HUSCH BLACKWELL



Michael A. Brandess

PARTNER

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OVERVIEW

Michael helps businesses, their owners, and their creditors manage the complexities associated with financial distress and bankruptcy law.

Michael's practice touches on all areas of corporate restructurings, crisis management, and transactions involving financial distress. He routinely counsels debtors, creditors, asset purchasers, assignees, creditors' committees, and trustees, among others, who require sound judgment and a deep knowledge of how to navigate the U.S. Bankruptcy Code.

He has drafted multiple bankruptcy plans incorporating settlements with senior secured lenders, classifications of claims and financials underlying liquidation analyses and has represented numerous bankruptcy committees and creditor trustees across multiple industries, including agriculture, retail, restaurants, and manufacturing.

Michael has substantial experience guiding clients through the process of buying and selling assets out of bankruptcy, including operating assets and intellectual property. He also regularly represents clients in resolving disputes in the context of financial

"He always finds the answers and makes us feel like we are the only client, which is great."

— Chambers USA 2025

Industry

Financial Services & Capital Markets

Services

Business Succession Planning

Corporate

Crypto, Digital Assets, & Blockchain

Insolvency & Commercial Bankruptcy

Special Situations & Opportunistic Investing

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distress, including loan workouts and negotiations involving trade relationships.

Michael frequently writes and speaks on issues pertaining to financial distress, family business, and entrepreneurship. He served as the President of Turnaround Management Association's Chicago/Midwest Chapter and was named by the American Bankruptcy Institute (ABI) as a 40 Under 40 Honoree.

Experience

- Served as counsel to KEY Investment Partners and its affiliates in the acquisition of Dixie Elixirs and Mary's Medicinals brands and related assets out of receivership.
- Drafted multiple bankruptcy plans incorporating settlements with senior secured lenders, classifications of claims and financials underlying liquidation analyses.
- Represented numerous bankruptcy committees and creditor trustees.
- Counseled assignee in sale of national retail business assets and intellectual property through assignment for benefit of creditors.
- Advised senior secured lender in sale of distressed pharmacy as going concern.
- Represented secured lender in loan workout during contentious litigation with borrower.
- Assisted sophisticated business in negotiating go-forward trade relationship with bankrupt client.
- Negotiated release of millions of dollars in guaranties with lenders in assignment for benefit of creditors.
- Directed complex sale transaction of national technology company to former employees.
- Counseled high-profile client in prosecution of nationally publicized dispute with international consulting firm.

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Recognition

- *The Best Lawyers In America®*
  - Bankruptcy and Creditor Debtor Rights / Insolvency and Reorganization Law, 2025-2027
- *Chambers USA*
  - Bankruptcy/Restructuring, 2025-2026
- *The Legal 500 United States*
  - Cannabis, Recommended lawyer, 2026
- Lawdragon 500 Special Situations Lawyers, 2026
- American Bankruptcy Institute 40 Under 40 Award, 2021
- 2021 Social Impact Award, Turnaround Management Association, Chicago/Midwest Chapter
- Martindale.com AV Preeminent Rating
- Illinois Super Lawyers Rising Star, 2016-2021
- 2016 Emerging Leader of the Year, Turnaround Management Association Chicago/Midwest Chapter
- M&A Advisor 8th Annual Emerging Leader Award

Education

- J.D., University of Illinois College of Law
  - *magna cum laude*
- B.A., University of Michigan
  - English

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Admissions

- Illinois
- Iowa
- New York
- U.S. District Court, District of Colorado
- U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois
- U.S. District Court, Central District of Illinois
- U.S. District Court, Southern District of Illinois
- U.S. District Court, Northern District of Iowa
- U.S. District Court, Southern District of Iowa
- U.S. District Court, Western District of Michigan
- U.S. District Court, Eastern District of Michigan



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