serafina, 10; Michael, 8; Samantha, 6; and our youngest daughter, Morgan Grayson, who is eight months old. The legal profession accepts, and even encourages, drinking as a sign of celebration. As a husband and father, I had to decide what direction I wanted my life to take. Over the last eight years, I have built a grounded, solid base, and I now live by the expression from the popular TV show *Friday Night Lights*: "Clear eyes, full heart, can't lose."

Last year, I organized a national town hall meeting sponsored by Duke University Law School and the University of Miami School of Law. The most respected experts on the issues of addiction in our profession spoke on how to deal with anxiety and choose options to live a great life. We raised over \$2 million to help many people and various causes.

Why did you start your own law firm?

There are times in our lives when we are faced with circumstances that provide us with a dramatic, different path. It is in those scary, uncertain times when we are really tested, and we either rise to the occasion or fall. I decided

that I was not going to fail. With my wife's help, we built a great firm and created a healthy environment with people from our community. My partner, Howard Bushman, is a great balance to me, and is very meticulous and a loving father to three daughters. We're honored to use the class action device as a weapon for consumers to take on the even the largest giants and get our clients justice. There is simply no substitute for hard work, clear ethics, and honesty, and I would put our small firm against any in the country.

What sets The Moskowitz Law Firm apart from other legal practices?

We wanted to keep our firm small, with only about five lawyers, a CFO, a few paralegals, and law students that we continue to hire from Miami Law School. I want to continue the close, healthy, family-style culture that we've developed. Success requires long-term relationships among our co-counsels and other professionals that we deal with, and we're grateful to all the banks and experts that we've worked with for over 25 years, because they're not only professionals, but also very good friends.

What cases are you most proud to have won?

Certainly, our force-placed insurance class action cases that made a real difference in society, and still continue today. Over the past 12 years, we have litigated and settled 32 class cases against the largest banks and mortgage servicers in the country and collected settlements on behalf of more than 1.7 million homeowners for almost \$1.8 billion, plus important injunctive changes that ended those practices forever. I will never forget all those calls that I had with homeowners who were facing foreclosure. In just two years, our new firm has litigated and settled almost as many cases, helping hundreds of thousands of consumers with types of important cases.

Don't you represent Native American tribes as well?

We do. We hired an attorney based upon a call from a very good friend who is a professor at the law school. He was the first Miccosukee Native American to graduate from law school, and he's now a great friend and a real role model to his community. As a result, we represent the Miccosukee Tribe and the Seminole Indian Tribe of Florida.

Are you currently involved in any community or civic organizations?

I'm involved with some local organizations, such as my local synagogue, where our children attend day school. Professionally, I sit on various state and national class action groups, such as the Duke University Class Action Board. I'm honored to be featured and to share my personal story so that maybe I can inspire just one person to take the right path and live a great life.

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