Blankingship Keith pc

Chidi I. James

Principal

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Chidi James represents people and families in serious personal-injury and wrongful-death cases, including product-liability claims, commercial-vehicle crashes, inadequate-security cases, and other catastrophic-injury matters.

His recent work includes a $14 million settlement for victims of sexual assault at a child-care center, a $9 million settlement arising from the University of Virginia shooting cases, a $5.4 million wrongful-death settlement following a high-speed crash, and a $4.4 million verdict in a commercial-vehicle case.

Chidi has been with Blankingship & Keith since 2003. Before joining the firm, he clerked for the judges of the Arlington County Circuit Court. He also served for 25 years in the Air National Guard, retiring in 2022.

He has been deeply involved in the legal profession throughout his career. Chidi is a former president of the Virginia State Bar and has held leadership roles with the Virginia Trial Lawyers Association, the Old Dominion Bar Association Foundation, the Fairfax Law Foundation, and the Northern Virginia Black Attorneys Association.

He has also served on Virginia State Bar disciplinary committees, taught professionalism courses for lawyers, coached trial-advocacy and mock-trial teams, and supported legal-aid and community organizations throughout Northern Virginia.

Chidi's work has been recognized by Best Lawyers, Super Lawyers, Washingtonian, Virginia Business, Forbes, and Northern Virginia Magazine. Washingtonian has named him a Lifetime Lawyer, and he has held an AV rating from Martindale-Hubbell since 2013.

Practice Areas

- Civil Litigation
- Personal Injury
- Brain Injury
- Inadequate Security and Crime Victim Litigation
- Product Liability
- Wrongful Death
- Automobile and Trucking Accidents

Education

- George Mason University School of Law (2001)
- Texas A&M University (1997)

Bar Admissions

- Virginia State Bar, 2001
- District of Columbia, 2002
- Eastern District of Virginia, 2003
- United States Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces, 2003

Clerkships

- Alper, Kendrick, Sheridan and Newman - Arlington County Circuit Court

Professional Honors & Activities

Professional Honors

- Rated AV by Martindale-Hubbell (2013-present)
- Virginia Access to Justice Commission - Pro Bono Honor Roll (2025)
- *Forbes Magazine* - Best in State (Virginia) for Civil Litigation (2025)
- *Virginia Business Magazine* - Virginia 500 Power List (2023)
- *Washingtonian Magazine* - Washington's Best Legal Minds (2011), Washington, DC's Best Lawyers (2020-2024) and Lifetime Lawyer (2022)
- *U.S. News - Best Lawyers in America*®, Personal Injury Litigation - Plaintiff and Product Liability Litigation - Plaintiff (since 2012)
- *Super Lawyers*, Personal Injury - Plaintiff, Washington, DC and Virginia (2014-2027)
- Northern Virginia Magazine, Personal Injury - Plaintiff (2022-2025)
- *Super Lawyers*, Rising Star (2007-2013)
- *Virginia Lawyers Weekly,* Personal Injury (2020)
- *Virginia Business Magazine*, Legal Elite - Legal Services Pro Bono (2021-2024)
- *Arlington Magazine*, Top Attorneys – Legal Aid/Pro Bono (2021-2025) and Personal Injury (2022)
- *Virginia Living Magazine*, Legal Eagles - Most Respected Attorneys in the Commonwealth (2012)

- *Richmond Magazine*, Outstanding Young Lawyers - Rising Star (2009)
- *Richmond Magazine*, Top Young Attorneys in Virginia - Rising Star (2008) and Top Virginia Lawyers - Rising Star 2007

Professional Activities

- Old Dominion Bar Association Foundation, Board Member (Former Board President)
- Virginia Trial Lawyers Association, Board Member
- Virginia Law Foundation Fellow
- Old Dominion Bar Association Foundation, Fellow
- Fairfax Law Foundation Fellow
- Fairfax Law Foundation Board Member
- Former President, Virginia State Bar
- Former President, Northern Virginia Black Attorneys Association
- Board member, Virginia Trial Lawyers Association
- Former Vice-Chair, Virginia State Bar's Standing Committee on Lawyer Discipline
- Member of the Virginia State Bar's Fifth District Disciplinary Committee
- Former faculty member, Virginia State Bar Henry L. Carrico Professionalism Course
- Former adjunct faculty member, George Washington School of Law, Washington, DC.

Representative Cases

Personal Injury

- Secured $14 Million Settlement for Child Care Center Victims of Sexual Assault with Blankingship & Keith Teaming with Seven Law Firms
- Secured $9 Million Settlement in UVa Shooting Cases with Integral Role by Blankingship & Keith
- Secured $5.4 Million Settlement in a Wrongful Death Case Arising from a High-speed Crash
- Secured $5,200,000 Settlement for Family in Wrongful Death Lawsuit Involving Hazing Incident
- Secured $4,400,000 Verdict in Loudoun County for Client Stemming from a Serious Commercial Vehicle Collision
- Secured a $450,000 Settlement for Client in Highway Collision
- $550,000 Settlement for Child Assaulted by Daycare Teacher
- Obtained $500,000 Settlement for a Client Injured in Truck Accident
- Obtained a $1.475 Million Personal Injury Settlement for Violation of Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code-Related Personal Injury

Community Service

- Member, Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church
- Member, Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc

- Member, Board of the Gainesville Basketball Association
- Member, Board of the Mount Pleasant Baptist Community Development Corporation
- Volunteer coach, multiple youth sports teams
- Board Member and Co-Chair, Gabriel James Memorial Scholarship Committee
- Coach and Mentor, Battlefield High School Mock Trial Team
- Board Member, 1st Stage Theatre

Publications

In this episode of *Just Virginia,* featuring Crista Gantz and Chidi James in a discussion of EGAD VA, the Virginia State Bar's 2025 report on "Entry, Growth, and Distribution of Virginia Attorneys." Hosted by Vice President of CLE Karl Doss, the conversation explores Virginia's legal-desert problem, misconceptions about the bar exam, and key findings from this important report on access to legal services across the Commonwealth. Podcast Link.

News & Insights

- Virginia Personal Injury Questions: What You Need to Know
- Thirty-Two Blankingship & Keith Attorneys Recognized in 2027 Best Lawyers and Ones to Watch
- David Gogal and Chidi James Serve on Faculty of National Trial Advocacy College
- Chidi James Joins Just Virginia Podcast to Discuss Access to Legal Services in Virginia
- Blankingship & Keith Attorneys Recognized in 2026 Virginia Super Lawyers and Rising Stars
- David J. Gogal Elected President of the Virginia Law Foundation
- Blankingship & Keith, P.C. Announces 2025 Northern Virginia Magazine Top Attorneys
- Ten Blankingship & Keith Attorneys Recognized Among Arlington Magazine's 2025 Top Attorneys
- Blankingship & Keith Secures $5.4 Million Settlement in Wrongful Death Case Following High-Speed Crash
- Thirty Blankingship & Keith Attorneys Recognized in the 2026 Editions of Best Lawyers in America® and Best Lawyers: Ones to Watch®
- Chidi I. James Named Best-in-State Lawyer in Virginia for Civil Litigation by Forbes
- Blankingship & Keith Secures $4.4 Million Jury Verdict for Client Injured in Loudoun County Truck Crash
- Don't Let Insurers Undercut Your Family's UIM Protection
- Blankingship & Keith Attorneys Recognized Among Virginia Business Magazine's Legal Elite
- Twenty-Seven Blankingship & Keith Attorneys Shine in the 2025 Edition of Best Lawyers in America
- Blankingship & Keith Plays Integral Role in Securing $9 Million Settlement in UVa Shooting Cases
- $550,000 Settlement Reached in Child Assault Case at Local Daycare
- Twenty Blankingship & Keith, P.C. Attorneys Named Virginia Super Lawyers and Rising Stars for 2024
- Blankingship & Keith's Personal Injury Lawyers Secure Three Major Settlements Totaling $6.675M, Recognized in Virginia Lawyers Weekly
- Blankingship & Keith Attorneys Shine as "Legal Elite" in Virginia Business Magazine's 2023 Rankings
- Ten Blankingship & Keith Attorneys Recognized as "Top Lawyers" by Northern Virginia Magazine
- Thirteen Blankingship & Keith Attorneys Recognized as Top Attorneys by Arlington Magazine
- Blankingship & Keith's Chidi I. James Earns Spot on Virginia Business Magazine's 2023 Top 500 Power List
- Twenty-two Blankingship & Keith Attorneys Shine in the 2024 Edition of Best Lawyers in America
- Virginia Access to Justice Commission Recognizes Blankingship & Keith Attorneys on 2023 Pro Bono Honor Roll

- Chidi James Named Prince William County Bar Association Pro Bono Attorney of the Year
- U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission Offers New Recommendations for Window Coverings Safety
- Protecting Your Child from Abuse at Child Care Centers
- Blankingship & Keith Teams with Seven Law Firms to Secure $14 Million Settlement for Child Care Center Victims of Sexual Assault
- Can Social Media Companies Evade Accountability?
- Changes in Virginia Law Regarding Improving UM/UIM Coverage
- Blankingship & Keith Principals Chidi James and Rob Stoney Inducted as Fellows of the Virginia Law Foundation
- 20 Blankingship & Keith Attorneys Named “Legal Elite” by Virginia Business Magazine
- Five Blankingship & Keith Attorneys Named “Top Lawyers” by Northern Virginia Magazine
- Ten Blankingship & Keith Attorneys Named “Top Lawyers” by Washingtonian Magazine
- Washingtonian Honors Three Blankingship & Keith Attorneys with Lifetime Achievement Awards