

## D.C.'S RISING STARS

Washington, D.C., is a magnet for the top graduates from the top law schools in some of the most sophisticated practices in the nation, including appellate and antitrust. So for the NLJ's 2017 Rising Stars list, how did we go about reviewing a large pool of smart, young nominees? Very carefully. We looked for key elements including success on the highest stages, diversity of practice groups and law firms. We also looked closely at recommendations. We are proud to present our 2017 Rising Stars. This year, we share their keys to success in their own words, edited for clarity and length. —*Lisa Helem, managing editor*

A SPECIAL REPORT



### OMID SAFA, 36

FIRM: BLANK ROME

PRACTICE: INSURANCE RECOVERY

TITLE: SENIOR ASSOCIATE

■ **WHAT WAS THE MOST VALUABLE LESSON YOU LEARNED IN YOUR FIRST YEAR OF PRACTICE?** Prepare every case expecting it to go to trial. Diligent preparation ensures that you are in the best position to secure a favorable result for the client whether or not a trial ultimately proves necessary to achieve it.

■ **DESCRIBE YOUR BIGGEST WIN OR ACCOMPLISHMENT IN PRACTICE.** We represented a multinational engineering company in an insurance dispute over defense and liability coverage for thousands of asbestos claims. After we prevailed at trial, the final judgment on behalf of the client was worth more than \$400 million.

■ **WHO DO YOU CONSIDER TO BE YOUR GREATEST LAWYER MENTOR?** I have had the privilege of working with several excellent mentors over the years. Collectively, [Blank Rome partners] Jim Murray, John Gibbons, and Jared Zola have taught me everything I know about the “art of lawyering.”

■ **PLEASE SHARE A KEY TO YOUR SUCCESS.** Insurance touches nearly every aspect of our lives. I am passionate about helping clients get the protection they need when something goes seriously wrong.