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Rising Star: Covington's Bre Jones

By **Abraham Gross**

Law360 (August 11, 2026, 4:03 PM EDT) -- Bre Jones of Covington & Burling LLP guided major aircraft companies to significant wins recouping losses tied to the Russian invasion of Ukraine, earning her a spot among the insurance law practitioners under age 40 honored by Law360 as Rising Stars.

2026 LAW360 RISING STAR

Bre Jones
Covington

Age: 36
Home base: San Francisco
Position: Special counsel
Law school: University of California, Berkeley School of Law
First job after law school: Associate at Covington

What motivates her:

Jones said she is motivated by the opportunity to use her position and Covington's resources to help people, particularly in developing caselaw in favor of policyholders.

"I feel privileged to be on the plaintiff side and to be holding insurers accountable instead of defending some of their more suspect decisions," she said. "They play a really key role in society, but only to the extent that they are living up to their promises to pay claims when claims arise."

Helping people also takes the form of mentorship, often for young women, who haven't previously had opportunities for hands-on work.

"It makes me the most proud and motivates me the most when I can elevate them to do well and have star roles and oral arguments in the cases that I'm involved in," Jones added.

Why she's an insurance attorney:

While contracts was not her favorite subject in law school, Jones found that the team at Covington's insurance practice motivated her to do better and supported her professional development.

On the substance of her work, Jones finds that representing policyholders is a great opportunity to drive case law forward toward recovery instead of putting up barriers to it.

"That jives a lot more with my philosophy and what I see for myself in litigation and building a practice that is really rewarding."

While she admits "insurance sounded dry on the page," she has found it to be an exciting practice that can often relate to a major news story of the day, from hurricanes to statements by company executives.

"Sometimes we say in the practice, when we're advertising to some of our associates to come join us, that insurance is the story within the story, and usually what is happening in the background with the insurers is motivating what's happening in the underlying litigation," she said.

Her biggest cases:

Several of Jones' bigger recent cases involved a similar set of circumstances: owners of aircraft and aviation assets, and aviation servicers seeking to recover losses from the theft and seizure of property in Russia when the country invaded Ukraine.

The most prominent of these cases involved an effort by aircraft leasing company BBAM US LP to recover $127 million for three aircraft previously leased to Russian government-owned or government-backed entities, which the country had not returned after the company terminated their leases.

In August 2024, a California state court sided with BBAM and other leasing companies that the seizure of aircraft by the Russian government — even if temporary — constituted a direct physical loss, rejecting insurer arguments that the property must have been damaged or impaired to qualify for coverage.

Jones said the case, and others like it, is challenging in part because the London insurance market that provides policies for aircraft operates on a quota-share system, leaving her relatively lean team facing off against dozens of insurers, including those with adverse interests to each other.

"It's quite a large claim because aviation assets are quite expensive. It also deals with significant international relations issues," she said. "So, it was just me and a couple of associates and a partner on this case really running against a whole group of insurers on these types of claims."

The BBAM case is on appeal, and Jones said it remains to be seen how influential these cases will be in pushing against Covid-era case law, which saw many insurer victories based on rulings limiting recovery to direct physical damage.

"There's a bunch of these litigations that have been going on since the invasion of Ukraine, and I think it's still an open question whether it has ripples for society, because obviously these policies still exist, and there are ongoing geopolitical conflicts in the world that could give rise to similar losses in the future," she said.

How she expects insurance law to change over the next 10 years:

Jones said artificial intelligence is already changing everything, and clients are encouraging their outside counsel to use AI tools in order to make their practice more efficient and targeted. Insurance law, however, appears to be a step beyond the current sophistication of many tools.

"While AI tools are decent at analyzing and making our lives easier on routine analytical tasks, my observation so far is that it's not a very good insurance lawyer," she said

Still, with the rapid development of the technology, Jones conceded, "it is possible that in a year, it will be able to emulate a good coverage counsel a little bit more effectively."

Another trend she is keeping an eye on is the continued shift away from California as a generally policyholder-friendly jurisdiction, noting that the state's recent case law on certain recurring coverage issues, like expected and intended exclusions, has made it less favorable.

--As told to Abraham Gross. Additional reporting by Jennifer Mandato. Editing by Kristen Becker.

Law360's Rising Stars are attorneys under 40 whose legal accomplishments belie their age. A team of Law360 editors selected the 2026 Rising Stars winners after reviewing more than 1,100 submissions. Attorneys had to be under 40 as of April 30, 2026, to be eligible for this year's award.