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The National Law Journal has recognized McKool Smith principals Mike McKool, Lewis LeClair and Keith McKenna as 2020 “Plaintiff Trailblazers” in the publication’s fourth annual feature on the nation’s leading plaintiff lawyers who have “achieved remarkable success” representing plaintiffs in high-stakes disputes.

Mike McKool:

As chairman and a founder of McKool Smith, Mike McKool is largely responsible for creating what The Wall Street Journal describes as “one of the biggest law firm success stories of the past decade.” Over the course of his 40-year career, he has tried more than 100 jury trials and developed an enhanced understanding of the psychology that governs how juries decide cases. His trial wins have secured substantial verdicts and settlements for clients, including major airlines, energy companies, telecommunications firms, investment banking houses, and industrial conglomerates, among others. Mike’s recent victories include serving as lead trial counsel for WiLAN in securing an $85 million verdict against Apple in a January 2020 patent damages trial concerning two WiLAN patents that cover voice over LTE ("VoLTE") wireless communication technology.

Lewis LeClair:

Lew LeClair is a principal in McKool Smith’s Dallas office. He has nearly 40 years’ experience representing both plaintiffs and defendants in high-stakes commercial litigation and intellectual property matters. His recent victories include serving as lead counsel in securing a significant appellate victory on behalf of Soaring Wind Energy, LLC and its investors before the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit, affirming a $63 million arbitration award for the plaintiffs against Catic USA following a failed wind energy joint venture. He also recently secured a favorable Fifth Circuit decision on behalf of Archer & White Sales that will enable the dental products distributor to prosecute its antitrust claims against medical device manufacturer Henry Schein in the Eastern District of Texas rather than via arbitration.

Keith McKenna:
Keith McKenna is a principal in McKool Smith's New York office and focuses on complex insurance recovery disputes. Keith's recent wins include serving as lead counsel on behalf of Pella Corporation in securing a global settlement with insurers concerning coverage for more than $57 million in costs incurred by Pella in defending and settling dozens of class action lawsuits. These rulings will have a national impact, as there is little authority discussing what events trigger defense obligations when windows or other construction products cause water damage that do not manifest for years, and complaints alleging construction defects typically do not allege when damage began.