

PARTNER

John F. LaSalle

New York

55 Hudson Yards
20th Floor
New York, NY 10001
Phone 212 303 3526

PROFILE

John is the co-leader of the firm's Insurance Disputes practice group. He has represented some of the largest life insurance companies in the United States, including Lincoln National Life Insurance Company, John Hancock Life Insurance Company (U.S.A.), Jackson National, and Voya. His practice includes defending life insurance companies in class actions, opt-out suits, and regulatory matters.

John has defended insurance companies against claims that cost of insurance rates in universal life insurance policies should have been decreased as mortality allegedly improved. He has also defended insurance companies that have redetermined cost of insurance rates. Additionally, he has challenged the validity of multimillion-dollar life insurance policies where the insureds lied on their applications regarding their net worth as part of a scheme to benefit unrelated investors who lacked an insurable interest in the lives of the insured.

Recently, John obtained dismissal of a putative class action seeking premium refunds of planned premiums for universal life insurance policies under a New York insurance statute. The district court granted BSF's motion to dismiss, and the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit certified a question of law to the New York Court of Appeals. In October 2023, the New York Court of Appeals held that the statute does not apply to planned premiums for universal life insurance policies, issuing the first decision by a New York court interpreting the statute since it was enacted 100 years ago.

John represented Starr International Company, headed by Maurice "Hank" Greenberg, in a federal lawsuit brought by American International Group seeking, among other things, billions of dollars of Starr's AIG stock and other assets. Starr won



PRACTICES

Insurance Disputes
Antitrust and Competition
Crisis Management
Financial Institutions and Private Funds
Class Actions

EDUCATION

University of Virginia School of Law, J.D., *Order of the Coif*, Notes Editor, Virginia Law Review
Duke University, B.A., *summa cum laude*, Medieval and Renaissance Studies; Phi Beta Kappa; Chester P. Middlesworth Award for Excellence in Research

ADMISSIONS

Bars

New York
U.S. District Court: Southern District of New York
U.S. District Court: Eastern District of New York
U.S. Court of Appeals: Second Circuit

AWARDS AND ASSOCIATIONS

Lawdragon 500 Leading Litigators in America

summary judgment on most of AIG's claims and won a unanimous jury verdict on AIG's remaining claims after a 16-day trial.

John defended a major credit card network during a seven-week bench trial against antitrust claims by the U.S. Department of Justice relating to the network's contractual provisions with merchants. The Supreme Court affirmed the Second Circuit's decision instructing the trial court to enter judgment in the network's favor.

PUBLICATIONS & PRESENTATIONS

Was Ptolemy of Lucca a Civic Humanist? Reflections on a Newly Discovered Manuscript of Hans Baron, 26 HISTORY OF POLITICAL THOUGHT 236 (2005), John La Salle and James M. Blythe, Ph.D.

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