

# IN THE NEWS

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## Butzel Long attorney Mitch Zajac appointed to WMU-Cooley Law School Board of Directors

3.2.2020

DETROIT, Mich. – **Butzel Long** attorney **Mitchell (“Mitch”) Zajac** has been appointed to serve a four-year term on the Western Michigan University Thomas M. Cooley Law School Board of Directors. He is one of three newly elected Board members. Zajac earned a J.D. in 2017 from WMU-Cooley Law School.

Based in Butzel Long’s Detroit office, Zajac is an associate and registered patent attorney, focusing his practice in the areas of automotive, intellectual property (IP), compliance, and international trade.

Before joining Butzel Long as a summer associate in May 2017, while attending law school full time, Zajac was an engineer at Fiat Chrysler Automobiles (FCA). He moved quickly through the ranks at FCA. He was responsible for multiple ground-breaking development projects, led the international engineering team producing the Ram ProMaster City, and had a leading role in FCA’s corporate audit group with responsibilities in safety/regulatory compliance, quality and purchasing.

Zajac has practiced in six federal courts, the U.S. Patent Office, and the U.S. International Trade Commission. Zajac’s career as an attorney builds on his strengths and experiences he gained while at FCA and has helped him to grow his practice beyond the automotive industry. Zajac already has helped several clients manage and craft IP portfolios in other unique industries, like medicine, light-weighting, and industrial manufacturing. His experience is extensive in complex patent, trade secret and commercial litigation cases. He crafts unique solutions for clients in emerging industries, achieves improbable deals, and recently helped a client achieve hundreds of thousands of dollars working with customs agents and import brokers to exclude tariffs on millions of dollars of imports exercising exceptions to President Trump’s Section 232 tariffs.

Zajac has built a book of business that includes automotive and transportation companies developing IP portfolios, multiple start-up companies with \$4M+ capitalization developing strategic national partners, and multi-million-dollar global automotive clients navigating international trade issues. Between trials and hearings in Detroit Washington D.C. on behalf of Detroit auto suppliers, sitting first-chair and taking depositions across the U.S. and around the world (including London, Singapore, and Taiwan), Zajac also spends time presenting across the country as a thought leader in remanufacturing, automotive IP, and automotive contracting and supply agreements.

Zajac attended WMU-Cooley (J.D., 2017) after graduating from Western Michigan University with Bachelors’ degrees in Mechanical Engineering and German (2012) and a Master’s in Mechanical Engineering (2013). He was a Rhodes Scholar finalist (2012); interned for Congressman Fred Upton; and was a four-year starter on the Division 1 football team at WMU. Zajac also is completing his Master’s

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degree in Corporate Law and Finance. Notably, Zajac received the Detroit Bar Association's "One to Watch" Award in 2019.

He also is an advocate for continuous education and public service. He's the Association for Child Development (ACD) President, a non-profit organization facilitating ~\$30M/annum through the USDA CACF Program providing healthy meals to children across the Midwest. He has helped this organization achieve financial stability, organizational structure, and leads strategic expansion of ACD programs to more children and to provide education to more families.

Moreover, Zajac dedicates hundreds of hours each year coaching high school football in Howell, turning his standard 12-hour workdays into 15+ hour days in order to work with and mentor young athletes. Zajac is an adjunct professor and curriculum coordinator for the engineering project management graduate programs at Trine University; serves on the WMU Lee Honors College Board; and, volunteers as a Challenge Master for Destination Imagination – a creative problem-solving program for kids around the world.