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# TRAILBLAZERS

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## JARED ZOLA BLANK ROME



**PIONEER SPIRIT** When disaster strikes, recovery is difficult enough. Jared Zola leads Blank Rome's Severe Weather Emergency Response Team, or SWERT, which seeks quick resolution of claims disputes following hurricanes, wildfires and other disasters, natural and manmade. The SWERT team pulls together lawyers from all the firm's practice areas, including environmental and maritime law, to help make clients whole as quickly as possible. "My clients have recovered more than nine figures from insurance companies just from Hurricane Maria alone. Our results are much quicker because of this team that we've put together."

**TRAILS BLAZED** Zola has practiced insurance recovery law his entire career, beginning with cases related to the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001. Despite his best efforts, these cases often end up before a jury. "There are big dollars at stake. Many of our cases turn on issues of fact." He represents companies that were victims of hurricanes Maria, Irma and Harvey. Last year, he was part of a team that helped resolve a massive insurance claim filed by a mall owner in Nashville, Tennessee, whose property was damaged in a 2010 flood of the Cumberland River. "The goal is to restore the businesses—and their employees."

**FUTURE EXPLORATIONS** Zola advises clients to review policies for loopholes that might let insurers avoid covering their losses—now, not after the next storm or wildfire. "I've done that in a very pressure-filled situation after major weather events. It's a lot easier—more efficient, more productive—to do that before the event happens." Clients "are surprised by the manner in which their insurance policies respond to a large-scale loss. The way my clients believe the policies should respond is not the way the insurance companies believe they should respond."