



Yakub Hazzard

Chair and Partner, through his Professional Corporation



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legal expertise

Yakub Hazzard is the Chair of Mitchell Silberberg & Knupp and former Co-Chair of the Litigation Practice Group. Mr. Hazzard specializes in litigating high-profile matters involving intellectual property, right of publicity, privacy, breach of contract, profit participation, commercial disputes, and other media & entertainment-related conflicts across a wide range of industries. He has also handled employment litigation matters for clients.

Yakub began his career at MSK in the 1990s, developing his entertainment litigation practice as the firm was representing the Recording Industry Association of America in the Napster dispute. Over his career, he has represented an array of entertainment industry clients, including Berry Gordy, the Ray Charles Foundation, Incubus, Weezer, NBCUniversal, Universal Music Group, Starz Entertainment and Sony Music Entertainment in litigation spanning copyright, trademark, right of publicity and contracts. His clients have also included foreign distributors and leading video game companies.

At NBCUniversal, his most recent role, Mr. Hazzard handled all profit participation audits and litigation for the company's television, film and consumer products businesses. In addition, Mr. Hazzard oversaw copyright, trademark and general litigation matters brought by or against NBCUniversal.

representative matters

- Achieved settlement on first day of trial on behalf of a museum client regarding wrongful termination claim
- Defending talent agency client in arbitration involving employment claims for talent agent
- Obtained Ninth Circuit published opinion establishing that the Ray Charles Foundation had standing to challenge copyright termination notices served by several of Ray Charles' children

practice areas

- entertainment transactions
- intellectual property
 - entertainment & ip litigation
- litigation
 - commercial litigation

admissions

- California
- U.S. District Court
- Central District of California
- Northern District of California

education

- University of California, Los Angeles School of Law, J.D. (1990)
- Stanford University, B.A., Public Policy (1986)

other career experience

- Vice-President Legal, NBCUniversal Television
- Co-Chair of the Entertainment and Media Group, Robins, Kaplan, Miller & Ciresi LLP



- Successfully represented major television studio in resolution of profit participation lawsuit brought by the creator of several successful television shows
- Counseled the Estate of Sammy Davis Jr. with respect to right of publicity and other intellectual property issues
- Represented Red Bull North America in successful resolution of idea misappropriation claims regarding the Red Bull Stratos event
- Successfully represented several actors and recording artists in several Labor Commissioner proceedings involving violations of the Talent Agencies Act
- Achieved settlement on behalf of video game publisher regarding right of publicity claims in connection with video game
- Represented slot machine manufacturer in defense of claims brought by Arnold Schwarzenegger for alleged unauthorized use of name, likeness and voice

honors & awards

- "Client Service All-Star," BTI Consulting Group (2025)
- "LA500: The Most Influential People in Los Angeles," *Los Angeles Business Journal* (2025)
- "Top 100 Lawyers," *The National Black Lawyers* (2025)
- "Outstanding IP Practitioner," *World Intellectual Property Review Leaders Directory* (2025)
- "Most Influential Minority Attorneys," *Los Angeles Business Journal* (2018)
- "Top 5% of lawyers in Southern California," *Southern California Super Lawyers* (2010-2014, 2022-2026)
- "Leading Media and Entertainment Litigation Lawyers in California," *Chambers USA* (2013-2014)

professional, business and civic affiliations

- Member, Board of Directors, The Ray Charles Foundation
- Litigation Division Chair, Black Entertainment & Sports Lawyers Association
- Advisory Board Member, UCLA Ziffren Center for Media, Entertainment, Technology and Sports Law
- Board Member, Public Counsel
- Member, Black Entertainment and Sports Law Association

- Member, John M. Langston Bar Association
- Member, Planning Committee, USC Intellectual Property Institute
- Former Board Member, Berry Gordy Family Foundation
- Former Board Member, Fulfillment Fund
- Former Co-Chair, Entertainment Section of the Century City Bar Association

headlines

12 MSK Attorneys Named to the 2026 Edition of Southern California *Super Lawyers*
Super Lawyers , February 20, 2026

MSK Chair Yakub Hazzard Featured on *The Daily Journal* Podcast, "In the Counsel's Chair"
The Daily Journal , February 9, 2026

Three MSK Attorneys Named As 2025 BTI "Client Service All-Star"
BTI Consulting Group, August 15, 2025

Yakub Hazzard Named to the *Los Angeles Business Journal's* 2025 LA500 List
Los Angeles Business Journal, June 2, 2025

11 MSK Attorneys Named to *World Intellectual Property Review's* Leaders Directory 2025
World Intellectual Property Review , May 19, 2025

Yakub Hazzard Featured in Several Publications Highlighting Promotion to Firm Chair
March 28, 2025

Yakub Hazzard Named to The National Black Lawyers 2025 "Top 100" List
March 18, 2025

13 MSK Attorneys Named to the 2025 Edition of Southern California *Super Lawyers*
February 18, 2025

12 MSK Attorneys Named to the 2024 Edition of Southern California *Super Lawyers*
January 10, 2024

Mitchell Silberberg & Knupp Announces New Leadership
Business Wire , December 11, 2023

15 MSK Attorneys Named to the 2023 Edition of Southern California *Super Lawyers*
January 10, 2023



16 MSK Attorneys Named to the 2022 edition of Southern California *Super Lawyers*
January 20, 2022

MSK Client PBS Scores \$1.5M Jury Win in Tavis Smiley #MeToo Case
March 4, 2020

Yakub Hazzard Named to the *Los Angeles Business Journal's* 2018 List of "Most Influential Minority Attorneys"
January 22, 2018

Yakub Hazzard Featured in *The Recorder's* "On the Move" Column
October 12, 2017

media mentions

MSK Chair Yakub Hazzard Featured on *The Future is Bright* Podcast
June 5, 2025

MSK Chair Yakub Hazzard Featured in *Above the Law* on Strategic Growth and Firm Culture
Above the Law , June 5, 2025

Yakub Hazzard Mentioned in *Law360*
October 27, 2017

Yakub Hazzard Mentioned in *The Hollywood Reporter's* "Rep Sheet Roundup" Column
October 16, 2017

events & speaking engagements

Competing Perspectives and Common Interests: Strategic Mediation On Behalf Of Artists, Studios, and Others
Players In The Media and Entertainment Ecosystem
Will Work For Food Philanthropic Seminar Series
March 12, 2026

Latest Film and Television Accounting and Legal Trends
Bright Lights, Big Opportunities: Best Bets in IP, Sports, and Entertainment Law
November 14, 2024

2023 Institute on Entertainment Law and Business
October 14, 2023

The Copyright Society's 2023 Midwinter Meeting
February 9-11, 2023



Yakub Hazzard

War Stories
April 22, 2022

Managing Risk in the Era of New Media
June 8, 2021

JAMS Entertainment Roundtable
November 10, 2020

Practising Law Institute (PLI)'s "Technotainment" 2020
October 23, 2020

Representing High Profile Clients in Litigation Matters
November 7, 2019