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TRAILBLAZERS

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MICHAEL ROSS JENNER & BLOCK



PIONEER SPIRIT Cryptocurrencies. Block chain technologies. Online lending and wealth management. Digital payment systems. This is the rapidly changing world that Michael Ross is mastering as head of the financial technology group at Jenner & Block. It was a natural next step for Ross, who began his career litigating cases that arose from the financial crisis of the mid to late 2000s. A thought leader on legal issues surrounding new and emerging financial technologies, he explains in articles and speaking engagements the effects of the latest innovations. Ross is also co-chair of the firm's pro bono committee, frequently counseling asylum seekers.

TRAILS BLAZED After law school, Ross clerked with the 3rd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals at a time when the number of immigration asylum cases exploded. Working on those cases made a lasting impact on Ross' career. For more than 10 years, he has done pro bono work helping children, many of them in the United States without their parents, obtain legal immigration status. He was moved to represent these clients because the law does not guarantee them an attorney. "It just struck me as unfair, really, that you'd have a child coming to the United States who would be navigating a very complex proceeding without a lawyer."

FUTURE EXPLORATIONS Ross, who works in Jenner & Block's litigation and investigations section, sees the fintech field continuing to evolve as new technologies are introduced. The money surrounding the field is staggering. New companies are raising capital. Existing companies are investing heavily in technology. With many players involved, including regulators, there is an ever present potential for litigation. "It will continue to be a space that will develop and will require sophisticated investigation and sophisticated litigation counsel as issues arise."