



SHAREHOLDER

Cinnamon A. Plonka

Zausmer 

(248) 254-4856
cplonka@zausmer.com

Cinnamon Plonka is an accomplished litigator who handles a wide array of civil litigation matters, including first-party no-fault and third-party automobile negligence claims, premises liability, employment litigation, fraud, and insurance coverage disputes, both at the trial level and before appellate courts.

Cinnamon has an impressive track record based on her ability to engage the jury and persuade them to her way of thinking. She is passionate about being in the courtroom and her capacity for conveying a convincing story to seven strangers on a jury drives her success and cements her clients' loyalty. She has a nearly flawless record of "No Cause of Action" verdicts over the past few years, including:

Deborah Gaines v. State Farm - personal insurance protection jury trial in Wayne County Circuit Court

Rudy Lewis and Darryl Hamer v. State Farm - personal insurance protection/uninsured motorist jury trial in Wayne County Circuit Court

Frank Brown v. Pioneer - underinsured motorist jury trial in Wayne County Circuit Court

Melanie Barnes, et al. v. State Farm - personal insurance protection/uninsured motorist jury trial in Wayne County Circuit Court

Valerie Zavala, Next Friend for Arturo Zavala v. Trinity, Inc. - automobile negligence jury trial in Oakland County Circuit Court, where the plaintiff sought \$12.1 million but was awarded no damages

Corey Latham v. Farmers Insurance Exchange and Meemic Insurance Company - subrogation trial focusing on domicile, in which the jury's favorable verdict for Farmers Insurance Exchange on the domicile issue allowed recovery of over \$240,000 in PIP benefits payments made to the plaintiff as the MAIPF insurer

On more than one occasion, her reputation for winning has prompted insurance carriers to substitute Cinnamon for its existing defense counsel.

In a recent subrogation trial (March 18, 2024) based on the issue of domicile, Cinnamon received a favorable verdict against another insurance company after the jury returned a verdict in favor of Farmers Insurance Exchange ("Farmers") on the question of domicile allowing Farmers to be able to recover more than \$240,000 in payments for PIP benefits that it made as the MAIPF insurer.

Prior to joining the firm, Cinnamon enjoyed a long career with Citizens Insurance Company. There, she rose through the ranks to become the manager of one of the company's busiest staff counsel offices, before eventually choosing to return to the courtroom to resume her role as senior trial attorney.

Cinnamon earned her undergraduate degree in social work from Eastern Michigan University. She received her law degree from Thomas M. Cooley Law School, where she competed on the school's national moot court and trial advocacy teams. She also completed a rigorous training regimen at the National Institute for Trial Advocacy.

Giving back is also an essential aspect of Cinnamon's practice, which she demonstrates through her service with the State Bar of Michigan's Attorney Discipline Board. She is a Past President and Board Member of the Black Women Lawyers Association of Michigan and a past Trustee on Eastern Michigan University's Foundation Board of Trustees. Currently, Cinnamon is on the Boards of Directors for Oakland THRIVE and Forgotten Harvest.



FARMINGTON HILLS

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PRACTICE AREAS

Employment & Labor
Insurance Coverage
Insurance Defense
Insurance Fraud

EDUCATION

Thomas M. Cooley Law School,

Juris Doctor, 1999
Moot Court Board
Trial Advocacy Team

Eastern Michigan University,

Bachelor of Arts in Social Work, 1994

National Institute for Trial Advocacy,

June 2004

BAR ADMISSIONS

State of Michigan
U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan

PROFESSIONAL GROUPS

State Bar of Michigan,
*Insurance & Indemnity Law and
Negligence Law Sections
Hearing Panelist, Attorney Discipline Board*
Black Women Lawyers Association of Michigan
*Treasurer, 2012 – 2015
Board of Directors, 2006 – 2015
President, 2004 – 2006
Mentor/Mentee Program*
National Bar Association
Litigation and Insurance Defense Sections
Zausmer, P.C. Diversity Committee
Co-Chair
Eastern Michigan University Foundation Board of Trustees
Trustee
Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.

RECENT PRESENTATIONS

"What's Above the Glass Ceiling," CenterForce Driving Diversity
in Law and Leadership Summit, April 2023
"Practice Makes Perfect: Avoiding Unexpected Pitfalls in
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Initiatives," Association of
Corporate Counsel (Michigan Chapter), April 2022
"Building a Better Workplace: Strategies for Creating
and Implementing Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
Initiatives," Association of Corporate Counsel (Michigan
Chapter), October 2020
"Running the *Bahri* Bases in Court," Insurance Alliance
of Michigan Seminar, September 2018
"New Statutory Fraud Provisions in Runner, Capper, Steerer
Laws & Assigned Claims Plan," Insurance Institute
of Michigan Annual Claims Seminar, September 2014
"Admirer v. Auto-Owners, Van Modification," Insurance
Institute of Michigan Annual Claims Seminar,
September 2013
"Trial Preparation from Start to Finish," Institute for Paralegal
Education, November 2012

HONORS & AWARDS

Notable Women in Law by Crain's Detroit Business – 2024
SuperLawyers (Michigan) – 2021 – 2023
Top Women Attorneys in Michigan – 2021 and 2022
Michigan Lawyers Weekly "Women in the Law" – 2017
Michigan Top Lawyers – 2015

IN THE COMMUNITY

Oakland THRIVE, Board of Directors, 2024 - Present
City Year Detroit – Women's Leadership Breakfast,
Host Committee
Forgotten Harvest, Board of Directors, 2023 – Present



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