harman claytor corrigan wellman
THE CIVIL LITIGATION FIRM

John R. Owen

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For more than two decades at Harman Claytor Corrigan & Wellman, P.C. (HCCW), John has built his practice on a deeply held conviction: sophisticated defense work demands a strategic, multi-disciplinary team — not a lone advocate. Drawing on his early experience as vice-president of his family's Ford-Mercury dealership in northeastern Ohio, John brings a business-savvy perspective to litigation, understanding firsthand how corporate risk, reputational exposure, and operational continuity must shape defense strategy.

John leads a dedicated team composed of attorneys, paralegals, medical consultants and support staff — collaborating closely with clients from initial case assessment through resolution. That team-centered model ensures that even the most complex, high-profile matters — from catastrophic product-liability or construction-defect claims to medical malpractice, commercial disputes, trucking and transportation litigation — are handled with precision, responsiveness and a coordinated strategy mindful of corporate sensitivities.

Representing businesses, institutions, and manufacturers, John guides clients through high-stakes litigation with an eye toward both legal outcomes and broader business implications. His approach is never a "check-the-box" defense — but instead a forward-looking strategy that anticipates risk, safeguards interests, and protects client relationships.

Leveraging his litigation experience, strategic insight, and trusted relationships across the bar, John has developed a successful mediation practice. He is frequently selected to serve as a mediator in complex matters across the Commonwealth of Virginia, valued for his practical judgment, credibility with counsel, and ability to drive meaningful resolution.

John's leadership in the defense bar is reflected in his long history of service and recognition by his peers:

- President, Virginia Association of Defense Attorneys (VADA)
- President, American Board of Trial Attorneys (ABOTA), Virginia Chapter
- Member of the Board of Directors, Defense Research Institute (DRI), Mid-Atlantic Region
- Recipient, VADA/Virginia Trial Lawyers Association (VTLA) Civility & Professionalism Award

John's work has been consistently recognized in leading legal

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directories and publications:

- Listed in Best Lawyers in America — including “Lawyer of the Year – Richmond” honors.
- Selected by Super Lawyers (Top 50 Lawyers in Virginia) for many consecutive years.
- Included in Virginia Business Legal Elite.
- Recognized by Virginia Lawyers Weekly as a “Leader in the Law” and, most recently, as a “Go-To Lawyer” for Medical Malpractice defense.

Whether defending a complex product-liability case, a high-exposure medical malpractice claim, or a multi-party commercial dispute, John’s clients rely on his commitment to strategic thinking, collective teamwork, and preservation of their broader corporate interests.

John brings a strong sense of balance to his professional and personal life, grounded in curiosity, enthusiasm, and connection. He and his wife share a love of travel, with a particular appreciation for exploring Europe and spending time in the Caribbean. At home in Richmond, they enjoy the city’s dynamic restaurant and live music scene – you can find them somewhere in the City nearly every weekend.

A dedicated golfer, John spends much of his free time at Independence Golf Club, where he continues his pursuit of the “perfect round”—while aiming to one day reclaim bragging rights from his son, the current Club Champion and a reminder that youth has its advantages.

In March 2020, John started a neighborhood fitness group, blending HIIT and CrossFit-style workouts. What began as a small gathering has grown into a close-knit and highly motivated friend group. More than 750 workouts later, the group continues to thrive—extending beyond John’s driveway to shared travel experiences, including concerts, cruises, and trips to the Caribbean.

Professional Activities & Honors

- Virginia Association of Defense Attorneys (VADA)
    - Immediate Past-President (2014 – 2015)
    - President (2013 – 2014)
    - President-Elect (2012 – 2013)
    - Treasurer (2011 – 2012)
    - Director Emeritus (2010 – 2011)
    - Board of Directors (2007 – 2010)
    - Instructor, Trial Tactics Seminar (2008)
    - Convention Chairman (2004)
    - Trial Tactics Seminar
        - Chair (2002)
    - Young Lawyers Division
        - Chair (2000 – 2002)
- Virginia Trial Lawyers Association (VTLA)
- VTLA-VADA Civility and Professionalism Award (2025)
- Defense Research Institute
    - Board of Directors, Mid-Atlantic Region Director (2016 – 2019)
    - It Is All About Relationships – *For the Defense,* with Donald P. Moloney, II (May 2018)
- American Board of Trial Attorneys (ABOTA)
    - State Representative (2016 – 2018)
    - Virginia Chapter President (2015 – 2016)

- Federal Bar Association, Richmond Chapter
    - Board of Directors (2009 – 2015)
- Lewis Powell Inn of Court
    - Board of Directors (2011 – 2017)
- International Association of Defense Counsel (IADC)
- Association of Defense Trial Attorneys (ADTA)
- Virginia Bar Association
    - Richmond Delegate to the Young Lawyers Division (1997 – 2001)
- Virginia Lawyers Weekly
    - Leader in the Law (2015)
    - "Go To Lawyer" for Medical Malpractice (2021)
- Best Lawyers in America (2013 – 2027)
    - Personal Injury Litigation – Defendants
        - "Lawyer of the Year" – Richmond, VA (2022)
    - Product Liability Litigation – Defendants
        - "Lawyer of the Year" – Richmond, VA (2014)
- Virginia Super Lawyers (2008, 2010 – 2026)
    - Personal Injury – Products: Defense
    - Rising Star – Civil Litigation
    - Top 50 Lawyers in Richmond
    - Top 100 Lawyers in Virginia
- Virginia Business Legal Elite (2004, 2008 – 2025)
    - Civil Litigation
    - Construction Law
    - Young Lawyer/Under 40
- Martindale-Hubbell® AV Rated
- Richmond Bar Association
- Henrico County Bar Association

Representative Experience

- Successfully defended hospital in medical malpractice action wherein plaintiff alleged a failure to monitor causing severe personal injuries.
- Successfully defended national restaurant chain in negligence action wherein plaintiff alleged defectiveness in construction materials resulting in catastrophic injuries.
- Successfully defended U.S. tool manufacturer in product liability action wherein estate alleged defective testing and warnings resulted in death.
- Successfully defended highway construction company in negligence action wherein estate alleged defectiveness in design, warning and construction resulting in death.
- Successfully defended aerial lift manufacturer/supplier in product liability action wherein plaintiff alleged defective components caused paraplegia.
- Successfully defended chemical manufacturer/supplier in product liability action wherein plaintiff alleged volatile chemicals exploded causing blindness.
- Successfully defended crane manufacturer in product liability action wherein plaintiff alleged defective design caused traumatic brain injury.
- Successfully represented client in product liability action wherein industrial equipment caused near leg amputation.
- Successfully defended lawnmower manufacturer/seller in product liability action wherein plaintiff alleged defective guarding and warning resulted in leg amputation.
- Successfully defended auto manufacturer/seller in product liability action wherein plaintiff alleged defective restraint system caused quadriplegia.
- Successfully defended crane/lifting equipment manufacturer in product liability action wherein plaintiffs alleged defective equipment caused paraplegia and severe leg injuries.
- Successfully defended industrial tool manufacturer/supplier in product liability action wherein plaintiff alleged defective design/manufacture resulted in loss of sight and significant brain injury.
- Successfully defended battery manufacturer in product liability action wherein plaintiff alleged defective design led to acid leak and significant burn injuries.
- Successfully defended HVAC manufacturer/installer in toxic torts claim wherein plaintiffs alleged defective equipment and installation caused the family to become seriously ill.
- Successfully represented insurance company in subrogation action and subsequent coverage action wherein defendant's insured burned home and defendant subsequently denied coverage for the loss.
- Successfully represented Italian manufacturer of industrial and agricultural equipment in breach of contract action.
- Successfully represented technology company in action wherein plaintiff alleged certain EPA violations resulted in contaminated development site.
- Successfully defended restaurant in negligence action wherein plaintiff alleged defendant's actions caused a fire resulting in a significant loss to retail shopping complex.
- Successfully defended lift manufacturer in product liability action wherein plaintiff alleged defective design of lift truck

owned by U.S. Navy caused leg amputation on U.S.S. Roosevelt.
- Successfully represented homeowner in fraud/breach of contract action against builder wherein defective foundation construction placed home in jeopardy of collapse.
- Successfully represented construction company in breach of contract action following remediation and rebuild of home due to fire loss.
- Successfully defended propane gas manufacturer/seller in product liability action wherein plaintiff alleged explosion caused significant personal injuries.
- Successfully represented world-wide property developer in breach of contract action involving $100 million plus sale of condominium complex.
- Successfully defended developer in action brought by purchasers alleging defective construction and resulting damages.
- Successfully defended automobile seller/dealer in product liability action wherein plaintiff alleged defective component parts caused significant personal injuries.
- Successfully defended farm equipment manufacturer/seller in product liability action wherein plaintiff alleged defective equipment caused foot amputation.
- Successfully defended RV manufacturer in product liability action wherein plaintiff alleged defective design and construction resulted in significant injuries/damages.

The cases referenced above do not represent the lawyer's entire record. Each case must be evaluated on its own facts. The outcome of a particular case cannot be based on past results.

Education

- Bowling Green State University, B.S.*, magna cum laude* (1992)
- Washington and Lee University School of Law, J.D. (1995)

Bar & Court Admissions

- Virginia State Bar
- United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia
- United States District Court for the Western District of Virginia
- United States Bankruptcy Court for the Eastern District of Virginia
- United States Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit
- United States Supreme Court