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John R. Vales

Born: April 17, 1972

Position: Partner, Riker Danzig Scherer Hyland & Perretti, Morristown

Practice Areas: Insurance and reinsurance litigation; professional liability defense

College: University of Notre Dame, B.A., government, 1994; commissioned as an Army second lieutenant upon graduation from Notre Dame through the R.O.T.C. program.

Law School: University of Notre Dame Law School, J.D., 1997

Career History: Current firm, partner, 2002-present; U.S. Army Judge Advocate General's Corps, captain (practiced criminal law, claims, general counseling), 1998-2001

Profile: After receiving an educational deferral of his military commitment to attend law school, Vales entered the J.A.G. Corps in January 1998 and accepted an assignment with one of the Army's most heavily deployed units, the 10th Mountain Division at Fort Drum, N.Y. During his four-year tour of duty, he served in several legal positions, including a two-year stint as a prosecutor. Among his cases was the successful prosecution of a soldier accused of murdering his four-year old nephew, *U.S. v. Specialist Enrique Flores*. After a two-week court-martial trial, Flores was found guilty of first-degree murder and sentenced to 27 years in

prison. The Army Court of Criminal Appeals affirmed the conviction. Vales was subsequently promoted to the position of Senior Trial Counsel. He also headed Fort Drum's Claims Office, served as Chief of Client Services and was the primary legal adviser to an infantry brigade commander on a five-month deployment to Bosnia and Herzegovina. While holding these positions, he supervised and rated the performance of more than 10 subordinate lawyers and clerks. Upon the completion of his active duty service, he received the Army's Meritorious Service Medal. At Riker Danzig, he has a long and richly diverse litigation record, but his practice is concentrated primarily in insurance and reinsurance cases, representing such carriers as Harleysville Insurance Company, Seaton Insurance Company, Stonewall Insurance Company, Medco Health Solutions, Inc., Mutual Marine Office, Inc., North River Insurance Company and



Zurich North American Insurance Company (the last including litigation arising out of the 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center). Vales has served on Riker Danzig's Recruiting Committee and has taken an active role in the recruiting and hiring of summer and lateral associates. He has also acted as a mentor to summer associates, and has prepared presentations to summer associates on legal writing and deposition techniques. He is a barrister of the John C. Lifland American Inn of Court.

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