

People



Michael I. Goldberg

Co-Chair, Bankruptcy and Reorganization Practice Group

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vCard

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” An extraordinary lawyer who is unflappable. He’s got a keen business mind and can forge consensus in seemingly irreconcilable disputes.

- *Chambers USA*

A Fellow of the American College of Bankruptcy, Michael Goldberg is co-chair of Akerman’s Bankruptcy and Reorganization Practice Group. For more than three decades, Michael’s practice has focused on the recovery aspects of complex bankruptcies and fraud. He has served as court-appointed receiver in many cases, helping victims maximize potential returns by identifying, securing, and monetizing potential assets as quickly and efficiently as possible.

As a leading member of Akerman’s fraud and recovery practice, Michael has managed some of the largest Ponzi scheme liquidation recoveries in U.S. history. He is a highly sought-after expert witness and routinely testifies in federal and state court cases throughout the country and internationally. Michael also has appeared on CNN, CNBC, Fox News, and National Public Radio to discuss Ponzi schemes and receiverships involving investor fraud. He has also been quoted in *Bloomberg*, *Forbes*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The New York Times*, *The American Lawyer*, *Miami Herald*, *Sun Sentinel*, and numerous other publications. Michael regularly lectures to regulators and various legal groups throughout the country.

Notable Work

Areas of Experience

Bankruptcy and Reorganization
SEC Receiverships and Ponzi Schemes
Fraud and Recovery
Financial Services
Assignments for the Benefit of Creditors
Distressed and Special Assets

Education

J.D., Boston University, 1990, magna cum laude
M.B.A., New York University, 1987
B.A., Boston University, History, 1985

Admissions

Bars

Florida
New York

Courts

U.S. Bankruptcy Court, Southern District of Florida
U.S. District Court, District of Colorado
U.S. District Court, Middle District of Florida
U.S. District Court, Southern District of Florida
U.S. District Court, Southern District of California

Related Content

Record Number of Akerman Lawyers Named to *Best Lawyers 2026 Guide*
August 21, 2025

Akerman Lawyers Ranked in Florida by *Super Lawyers Magazine*
July 08, 2025

Akerman Earns Top Rankings in 2025 *Chambers USA Guide*
June 09, 2025

Ponzi Scheme Liquidation Work and Receiverships

Champlain Towers South Condominium Association, Inc. -

Receiver: Serve as Receiver for the Champlain Tower South Condominium Association, Inc. following the horrific collapse of the Champlain Tower South Condominium in Surfside, Florida, in June 2021. Case is pending in the Circuit Court of the Eleventh Judicial Circuit in and for Miami Dade County, Florida.

Woodbridge Group of Companies: Appointed by the SEC to the Board of Managers, and subsequently as Liquidating Trustee, of The Woodbridge Group of Companies, a group of related entities accused of defrauding investors out of \$1.2 billion. The appointment of the Board of Managers arises out of a settlement that resolved motions filed by the SEC and the Unsecured Creditors Committee in the United States Bankruptcy Court in Delaware to oust the debtors' current management in favor of a trustee. The settlement also avoided the appointment of a receiver in a case commenced by the SEC against the debtors in the United States District Court for the Southern District of Florida accusing the debtors of conducting a massive Ponzi scheme.

Jay Peak, Inc. and Q Resorts, Inc.: Appointed Receiver by the United States District Court for the Southern District of Florida over ski resorts located in Northern Vermont in the largest EB-5 fraud in the history of the United States involving more than 800 investors owed in excess of \$400 million. Secured a \$150 million settlement with Raymond James that was announced in a press conference with Vermont Governor Phil Scott exactly one year from the date the case began. In negotiating the settlement, recovered investors' stolen money and all past due trade debt and contractor claims of the resort will be paid in full. The settlement funds allow for completion of construction of the Jay Peak Resort, northern Vermont's largest employer.

GWG Holdings, Inc. – Litigation Trustee: Serve as Litigation Trustee of the GWG Holdings Trust, a litigation trust arising out of the bankruptcy of GWG Holdings and related entities and involving allegations of an approximate billion-dollar fraud. Responsible for overseeing and pursuing all litigation for the benefit of creditors.

Rothstein Rosenfeldt Adler: Represented the Official Committee of Unsecured Creditors in the Rothstein Rosenfeldt Adler bankruptcy case involving the liquidation of a law firm engaged in a \$1.2 billion Ponzi scheme. Subsequently appointed Liquidating Trustee of Rothstein Rosenfeldt Adler Liquidating Trust responsible for overseeing all distributions to creditors and handling litigation on behalf of the Liquidating Trust, which had a one hundred percent payout to all general unsecured creditors.

Special Needs Trust Administration: Serve as Trustee of the Special Needs Trust Administration, which filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy. The nonprofit has accused its founder of taking half of the \$200 million in trusts that it oversees for disabled individuals with special medical needs.

Professional Financial Investors, Inc. and Professional Investors Security Fund, Inc. - Independent Director: Appointed Independent Director (and subsequently Liquidating Trustee) to oversee the bankruptcy of Professional Financial Investors, Inc. and Professional Investors Security Fund, Inc., two entities that engaged in an \$850 million Ponzi scheme defrauding hundreds of investors in connection with the purchase and operation of more than 60 multi-

family and commercial buildings in and around San Francisco. Case is pending in the United States Bankruptcy Court for the Northern District of California.

Worldwide Entertainment, Inc: The Entertainment Group Fund, Inc.; and American Enterprises, Inc.: Appointed Receiver by the United States District Court for the Southern District of Florida over a group of entertainment companies, including the world's second largest independent concert promoter, to operate and liquidate diverse entertainment assets, including venues, shows, movies and other intellectual property, in order to repay approximately 3,750 investors owed more than \$300 million.

Federal Employee Benefits Group, Inc. and F&S Asset Management, Inc.: Appointed receiver by Chief Judge of the United States District Court for the Southern District of Florida at the request of the Securities and Exchange Commission over entities engaged in a \$50 million Ponzi scheme which victimized approximately 300 FBI, DEA, and ICE agents in connection with non-existent bond fund.

Berman Mortgage Corporation: Appointed Receiver by the Circuit Court in Miami, Florida over a large mortgage origination business with approximately 650 investors and total mortgages and/or real estate developments valued at more than \$200 million.

MAMC Incorporated: Appointed Receiver by the Circuit Court in Miami, Florida over a business engaged in the servicing of more than \$200 million in mortgages on behalf of approximately 650 lenders.

Home Equity Mortgage Corporation: Appointed Receiver by the Circuit Court in Miami, Florida over a company engaged in the business of originating and servicing over \$200 million in mortgages on behalf of approximately 800 investors.

Madoff Ponzi Scheme: Represented over 100 defendants in more than 35 separate adversary proceedings seeking to avoid alleged preferential and fraudulent transfers in Madoff Ponzi scheme.

AB Financing & Investments, Inc.: Appointed Receiver by the United States District Court for the Southern District of Florida over a company engaged in a \$80 million Ponzi scheme. Responsible for liquidating six large commercial properties, including hotels and office buildings.

Ware Enterprises and Investments, Inc.: Appointed Receiver by the United States District Court for the Middle District of Florida over an investment firm engaged in a \$30 million dollar Ponzi scheme.

Representative Bankruptcy Work

Bed Bath & Beyond – Plan Administrator: Serving as Plan Administrator for the Chapter 11 plan of Bed Bath & Beyond. Responsible for overseeing the winding down of the company and all litigation.

Monster Energy Corporation: Represent Monster Energy Corporation as co-counsel in connection with the bankruptcy of Vital Pharmaceuticals, Inc., manufacturer of the Bang Energy drink, culminating in the ultimate purchase by Monster Energy of Vital Pharmaceutical's assets.

Samsung Electronics of America: Represented the consumer electronics manufacturer in bankruptcy cases throughout the United States including the Sears, Circuit City, Tweeter, and Ultimate Electronics cases.

AutoNation: Represented the largest automobile dealership in the United States in the ANC Rental bankruptcy in Delaware in connection with large avoidable transfer claims made against AutoNation arising out of its spin-off of Alamo and National Car Rental.

Republic Services, Inc.: Represented one of largest waste companies in the purchase of a waste transfer station pursuant to Section 363 of the Bankruptcy Code.

Published Work and Lectures

- Akerman/Brevet Capital/JTC Group Webinar, Keynote Speaker, “Making an EB-5 Investment Choice: Considerations for Investors and Agents in the New Era,” June 14, 2023
- Greater Miami Jewish Federation Attorneys’ Division, Speaker, “Litigating Through Tragedy: The Surfside Negotiation,” June 12, 2023
- Florida Institute of Certified Public Accountants, Valuation, Forensic Accounting & Litigation Services Conference, Presenter, “Stories From the Front,” January 27, 2023
- American Bankruptcy Institute, Panelist, “Allocating Precious Resources in the Face of Disaster,” March 29, 2022
- Miami Law, Class Action and Complex Litigation Forum, Speaker, “New Waves of Mega Liability Litigation: Lessons Learned from Opioid, Monsanto Roundup, and Other Complex Cases,” January 24, 2020
- Federal Bar Association, Orlando Chapter and Central Florida Bankruptcy Law Association Meeting, “Liquidation of Ponzi Schemes,” September 2019
- National Association of Bankruptcy Trustees Annual Conference, Panelist, “Administering Mega-Ponzi Scheme Cases in Bankruptcy and Receivership,” August 2018
- The Federal Bar Association, Panelist, “Equity Receiverships,” January 17, 2018
- Association of Insolvency & Restructuring Advisors’ 16th Annual Advanced Restructuring and Plan of Reorganization Conference, Speaker, “EB-5 Lending - A Tale of Two Cities,” November 13, 2017
- National Association of Federal Equity Receivers’ 6th Annual Conference, Moderator, “Fraud Vectors in the Receivership Universe,” October 19, 2017
- 2017 San Francisco EB-5 & Investment Immigration Convention, “EB-5 Receivership and Representation of Investors in Troubled Projects,” July 2017
- IIUSA Annual Conference, Speaker, “EB-5 & Securities: Enforcement & Compliance Trends,” April 2017
- 15th Annual Advanced Restructuring and Plan of Reorganization Conference, Speaker, “Administering Ponzi Schemes in Bankruptcy,” November 14, 2016
- University of Miami School of Law, Guest Lecturer, “Distressed Real Estate Receiverships – An alternative to Bankruptcy,” April 2016
- Moderator, Florida Fiduciary Forum, Judges panel (District Court, Bankruptcy Court and State Court) comparing receiverships to bankruptcy, March, 2016

- Palm Beach Bar Association, Speaker, “Ponzi Scheme Liquidations,” May 2015
- The Florida Bar Continuing Legal Education Committee and the Business Law Section, Moderator on Statutory Receiverships, May 2014
- Central Florida Bankruptcy Law Association, Speaker, “Liquidating Ponzi Schemes,” October 2012
- C51 Fraud, Asset Tracing and Recovery Conference, Speaker, “Miami Vice - Unravelling the \$1.2 Billion “Rothstein” Ponzi Scheme,” October 2012
- Guest Lecturer, Florida International University School of Law, “Receiverships and Ponzi schemes,” February 2012
- Turnaround Management Association, Speaker, “Liquidating Ponzi Schemes,” October 2010
- North American Securities Administrator Association’s (NASAA) 25th Annual Public Policy Conference, Speaker, “Overview of Receivership and Ponzi Schemes,” Audience Included State and Federal Regulators from the United States and Canada, April 2010
- Greater Miami Jewish Federation, Professional Advisory Committee, Lunch and Learn Program, Speaker, January 2010
- Turnaround Management Association, Speaker, “Mopping Up After Madoff,” 2009
- Broward County Family Law Bar, Speaker, “Bankruptcy Law Issues for the Family Law Practitioner,” December 2005
- Stetson University College of Law and the Florida Bar, Faculty Speaker, “The Ins and Outs of the New Reformed Code-Minefields for the Unwary Special Topics Under Bankruptcy Reform,” August 2005
- Stetson University College of Law Seminar, Faculty Speaker, “Previewing the Bankruptcy Reform Act,” August 2005
- Turn Around Management Association, Annual South Florida Dinner, Speaker, “Trustees and Receiver’s Responsibility for Preserving Computer Evidence in Bankruptcy and Receiverships,” 2005
- Daily Business Review, Author, “Florida to Remain a Haven for Debtors,” March 30, 2005
- Florida Medical Business, Author, “Road Map For Dealing With Your PPM When It Careens Towards Bankruptcy”
- South Florida Business Journal, Author, “Buying Assets from Bankrupt Businesses,” May 2002
- Daily Business Review, Author, “When Bankruptcy Looms: Deciding If Patient Can Be Saved Or Read Last Rites,” March 23, 1998
- The Florida Bridge The Gap Seminar, Speaker, 1995 and 1996
- As a law clerk, assisted in writing a book on exemptions for PLI and his portion of Colliers, dealing with Leverage Buyouts and Fraudulent Transfers; also wrote a thesis receiving the highest honors on this particular issue, in an article entitled “Fraudulent Transfer Laws, Are They In Need Of Repair?”

Affiliations

- The Florida Bar, Member
- Broward County Bar Association, Member
- New York State Bar Association, Member
- Bankruptcy Bar Association of the Southern District of Florida, Member
- American Bar Association, Member

- Families Against Cult Teachings, Legal Advisor
- Nova University School of Law, Board of Trustees, 2012-2014
- FBI Citizens Academy Graduate, 2008

Honors and Distinctions

- American College of Bankruptcy, Fellow
- *Daily Business Review*, 2023, Attorney of the Year
- *Chambers USA*, 2006-2025, Ranked in top tier in Florida (South Florida) for Bankruptcy/Restructuring; 2024-2025, Ranked in Florida for Bankruptcy Litigation
- *Financial Times*, Innovative Practitioner Short List, 2023
- *Forbes*, 2024, Listed as a “Top 200 U.S. Lawyer”
- *Best Lawyers*, 2006-2026, Listed in Florida for Bankruptcy and Creditor Debtor Rights / Insolvency and Reorganization Law, Bet-the-Company Litigation, and Litigation - Bankruptcy
- *Best Lawyers*, 2015, 2019, 2024, 2026, Named “Lawyer of the Year” in Florida for Litigation - Bankruptcy
- *Best Lawyers*, 2025, 2021, 2013, 2016, Named “Lawyer of the Year” in Florida for Bankruptcy and Creditor Debtor Rights / Insolvency and Reorganization Law
- *Best Lawyers*, 2020, 2024, Named “Lawyer of the Year” in Florida for Bet-the-Company-Litigation
- *Super Lawyers Magazine*, 2020-2025, Listed in Florida for Bankruptcy: Business
- *Super Lawyers Magazine*, 2007-2020, Listed in Florida for Bankruptcy & Creditor/Debtor Rights
- *Super Lawyers Magazine*, 2010, Listed in Florida as a “Top 100 Lawyer”
- *Benchmark Litigation*, 2025, Listed in Florida as a “Local Litigation Star” for Bankruptcy
- *Fort Lauderdale Illustrated*, Recognized as a “Top Lawyer in Broward County” for Bankruptcy and Creditor Debtor Rights/Insolvency and Reorganization Law, 2021-2022
- *Daily Business Review*, 2017, “Most Effective Lawyer,” Finalist
- *The Financial Times*, 2017, “Most Innovative Lawyers North America” for Litigation and Disputes
- *Daily Business Review*, 2017, Professional Excellence Awards, “Distinguished Leader”
- *Daily Business Review*, 2015, “Lawyer of the Year,” Finalist
- *South Florida Legal Guide Top Lawyers*, 2004-2019, Listed for Bankruptcy, Creditors’ Rights
- *Florida Trend’s Legal Elite*, 2005-2011, 2013-2015, 2019, Listed for Bankruptcy & Workout
- *Daily Business Review*, 2013, Most Effective Lawyer in Bankruptcy, Winner
- *The Best Lawyers in America*, 2013, Named as “Lawyer of the Year” for Bankruptcy and Creditor Debtor Rights / Insolvency and Reorganization Law in Miami
- *South Florida Business Journal*, 2011, “Key Partner Award,” Finalist
- *BTI* 2007, Listed as a Client Service “All-Star”
- National Multiple Sclerosis Society, Leadership Award, 2000
- Paul J. Liacos Scholar; G. Joseph Tauro Scholar