

# IN THE NEWS

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## Butzel Long attorney Mitchell (“Mitch”) Zajac named to *Michigan Lawyers Weekly’s* 2020 Class of ‘Up & Coming Lawyers’

12.2.2020

DETROIT, Mich. – **Butzel Long** attorney **Mitchell (“Mitch”) Zajac** is one of 25 attorneys in the state named to *Michigan Lawyers Weekly’s* 2020 Class of “Up & Coming Lawyers.” The attorneys will be honored during a virtual program on December 8 and profiled in the December 14 edition.

Attorneys recognized for this honor have distinguished themselves in the practice of law. The honorees were evaluated based on nominations by their peers, colleagues, and associates. The recipients were selected by a committee based on their outstanding professional accomplishments and their mentoring/ community involvement.

Zajac is an associate and registered patent attorney, focusing his practice in the areas of automotive, intellectual property (IP), compliance, and international trade law.

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 has helped several clients manage and craft IP portfolios in other unique industries, like medicine, light-weighting, and industrial manufacturing. He also has experience in complex patent, trade secret and commercial litigation cases.

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His clients include 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 and 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 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 degree in Corporate Law and Finance. He received the Detroit Bar Association's "One to Watch" Award in 2019.

Notably, Zajac is very active in the community. He recently was elected to the Livingston County Board of Commissioners. Earlier this year, Zajac was appointed to serve a four-year term on the Western Michigan University Thomas M. Cooley Law School Board of Directors.

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.