

John F. Ventola

PRACTICE CHAIR, FINANCE & RESTRUCTURING

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John Ventola, Practice Chair of Choate's Finance & Restructuring Group, has more than 25 years of experience representing banks, private credit lenders, and distressed investors and helping guide them through a wide range of complex lending and corporate restructuring issues, including Chapter 11 cases and out-of-court workouts. John is a Fellow of the prestigious American College of Bankruptcy.

John's lending experience includes representing financial institutions in complex, multi-tranche financial transactions, including asset based, cash flow, lender finance, second-lien, DIP and mezzanine loans, along with preferred stock and other junior capital investments. John also has deep restructuring experience, having practiced extensively in bankruptcy courts across the country in connection with a range of special situations, including cash collateral disputes, equitable subordination and recharacterization, Section 363 sales, and contested plans of reorganization. He has particular expertise in retail finance and other lending transactions and the heavily-negotiated intercreditor arrangements that are often the key element in successfully completing those financing arrangements.

John is often called on to represent independent directors, boards and special committees of distressed companies in a wide range of industries, including healthcare, consumer product and technology businesses. These representations frequently arise following the exercise of an equity pledge by secured lenders. Working with lawyers across Choate's practice groups, John provides advice on financing and M&A options, claims analysis and internal investigations to assist all stakeholders in maximizing value.

John's clients include Ares Commercial Finance, Bank of America, Callodine Commercial Finance, Gordon Brothers, M&T Bank, MidCap Financial, PNC, Second Avenue Capital Partners, SLR Credit Solutions, Wells Fargo, and Wingspire Capital.

Focus Areas

- Finance and Restructuring
  - Asset-Based Lending
  - Independent Directors & Special Committees
  - Restructuring and Bankruptcy

Recognition

- *Chambers USA* (2005-2026)
- *Best Lawyers in America* (2009-2027)
- *Best Lawyers in America*: "Lawyer of the Year" for Banking and Finance Law (2026)
- *The Legal 500* (2020-2026)
- *Massachusetts Super Lawyers (2009-2020, 2026)*
- *Business Today* "Top 10 Banking and Finance Legal Influencers in Massachusetts 2023"

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Representative Engagements

- ACF Finco I LP, an affiliate of Ares Commercial Finance, as the Administrative Agent and Collateral Agent for revolving DIP financing arrangements totaling in excess of $55 million to Bamboo Purchaser, Inc. and its affiliates in its Chapter 11 case in the Bankruptcy Court for the District of Delaware.
- PNC Capital Markets arranging and leading a $1.0 billion senior secured credit facility for Teradyne, Inc., a provider of automated test equipment, robotics and industrial automation solutions.
- PNC Capital Markets in connection with a senior secured, revolving loan to CarGurus, Inc.
- Callodine Credit Management, LLC, as Administrative Agent, in connection with a CAD$220 million first-in-last-out term loan to RONA INC., one of the largest home improvement retailers in North America.
- Second Avenue Capital Partners in $126 million financing to Valore Capital for the acquisition of Mirai Casting Group, a global automotive casting and engineering platform.
- Second Avenue Capital Partners, as originator, in a $700M warehouse credit facility with Huntington National Bank, and a separate term credit facility with Pathlight Capital.
- WhiteHawk Capital Partners LP as the Administrative Agent in a $250 million senior secured term loan facility to 1959 RE Intermediate Holdings, LLC, whose direct and indirect subsidiaries collectively own and lease real estate to operating companies in the Family Dollar corporate structure.
- Wingspire Capital LLC as the Administrative Agent in a $82.5M revolving credit facility and $7.5M term loan facility with Maurices Incorporated.
- Second Avenue Capital Partners in a $75 million asset-based revolving credit facility to Allbirds, a publicly-traded sustainable footwear and apparel company.
- Second Avenue Capital Partners in asset-based revolving credit facility and term loan facility to True Religion Apparel, a retail clothing company known for its direct-to-consumer signature premium denim jeans.
- Second Avenue Capital Partners in $112 million Senior Secured Revolving Credit Facility and Term Loan to Backcountry, a specialty retailer of outdoor gear and apparel.
- PNC Bank, National Association as the Administrative Agent for a DIP Financing arrangement totaling $550 million provided to Big Lots, Inc. and its subsidiaries in its Chapter 11 case in the U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the District of Delaware.
- 1903P Loan Agent, LLC (an affiliate of Gordon Brothers Group) as FILO Documentation Agent in a $153 million first in, last out exit financing facility to national fabric and crafts retailer Jo-Ann Stores, LLC, upon the company's emergence from a Chapter 11 restructuring.
- Bank of America, N.A., as the Administrative Agent for two DIP Financing arrangements totaling in excess of $3.4 billion provided to Rite Aid Corporation in its Chapter 11 case in the Bankruptcy Court for the District of New Jersey.
- PNC Bank, as Administrative Agent, in its $400 million asset-based revolving credit facility to Designer Brands Inc.
- Term Loan Agent that provided a $200 million loan to a leading office supply retailer as part of a multi-billion dollar take private transaction.
- Crystal Financial as Tranche A-1 Documentation Agent and an A-1 lender to Bon-Ton Stores, Inc. and its affiliated subsidiaries in its Chapter 11 bankruptcy.
- Bank of America as the ABL DIP Lender to Performance Sports (d/b/a Bauer Hockey).
- Wells Fargo Retail Finance in connection with DIP and emergence loan facilities to Pacific Sun and HH Gregg.
- Bank of America in connection with $600 million, multi-currency loan facility to leading environmental services company.

Publications and Presentations

- "Appointing Independent Directors to Distressed Companies: An Alternative to Bankruptcy," co-author, *The Secured Lender*, January 2026
- "Liability-Management Transactions: How We Got Here, Where We're Going," panelist, ABI Northeast Bankruptcy Conference and Consumer Forum, July 2025
- "Franchise Group Dispute Reflects Rising Intercreditor Suits," co-author, *Bankruptcy Law360*, May 2025
- Pendulum Swings Back Toward Lenders in Credit Bidding Disputes," co-author, *Journal of Corporate Renewal*, December 2016
- "Caution: Make-Whole Provisions Are Taken at Face Value," co-author, *Bankruptcy Law360*
- "Q&A With Choate's John Ventola," featured, *Bankruptcy Law360*
- "10th Circ. Has Left Less Static for Secured Creditors," co-author, *Bankruptcy Law360*
- "Houghton Mifflin: Practically Proper Improper Venue," co-author, *Bankruptcy Law360*
- "Debating Bankruptcy Venue Reform," co-author, *Bankruptcy Law360*
- "The Gifting Doctrine v. the Absolute Priority Rule," co-author, *Bankruptcy Law360*
- "Environmental Claims Get Harder to Discharge," co-author, *Bankruptcy Law360*
- "The Assault on the Secured Creditor," panelist, ABI Northeast Conference
- "Lessons From In Re Hydrogen LLC," co-author, *Bankruptcy Law360*
- "Viewpoint: Court Ruling Endangers 'Credit Bidding'," co-author, *American Banker*
- "Turnaround and Distressed Investing," panelist, MIT Sloan Private Equity Symposium
- "The Evolution of Credit Bidding," co-author, *Bankruptcy Law360*
- "Lessons from General Growth Properties," co-author, *Bankruptcy Law360*
- "Surviving the Credit Markets and Succeeding in a Turnaround," co-author, *Bloomberg Law Report: Banking & Finance*
- "Distressed Investing and Turnarounds," panelist, MIT Sloan Private Equity Symposium
- "Credit Market Exposure," panelist, Periscopes Up: Managing Your Company in Turbulent Economic Waters
- "Chief Restructuring Officer: Coming to a Company Near You?" co-author, *ACC Northeast Chapter Quarterly Newsletter*, Quarter 2
- "The Role of a Chief Restructuring Officer," co-presenter, Boston Bar Association Business Law Section Meeting

Professional & Community Involvement

- Member of the Board of the Boys & Girls Club of Boston
- Member of the Commercial Finance Association
- Member of the American Bankruptcy Institute
- Member of the Turnaround Management Association
- Member of the Bankruptcy Section of the Boston Bar Association

Education & Credentials

- Boston College Law School, JD (1994) *magna cum laude, Order of the Coif*
- Boston College, BS (1990) *magna cum laude*

Admissions

- Massachusetts

- New York