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FALL 2013

LEGAL

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STEVEN BLADER SETTLES CASE AGAINST MAJOR FIREWORKS DISTRIBUTOR, HOMEOWNER FOR \$450.000

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EMPLOYEES HELP THE RESCUE MISSION OF TRENTON



(LTOR) B. BARRON, E. STEIN, J. WANG, F.KRITZER, G. JACLIN, J. ZAMMIT, B. ZASLAVSKY, J. YE.

FIRM ADDS SECURITIES PRACTICE

In order to broaden the services available to our clients, in September the firm added securities to its already diverse business practice. The securities team is headed by firm partner, Gregg Jaclin, formerly a name partner of a NY/NJ based boutique firm specializing in corporate and securities law, and includes Eric Stein, Counsel, Associates Bella Zaslavsky, Jamie Wang and Blake Barron, paralegal Jen Zammit, law clerk Jason Ye and attorney assistant Fran Kritzer.

The securities practice will continue the specialty developed by Gregg and his colleagues in microcap transactions including "PIPE," or private investment in public equity, transactions. The lawyers in the securities practice will continue to advise clients in private equity, venture capital, reverse mergers, Regulation D and S offerings under federal securities law, secondary offerings, convertible debt and bridge financial transactions.

Managing Partner Barry Szaferman noted, "We are very excited that we were able to attract Gregg and his colleagues. This says a lot about the reputation of our firm in central New Jersey and beyond."

The securities practice increases the firm's Business Law portfolio breadth to include:

- Corporate Finance
- Institutional Finance
- Mergers
- Acquisitions
- Intellectual Property
- Tax & Estates
- Real Estate
- Land Use
- Securities

SZAFERMAN, LAKIND, BLUMSTEIN & BLADER ON LIST OF 2014 BEST LAW FIRMS – THREE PARTNERS REPEAT AS "BEST LAWYERS IN AMERICA."

U.S. News & World Report and Best Lawyers annually recognize law firms nationally based on quality law practice and breadth of legal experience. For 2014, Szaferman Lakind received the highest designation, Tier 1, for New Jersey in the following practice areas:

- Family Law
- Land Use & Zoning Law
- Personal Injury Litigation Plaintiff

The "Best Law Firms" designation is determined through an evaluation of hard data, reviews by other lawyers and client assessments. It reflects a high level of respect for abilities, professionalism and integrity.

To be considered for "Best Law Firms" recognition a firm must have a least one lawyer receiving the "Best Lawyers in America" designation. Szaferman Lakind has three such lawyers – Founding Partner Arnold Lakind and Partners Brian Paul and Craig Hubert. Arnold has received the Best Lawyers in America recognition in 2009, 2011 and 2014, while Brian and Craig were both so designated in 2013 and 2014.

Firm Co-Founder and Managing Partner Barry Szaferman observed, "36 years ago, when the firm was founded, we were excited to be open. Since then we've come a long way and to be recognized on a national stage is both an honor and a testament to the efforts of the entire firm."



Arnold C. Lakind

Commercial

Litigation, Land Use



Craig J. Hubert
Personal Injury Law



Brian G. Paul Family Law

(continued on page 2)

WHAT IS SECURITIES LAW?

A small or mid-size business can raise capital in a number of different ways including the traditional approaches of obtaining loans from banks and other financial institutions or by selling shares of the company. If a business is selling shares, the offer and sale of the securities must either be registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission (the "SEC") or conducted in accordance with one of the many registration exemptions under the appropriate federal law. Registering an offering with the SEC would make the company a public company (commonly known as "going public"), which is a significant milestone for any company. As many small offerings from the registration process are exempted, the SEC has lowered the cost of offering securities to the public for many small or mid-size businesses.

Companies go public for a number of reasons, and these reasons can be different for each company, including:

- To raise capital and potentially broaden opportunities for future access to capital (this is the most common reason for many businesses)
- To increase liquidity for a company's stock, allowing owners and employees to more easily sell stock
- To acquire other businesses with the public company's stock
- To attract and compensate employees with public company stock and stock-option compensation
- To create publicity, brand awareness and prestige for a company

Attorneys who practice Securities Law assist companies in raising funds from investors and in satisfying compliance obligations with regulators and stock exchanges.

WANT TO GROW YOUR BUSINESS? Contact Szaferman Lakind today.

BEST LAWYERS ...(continued from page 1)

In addition to collaborating with *U.S. News and World Report* to identify the "Best Law Firms," *Best Lawyers,* a peer-review publication, annually selects attorneys from throughout this country for inclusion in its list of "Best Lawyers in America." Selection is based on a survey of leading attorneys, who cast more than 4.9 million votes in determining the 2014 list.

Corporate Counsel magazine states that the Best Lawyers list is, "the most respected referral list of attorneys in practice." Szaferman Lakind congratulates three of its partners for their accomplishments on achieving such recognition.

These lawyers are not new to professional recognition:

- Arnold and Craig have been named Super Lawyers[®] for nine consecutive years and Brian for each of the past seven years
- All three have received the highest of ratings from Martindale-Hubbell™: AV Rated Preeminent
- Both Craig and Brian are New Jersey Supreme Court Certified in their respective areas of practice

JANINE BAUER PROCURES FINANCIAL SETTLEMENT TO CLEAN CONTAMINATED SITE



Partner Janine G. Bauer obtained a significant financial settlement under the Spill Act, not disclosable due to a confidential settlement agreement, from three previous operators of the site.

The property had been used as an airplane parts manufacturing and degreasing site, and as a dry cleaner associated with a textile mill. However, the chemical solvent

discharged by these two past operators, called perchlorethylene, or PCE, sinks rapidly into the ground and through concrete to the subsurface, and was not visible, even though environmental audits were p erformed. Our client was not aware that the property was contaminated at the time of purchase.

Janine Bauer, whose environmental legal experience spans almost three decades, reached a settlement with all of the past operators that polluted the site, including the textile mill, which settled after one and a half days of trial, in Superior Court in Bergen County. Ms. Bauer was then appointed by the Court as trustee over the settlement proceeds, which will be used to clean up the property and maximize its value to our client.

There are now mandatory timeframes for retaining a licensed site remediation professional and getting properties clean. A failure to do so may subject the property owner to fines. If you have property that may need to be cleaned up, you should seek the guidance of Szaferman Lakind.



(LTOR) THE HONORABLE LINDA R. FEINBERG RECEIVES THE 2013 MICHAEL J. NIZOLEK AWARD FROM SAMUEL GAYLORD, ESQ., PRESIDENT, MERCER COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION

SZAFERMAN LAKIND STAFF PROVIDES HOLIDAY GIFTS TO AREA CHILDREN IN NEED

In the spirit of giving, Szaferman Lakind attorneys and staff provided gifts this holiday season to area children in need through HomeFront, a local non-profit organization.

Our people were provided with a holiday wish list generated by needy children. Participants here purchased items from that list such as toys, clothing and other assorted items and those gifts were delivered to HomeFront for distribution.

Founded over 20 years ago, HomeFront is a non-profit organization with a mission to end homelessness in central New Jersey by harnessing the caring, resources and expertise of the community. We are thankful to have been able to make a difference in each child's life.



To find out how you can help, visit **HomeFrontNJ.org.**

HONORABLE LINDA FEINBERG (RET.) RECOGNIZED BY MERCER COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION

The Hon. Linda R. Feinberg (retired) received the prestigious Michael J. Nizolek Award by the Mercer County Bar Association (MCBA) on October 29, 2013 amidst a crowd of attorneys, family members and colleagues.

Named for the late Michael J. Nizolek, Esq., the award serves as recognition and gratitude for Mr. Nizolek's tireless contributions to the community and legal profession. Michael served as President of the MCBA in 1992 and as a trustee for many years thereafter.

Judge Feinberg is the second member at Szaferman Lakind to receive the award. Firm Co-Founder and Partner, Arnold C. Lakind was recognized by the Mercer County Bar Association in September 2011.

Judge Feinberg has served her community for nearly four decades since her admission to the bar in 1974. She started her career as a labor lawyer with the U.S. Department of the Army, was appointed an Assistant Prosecutor and then Assistant County Counsel in Mercer County, earned a tenured faculty position in the Department of Law and Justice at the College of New Jersey and then pursued a successful private practice.

In 1985, she was appointed by Lawrence Township to serve as their Municipal Court Judge and during the next five years was appointed to similar positions in West Windsor and Hopewell Townships. In 1988 Judge Feinberg was named Presiding Judge of the Municipal Courts in Mercer County, N.J., and in that role developed and implemented an extensive community dispute resolution program that became a model for other municipalities around the state.

Judge Feinberg's judicial career spanned more than twenty years and included:

- 1992: Appointment by the Governor to Judge of the Superior Court of New Jersey
- 1993: Presiding Judge of the Family Part, Superior Court of New Jersey, Mercer County
- 1997: Assignment Judge of the Mercer Vicinage

Judge Feinberg retired in March 2012 as Assignment Judge with a legacy of ethical, professional and successful service.

Upon receipt of the award Judge Feinberg said, "I am honored to be the recipient of the Michael J. Nizolek Award. Having had the privilege to know Michael, I can attest to his remarkable career as a lawyer and, more importantly, his reputation as an honest, fair and kind man. Any success I have had over the years is the result of my wonderful family and the opportunity I have had as a lawyer and judge to work with the MCBA, their staff and the lawyers in this County."

In her position with Szaferman Lakind, Judge Feinberg provides mediation services, consultation and advice in land use and redevelopment matters, government related applications and issues, complex civil litigation and family matters.

ABOUT SZAFERMAN, LAKIND, BLUMSTEIN & BLADER, P.C.

Founded in 1977 and based in Lawrenceville, New Jersey, Szaferman Lakind is a full service law firm which holds Martindale-Hubbell's ™ highest rating of AV, and has been ranked a Tier-1 Law Firm by *U.S. News & World Report* in its 2014 Best Law Firms edition. The firm is proud to have been recognized by *New York* Magazine as one of the New York Area's Top Ranked Law Firms. Szaferman Lakind consists of four primary practice groups: general litigation, family law, personal injury and business. Our attorneys work together across practice areas to provide effective guidance to our clients, whether individuals, families, businesses or investors. We take pride in developing creative, cost effective solutions to achieve our clients' goals.

Many of our attorneys have been recognized in their respective fields by *Best Lawyers in America*, *Super Lawyers* $^{\circ}$, *Rising Stars* † and Martindale-Hubbell † . We are proud of the recognition that our attorneys have received from peers and rating organizations, but we are most proud of what our clients have to say about us.

We invite you to learn more about what True Counsel® can do for you.



Szaferman Lakind Practice Areas

- Alimony
- Auto Accidents
- Appellate Practice
- Business Organizations
- Banking
- Bankruptcy
- Child Custody
- Contract Disputes
- Divorce
- Domestic Violence
- Employment
- Environmental
- Family Law
- · Financial Fraud
- Medical Malpractice
- Mergers & Acquisitions
- Mesothelioma
- Municipal Court
- Patent &Trademark
- Prenuptial Agreements
- Real Estate & Land Use
- Securities
- · State and Federal Criminal
- Student's Rights
- Transportation
- Trust & Estates
- Workers Compensation

FIRM DONATES A TRUCKLOAD OF CLOTHING TO THE RESCUE MISSION OF TRENTON

With colder months ahead, Dan Sweetser, firm partner sought to help our area's less fortunate stay warm. To do so Dan coordinated a Thanksgiving Clothing Drive between the firm and the Rescue Mission of Trenton. Szaferman Lakind's employees donated some 100 bags of clothing, essentially filling the Rescue Mission's 10x10 box truck, all of which will go to area families and those in need of some assistance this holiday season.

To learn more about the Rescue Mission of Trenton or to see how you can help, visit **RescueMissionOfTrenton.org**.



ROBERT LYTLE NAMED TO SPECIAL COMMITTEE BY NEW JERSEY SUPRMEME COURT



Firm Partner Robert Lytle has been appointed by the New Jersey Supreme Court to a Special Committee on Attorney Ethics and Admissions which has been tasked to review the American Bar Association's recent amendments to the Model Rules of Professional Conduct and standards for admission to practice law. This blue ribbon panel, which consists of twenty-eight members, will study and make recommendations to the Supreme Court on a host of rule changes that address, among other things, advancing technology and the increasing mobility of lawyers in an age of globalization. "We are very fortunate that a panel of distinguished legal experts will examine the ABA's new model rules," said Chief Justice Stuart Rabner.

Mr. Lytle also serves as the Chairperson of the Statewide Panel for the New Jersey Supreme Court's Committee on Character. In his practice, Bob specializes in complex civil litigation and criminal defense in both state and federal court. His civil practice includes business and commercial litigation of various types, consumer class actions, representing victims of mesothelioma and other asbestos-related diseases, the prosecution of civil rights claims, the defense of professionals at administrative hearings and environmental litigation. Bob's criminal practice focuses on the representation of individuals, corporate officers and corporations who are subject to both traditional and white collar prosecutions, as well as defending those charged with DWI.

NEED HELP WITH A COMPLEX MATTER OR A PERSONAL LEGAL SITUATION? Contact Szaferman Lakind today.

SKILLMAN, LAKIND PRESENT TO RUTGERS LAW SCHOOL AND FEINBERG, LAKIND PROVIDE SEMINAR TO BAR ASSOCIATION

On November 20, 2013, the Honorable Linda Feinberg, A. J. S. C., (ret.) and firm partner Arnold Lakind gave a seminar at the Mercer County Bar Association Continuing Legal Education Program, entitled the "Nuts and Bolts of Land Use Planning."

This presentation followed a lecture the previous evening to Rutgers Law School students by Steven Skillman, J.A.D., (ret.) and Mr. Lakind devoted to zoning and planning law.



Hon. Stephen Skillman J.A.D., (ret.) Of Counsel



Hon. Linda Feinberg

A.J.S.C.,(ret.)

OfCounsel



Arnold C. Lakind
Partner
Executive Committee

STEPHEN SKILLMAN APPOINTED BY NEW JERSEY SUPREME COURT TO ITS ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON JUDICIAL CONFLICT

Szaferman Lakind is pleased to announce that the Supreme Court of New Jersey has appointed Stephen Skillman, a retired presiding Judge of the Superior Court, Appellate Division, to the Advisory Committee on Judicial Conduct. The Advisory Committee was established in 1974 to assist the Supreme Court by investigating allegations of unethical judicial conduct. This prestigious appointment is further recognition of the respect the Judge enjoys from members of the judiciary and the bar.

Judge Skillman, who joined the firm after his retirement from the bench, brings a wealth of experience to our litigation practice. Prior to his appointment to the bench, Judge Skillman had argued over 125 cases in the Appellate Division, the Supreme Court of New Jersey and the Federal Appellate Courts, among them the Supreme Court of the United States. As an Appellate Division Judge, the Judge wrote more than 3,000 opinions, of which more than 550 are published. Judge Skillman served as the Director of the Department of Public Safety in the New Jersey Attorney General's office from 1973 to 1981 where he mentored hundreds of lawyers, among them the founding members of the firm. During his first five years on the bench, Judge Skillman served as a Law Division and General Equity Judge in Middlesex County and as the specially assigned Mount Laurel Judge for northern New Jersey.

MICHAEL PAGLIONE SECURES \$828,000 SETTLEMENT FOR HAZARDOUS WORKPLACE INJURY



Firm Partner Michael Paglione recently settled a case for \$828,000 against several defendants on behalf of a commercial plumber who suffered a workplace injury at a construction site. Principal defendants Penn Valley Constructors Inc. and Michael

Haas Construction contributed \$380,000 each to the settlement and several other defendants participated in the payment of \$68,000 on a workers compensation claim.

Michael was initially contacted when his client was out of work due to a foot injury sustained when he stepped on a drywall screw at a job site. Michael filed a worker's compensation claim and began investigating how the injury occurred. He learned that his client injured his foot due in part to hazardous workplace conditions. He also learned that his client was a diabetic. Michael knew that diabetics are particularly susceptible to a lack of feeling in their feet, a condition known as peripheral neuropathy. Neuropathy is nerve damage and can be caused by a prolonged exposure to high blood glucose. Symptoms are often minor at first and progress gradually without the patient ever being aware.

Our client was working at a new commercial construction site. As a commercial plumber he worked closely with the drywall subcontractors, installing the plumbing before the walls would be closed up. Unfortunately, the subcontractors were negligent in their clean up and constantly left the work site full of debris, including pieces of metal studs, drywall and 1-1/4 inch long drywall screws. The plaintiff had regularly complained to the general contractor about the unsafe conditions to no avail. A construction expert, hired on behalf of the plaintiff, opined that both contractors violated numerous BOCA and OSHA code provisions.

One day the plumber was walking through the debris and stepped on a screw which pierced the sole of his work boot and became imbedded in the bottom of his foot. Because of his diabetic neuropathy, he did not feel the screw in his foot and continued to work for several hours. It was not until he got home and removed his boot that he saw a considerable amount of blood and knew the wound was serious.

To complicate matters, the plaintiff's past medical records indicated that his family physician had diagnosed him with diabetes and prescribed medication for the condition some three years prior to this incident. The plumber denied ever having been told he was diabetic. The dry wall subcontractor and general contractor defended the action asserting that had the client been compliant and taken his medications, the peripheral neuropathy would have resolved and the plumber would have felt the screw when it first penetrated his foot, never allowing the wound to become so serious.

Working diligently with medical experts, Michael was able to convincingly argue that the damage to the plumber's foot was caused in large part by the adhesive used to bind the sole of the boot to the leather upper. As the screw penetrated through the boot, it became contaminated from bacteria in the adhesive, causing the infection which ultimately led to the partial amputation of the plaintiff's foot. In other words, the plumber would have suffered the same outcome whether he was a diabetic or not. Michael was able to secure a significant settlement for our client as the result of hard work and the insights provided by construction and medical experts.

INJURED AND OUT OF WORK? Know your rights.

Contact Szaferman Lakind today.

CLIENT AWARDED \$1.6 MILLION IN MESOTHELIOMA CASE

Following a four-week trial, Szaferman Lakind Partner, Robert E. Lytle, along with co-counsel, Moshe Maimon and Leah Kagan of Levy, Phillips and Konigsberg, obtained a \$1.6 million dollar verdict on behalf of their client and his wife in a mesothelioma lawsuit filed against talc manufacturer, Whittaker, Clark & Daniels (WCD), a Pfizer© company.

Our client's father worked in a warehouse of the Shulton Company where WCD talc and ingredients were used to make Old Spice and Dessert Flower talcum products.

We proved that our client's mesothelioma was caused by his exposure to asbestos-containing WCD-manufactured talc that his father brought home on his person and clothing.

This case represents the first mesothelioma related verdict against Whittaker, Clark and Daniels and against a supplier of talc used as an ingredient in cosmetic products.

WERE YOU OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW INJURED ON THE JOB?

Contact Szaferman Lakind today.

FAMILY LAW IN FLUX by Jeffrey K. Epstein, Partner

No other area of law is subject to change, modification or revision as much as Family Law.

Family Law is greatly impacted by economic, social and cultural factors that evolve over time and necessitate that the law adapt to meet the evolving concerns of public policy. We are currently undergoing a shift in society's view of alimony, which is likely to result in significant changes to New Jersey's alimony statute. We have also experienced recent changes in our premarital agreement laws, laws concerning cohabitants (palimony) and our child support guidelines.

Alimony, like most concepts in Family Law, is state specific. Alimony laws in New Jersey are completely different from alimony laws in Texas, Oklahoma or even bordering states such as Pennsylvania or New York. Years ago it was much easier to understand the purpose of alimony. When divorce was based on fault and women could no longer support themselves when the marriage broke down, the wife needed life-long support to sustain herself and the family. This element of need for alimony still exists where divorce occurs after a traditional, long-term marriage in which the wife did not work. However, today the shorter length of many marriages and the fact that very few women are entirely removed from the workforce have mandated that our legislature take a fresh look at our alimony laws.

Is New Jersey in store for alimony reform? The answer is probably yes, although the timing and scope of the potential statute is still under consideration. It does seem clear, however, that termination of alimony close to retirement will be more certain, making it very difficult for a supported spouse to continue receiving alimony after the payor retires.

While we await potential changes in New Jersey's alimony statute, there have already been changes in our prenuptial agreement statute. This year our prenuptial agreement statute was amended, making it harder to set aside prenuptial agreements upon divorce. Simply stated, the law previously allowed for an analysis of whether implementing the prenuptial agreement at the time of divorce would be grossly unfair to the non-titled or supported spouse. The law now focuses on the financial circumstances of the parties at the time the Prenuptial Agreement was entered into prior to the marriage. We now examine at the time of execution whether the agreement satisfies the requirements of the statute in terms of discovery of assets and what lawyers call unconscionability of its provisions.

Similarly, our law governing cohabitants, popularly called "palimony," changed significantly in recent years to the point where recovery for damages as a result of the break of a promise during a relationship between cohabitants required the existence of an agreement in writing governing the duties and responsibilities of both cohabitants. However, recent case law has created equitable remedies that may apply even without a written document.



Finally, child support continues to be modified to adapt to the changing patterns of family spending and takes into consideration issues that were not contemplated when our child support guidelines were originally enacted. For example, for years it was unclear whether a child's automobile insurance costs were covered by basic child support under the guidelines. The new revised guidelines make it clear that automobile insurance costs for a child of driving age are not covered under child support.

One should also recognize that deviation from our child support guidelines is possible based on specific circumstances in each individual case. It appears that the prospective alimony statute may also allow for deviation under appropriate circumstances. Family law continues to be the most fact-sensitive body of law. Each case strategy must be tailored to the unique facts and circumstances of that case. Although our laws provide templates for resolution, the client's best interest is served by an approach to resolution that considers all of the facts and issues particular to that case.

FIRM SETTLES ERISA CLASS ACTION CASE

In October 2013, the United States District Court for the District of New Jersey approved a class action settlement in the matter of <u>Goldenberg v Indel</u>, a case we brought under the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA).

In the complaint, plaintiff, an elderly retiree, alleged that Indel and the other plan fiduciary had failed to consider plan demographics when developing the Plan's investment strategy.

As a result, the plaintiff's retirement account sustained a large loss shortly before he retired in 2008. The matter, litigated over a five year period, resulted in a highly beneficial settlement to the plaintiff and other plan participants.

ARE YOU SURE YOUR RETIREMENT IS SECURE?Contact us today.

STEVEN BLADER SETTLES CASE AGAINST MAJOR FIREWORKS DISTRIBUTOR, HOMEOWNER FOR \$450,000



In a precedent-setting case, Partner Steven Blader brought suit against a Pennsylvania-based fireworks distributor who failed to provide safety instructions to the purchaser of more than \$1,200 worth of fireworks. The case was settled prior to trial with the fireworks distributor and the purchaser's homeowner's policy contributing to the \$450,000 settlement.

Michael Maibach, a Jackson Township, NJ, resident purchased the fireworks in 2010 for a 4th of July fireworks display to be

held at his home. Mr. Maibach asked his neighbor, Mr. Blader's client, to assist in igniting the fireworks. In the course of the display the client was struckin the eye with a mortar and, in spite of two surgeries, lost vision in the eye.

Pennsylvania law requires its residents to produce a permit issued by a municipality to legally purchase fireworks. Non-residents of Pennsylvania may legally purchase fireworks in Pennsylvania without a permit.

The fireworks distributor filed a motion to dismiss the action on the basis that the sale was permitted by law. Mr. Blader argued before Ocean County, NJ Superior Court Judge James Den Uyl that the distributor had an obligation to determine that the fireworks could be used safely by the purchaser. Judge Den Uyl concurred and stated in his denial of the motion to dismiss the case that the distributor, "arguably had a duty to do something to either assess his (Maibach) knowledge, training or experience to stage a fireworks display and/or, to provide some instruction on how to do so safely."

The distributor knew that Maibach's use of the fireworks was illegal and the distributor took no precaution to assess Maibach's competence as a fireworks operator. Thus the court found that the distributor could be liable for the neglect and illegal use of fireworks by Maibach.

INJURED IN AN ACCIDENT? It may not be your fault.

Contact Szaferman Lakind today.

LEARN MORE ABOUT US

- Founded 1977
- Full-service Law Firm
- 39 attorneys,
 85+ employees
- Strength & resources of large firm
- Caring and friendly environment

AV rated by Martindale-Hubbell™, the law firm of Szaferman Lakind is a full-service law firm with a multi-faceted team of attorneys who provide legal representation for businesses, investors, professionals, families and individuals.

- Commercial and Litigation Law
- Matrimonial Law
- · Personal Injury Law
- Workers' Compensation & Business Law



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