



# THE 2018 ELITE TRIAL LAWYERS



The National Law Journal and ALM Media honored law firms and lawyers handling cutting-edge work on behalf of plaintiffs in practice areas ranging from mass torts to securities litigation. Here's a look back at the work of our winners.





## ANTITRUST

ROBINS KAPLAN

■ **TELL US ABOUT YOUR BIGGEST WIN OR WINS THIS YEAR.**

Robins Kaplan serves as co-lead counsel in a long-running MDL surrounding payment card interchange fees. In September, the parties reached a class wide settlement for \$6.26 billion which is one of if not the largest-ever antitrust class action settlement. The firm is also court appointed co-lead counsel in litigation surrounding alleged price-fixing and bid-rigging conspiracies among automotive parts manufacturers—litigation that this year surpassed \$1.1 billion in settlements.

■ **WHAT'S THE BIGGEST LESSON YOU LEARNED PRACTICING LAW?**

There is no such thing as being too prepared.

■ **RECENTLY, WHAT'S BEEN THE MOST SIGNIFICANT CHANGE IN YOUR PRACTICE AREA AND HOW HAVE YOU ADJUSTED?**

The proliferation of arbitration agreements with class-action waivers in customer agreements have made a significant mark in our practice area. We challenge these clauses to seek justice for our clients who may have entered into these agreements without choice, unfortunately with mixed results due to the current state of the law. Nonetheless, we continue to seek justice for our clients.

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*Answers submitted by Hollis Salzman, assistant managing partner, co-chair, antitrust and trade regulation group, member of executive board.*



## ANTITRUST

SUSMAN GODFREY

■ **TELL US ABOUT YOUR BIGGEST WIN OR WINS THIS YEAR.**

In the Automotive Parts Antitrust litigation, one of the most complex set of antitrust class actions ever litigated, we have now obtained over \$1 billion in settlements for the classes we represent. We and our co-lead counsel faced many challenges in managing the multiplicity of actions brought together as part of this massive litigation, in addition to confronting the defenses mounted by the defendants to plaintiffs' claims. In the face of those obstacles, we persevered and achieved what we regard as a remarkable result for the plaintiff classes.

■ **WHAT'S THE BIGGEST LESSON YOU LEARNED PRACTICING LAW?**

It has never ceased to be gratifying

to be able to use one's skills and experience as a lawyer to right a wrong or defend against an unjust claim.

■ **RECENTLY, WHAT'S BEEN THE MOST SIGNIFICANT CHANGE IN YOUR PRACTICE AREA AND HOW HAVE YOU ADJUSTED?**

There have been many ebbs and flows in the law over the years which have always required new thinking and new approaches to litigation.

■ **SHARE AN INTERESTING FACT ABOUT YOUR FIRM THAT FEW KNOW.**

We recently adopted for the first time a mandatory retirement age. It's 100. (But we might make exceptions, depending upon the circumstances.)

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*Answers submitted by Marc Seltzer, partner.*



## BUSINESS TORTS

LOEWINSOHN FLEGLE DEARY SIMON

■ **TELL US ABOUT YOUR BIGGEST WIN OR WINS THIS YEAR.**

We achieved a \$6 billion dollar jury verdict in probate court and \$45 million settlement in arbitration.

■ **WHAT'S THE BIGGEST LESSON YOU LEARNED PRACTICING LAW?**

Passion and dedication pay off.

■ **RECENTLY, WHAT'S BEEN THE MOST SIGNIFICANT CHANGE IN YOUR PRACTICE AREA AND HOW HAVE YOU ADJUSTED?**

None.

■ **SHARE AN INTERESTING FACT ABOUT YOUR FIRM THAT FEW KNOW.**

I practiced law with two of my current partners when they practiced with me at a different firm from over 20 years before going our separate ways, until we rejoined forces here.

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*Answers submitted by Alan Loewinsohn, managing partner.*



## CIVIL RIGHTS

BROWN, GOLDSTEIN & LEVY

■ **TELL US ABOUT YOUR BIGGEST WIN OR WINS THIS YEAR.**

James Owens, a man wrongfully convicted of the 1987 murder of a young woman, was sentenced to life in prison without parole and spent 21 years in prison. Owens was exonerated by DNA evidence and released from prison in 2008. He filed a federal lawsuit alleging that Baltimore homicide detectives failed to disclose exculpatory evidence. After we prevailed in the Fourth Circuit, the case settled for \$9 million in April 2018, a month before trial. This settlement was the largest ever in Maryland for allegations of police misconduct.

■ **WHAT'S THE BIGGEST LESSON YOU LEARNED PRACTICING LAW?**

Get to know our clients and tell

their stories. Then get to know the defendant, make the judge and jury care about the threat the defendant poses, and give the judge and jury an opportunity to right a wrong.

■ **RECENTLY, WHAT'S BEEN THE MOST SIGNIFICANT CHANGE IN YOUR PRACTICE AREA AND HOW HAVE YOU ADJUSTED?**

Our managing partner was a law clerk at our firm in 1986. She worked at a small table in the office of one of our founding partners and recalls his gentle but forceful voice advocating for the poor and disenfranchised. Those memories continue to guide us today.

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*Answers submitted by Andrew Freeman, partner.*





## CONSUMER PROTECTION

COHEN MILSTEIN SELLERS & TOLL

■ **TELL US ABOUT YOUR BIGGEST WIN OR WINS THIS YEAR.**

On August 16, 2018, U.S. District Judge Lucy H. Koh granted final approval to an historic \$115 million settlement in a multidistrict litigation stemming from the Anthem, Inc. data breach in 2015. In February 2015, Anthem reported that it had incurred a massive data breach that compromised the Personally Identifiable Information and Personal Health Information of 78.8 million insureds, thus constituting one of the largest data breaches ever. Judge Koh described the \$115 million settlement—the largest ever in a consumer data breach litigation—as “exceptional,” and observed that “Class Counsel achieved an impressive benefit for the Class.”

■ **RECENTLY, WHAT’S BEEN THE MOST SIGNIFICANT CHANGE IN YOUR PRACTICE AREA AND HOW HAVE YOU ADJUSTED?**

Judge Koh’s opinions in the Anthem matter have changed the landscape for future data breach suits. The ability to pursue “benefit of the bargain” damages and “market value” damages for the loss of personally identifiable information give plaintiffs another strong tool in their fight to hold corporations to a higher standard of responsibility to protect their customers’ data.

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*Answers submitted by Andrew N. Friedman, partner and co-chair, consumer protection practice.*



## COUNTERTERRORISM

COHEN MILSTEIN SELLERS & TOLL

■ **TELL US ABOUT YOUR BIGGEST WIN OR WINS THIS YEAR.**

On February 28, 2018, U.S. District Court Judge Royce C. Lamberth, for the District of Columbia, ordered the Republic of Iran to pay \$920 million to 80 families of soldiers and other military service members who were killed or injured in the 1983 bombing of the U.S. Marine barracks in Beirut, Lebanon. The attack, carried out by a group calling itself Islamic Jihad (later determined to be a front for Hezbollah), killed 241 U.S. service members serving as peacekeepers in Lebanon’s then-ongoing civil war and injured numerous others—the deadliest state-sponsored terrorist attack against U.S. citizens prior to

September 11, 2001. Cohen Milstein is honored to represent the plaintiffs in this matter.

■ **WHAT’S THE BIGGEST LESSON YOU LEARNED PRACTICING LAW?**

I was initially attracted to the practice of law because I saw it as an opportunity to do challenging work, work that would be important. What I’ve come to appreciate over time is just how important our work can be in terms of changing policy, addressing misconduct, and generally impacting the lives of others for the better.

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*Answers submitted by Theodore J. Leopold, partner and co-chair, complex tort litigation practice.*

Powerful Advocates.  
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Cohen Milstein Sellers & Toll PLLC  
salutes our **Elite Women of the  
Plaintiffs Bar:**

**Kalpana Kotagal**

**Betsy Miller**

**Julie Goldsmith Reiser**

and congratulates all of this year's  
**Elite Trial Lawyers** honorees.

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## DISABILITY RIGHTS

ROSEN BIEN GALVAN & GRUNFELD

■ **TELL US ABOUT YOUR BIGGEST WIN OR WINS THIS YEAR.**

RBGG represents an association of blind and low-vision persons and two blind individuals in an action challenging the state and San Mateo County's failure to provide voters with vision impairments the opportunity to equally participate in the county's vote-by-mail program, which relied on inaccessible paper ballots. Plaintiffs sought to vote using software allowing them to read and mark their vote-by-mail ballots privately and independently using screen access software on their personal computers, which is already in place in a number of other states. The discriminatory effect was especially pronounced in San Mateo County, which in 2015

began taking steps to dramatically reduce in-person polling sites in an effort to further expand absentee voting.

■ **WHAT'S THE BIGGEST LESSON YOU LEARNED PRACTICING LAW?**

As a direct result of this lawsuit, California amended the Elections Code to permit the Secretary of State to certify the accessible vote-by-mail technology plaintiffs requested.

■ **SHARE AN INTERESTING FACT ABOUT YOUR FIRM THAT FEW KNOW.**

Taking risks on behalf of compelling clients with compelling stories pays off. Our greatest strength lies in persistent and careful monitoring of injunctive relief.

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*Answers submitted by Gay C. Grunfeld, managing partner.*



## EMPLOYMENT RIGHTS

STOWELL & FRIEDMAN

■ **TELL US ABOUT YOUR BIGGEST WIN OR WINS THIS YEAR.**

During 2018, we have continued to battle racial discrimination and particularly in the securities industry. This work has become increasingly more difficult as rather than eliminate the discrimination that plagues Wall Street, many firms have unfortunately turned their efforts towards eliminating the law suits with new mandatory arbitration policies and class actions waivers. Notwithstanding this trend, JP Morgan Chase entered in a class racial discrimination settlement with our clients which included substantial monetary relief and expansive programmatic relief. In 2019, Stowell & Friedman, Ltd. will celebrate its 30th year in business

and will continue its mission of challenging mandatory arbitration and challenging discrimination with the prosecution of several new class. muti plaintiff and individual actions.

■ **SHARE AN INTERESTING FACT ABOUT YOUR FIRM THAT FEW KNOW. [25 WORDS]**

Every person in the firm contributes to the success of the Firm. We are our best when all of the doors close and it appears that there is no way to find the win. One of my partners likes to say that you learn in law school that there are four corners to every document but we are always searching for that fifth corner.

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*Answers submitted by Linda D. Friedman, managing partner.*

## ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

BERGER MONTAGUE

■ **TELL US ABOUT YOUR BIGGEST WIN OR WINS THIS YEAR.**

In the Environmental category, Rocky Flats, the case for which we won.

■ **WHAT'S THE BIGGEST LESSON YOU LEARNED PRACTICING LAW?**

Never assume anything and never give up.

■ **RECENTLY, WHAT'S BEEN THE MOST SIGNIFICANT CHANGE IN YOUR PRACTICE AREA AND HOW HAVE YOU ADJUSTED?**

Lack of professionalism and competition without any ethical boundaries.

■ **SHARE AN INTERESTING FACT ABOUT YOUR FIRM THAT FEW KNOW.**

We try cases, and do not give up!

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*Answers submitted by Merrill Davidoff, chairman emeritus and managing shareholder.*



## ELITE WOMEN OF THE PLAINTIFFS' BAR

CONGRATULATIONS TO ELIZABETH CABRASER & ALL THE OTHER  
2018 NLJ HONOREES



**Elizabeth J. Cabraser**  
PARTNER

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## FINANCIAL PRODUCTS

COHEN MILSTEIN SELLERS & TOLL

■ **TELL US ABOUT YOUR BIGGEST WIN OR WINS THIS YEAR.**

Cohen Milstein's Public Client group—a practice dedicated to supporting state Attorneys General and local governments in their mission to protect consumers, patients, workers and public funds from false claims and other deceptive practices—served as counsel for the co-lead state, Mississippi, in the recent \$864 million government enforcement settlement between Moody's Corporation, 22 states and the U.S. Department of Justice. This settlement, together with a \$1.375 billion deal reached with Standard & Poor's (in which Cohen Milstein also represented the co-lead state) in 2015, held the credit rating agencies publicly and

financially accountable—for the first time—for the critical role they played in causing the Great Recession.

■ **WHAT'S THE BIGGEST LESSON YOU LEARNED PRACTICING LAW?**

Stated demands only paint a piece of the picture—the most important information often resides in the parts that are unsaid. For that reason, listening deeply and asking the right questions before reacting are essential to success. I am a litigator, professor of negotiations, and leadership coach. These experiences have disciplined me to gain a clear and complete understanding of people, their perspectives, and the objective facts.

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*Answers submitted by Betsy A. Miller, partner and co-chair, public client practice.*



## GENDER DISCRIMINATION

SANFORD HEISLER SHARP

■ **TELL US ABOUT YOUR BIGGEST WIN OR WINS THIS YEAR.**

We represented plaintiff Enrichetta Ravina, a former Columbia University assistant professor against Columbia. The complaint documented how the senior leadership of Columbia allowed a tenured professor to sexually harass and obstruct the work of our client, including retaliating against her for protesting the harassment, revoking a year of leave, and putting her on an accelerated tenure process that made it impossible for her to succeed. The jury in the SDNY awarded Ravina \$1.25 million as compensation for workplace retaliation, ordering the university to pay \$750,000 in compensatory damages, and Professor Bekaert to pay \$500,000 in punitive damages.

■ **WHAT'S THE BIGGEST LESSON YOU LEARNED PRACTICING LAW?**

Exercising good judgment is the most important characteristic of a lawyer.

■ **RECENTLY, WHAT'S BEEN THE MOST SIGNIFICANT CHANGE IN YOUR PRACTICE AREA AND HOW HAVE YOU ADJUSTED?**

The attack on class actions by the U.S. Supreme Court. We have adjusted by filing more Equal Pay Act cases and multi-party matters.

■ **SHARE AN INTERESTING FACT ABOUT YOUR FIRM THAT FEW KNOW.**

We hire our attorneys primarily from the top 5 law schools.

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*Answers submitted by David Sanford, chairman.*



## IMMIGRATION

COHEN MILSTEIN SELLERS & TOLL

■ **TELL US ABOUT YOUR BIGGEST WIN OR WINS THIS YEAR.**

Working closely with our colleagues at Jenner & Block, counsel in a companion case, we represent the NAACP, the UFCW and the AFT in one of several cases challenging the rescission of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program, the program which for more than six years deferred deportation of immigrants who entered this country as children and have become productive members of our communities. On April 24, 2018, the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia ruled that the decision to rescind the DACA program violated the Administrative Procedure Act and entered summary

judgment. While the decision will be the subject of appellate review, the ruling represents a significant victory for the Dreamers who were members of our client organizations and their sisters and brothers throughout the country.

■ **WHAT'S THE BIGGEST LESSON YOU LEARNED PRACTICING LAW?**

Success that can make a real difference in peoples' lives and in our society often requires years of perseverance and the steadfast conviction that what may have seemed impossible is achievable.

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*Answers submitted by Joseph M. Sellers, partner and chair, civil rights and employment practice.*



## INSURANCE LIABILITY

LEE & ASSOCIATES

■ **TELL US ABOUT YOUR BIGGEST WIN OR WINS THIS YEAR.**

We convinced insurance companies to accept \$7 million in policy limit demands in the first 5 months of this year. In *Lee v. Big Time Towing, Inc.*, defendants elected to pay plaintiff's policy limits demand of \$1 million prior to expiration of the demand. Defendants' tow truck failed to notice traffic stopping in front of him which caused him to lose control of his tow truck, which crossed the median and struck plaintiff's vehicle, causing plaintiff's vehicle to go down an embankment. In *Sung Tae Song et al. v. Vickie Boxwell Rigdon*, defendant paid \$1 million policy limits in a case where plaintiff was crossing a street outside of a crosswalk. In *Hyong Sok*

(*"Ricky"*) *Choi v. JNH Roofing dba Roofing USA*, defendant paid their \$1 million policy limits when a ladder at work fell injuring plaintiff. Policy limits were paid out in other cases as well.

■ **WHAT'S THE BIGGEST LESSON YOU LEARNED PRACTICING LAW?**

It is important to search out and learn all aspects of your client's case and to present it zealously, but with integrity and civility.

■ **SHARE AN INTERESTING FACT ABOUT YOUR FIRM THAT FEW KNOW.**

We make extensive use of focus groups in order to properly prepare our cases.

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*Answers submitted by Daniel E. Hoffman, attorney.*





## MASS TORTS

SEEGER WEISS

■ **TELL US ABOUT YOUR BIGGEST WIN OR WINS THIS YEAR.**

I served as co-lead class counsel and chief negotiator on behalf of over 20,000 retired NFL players suffering from concussion-induced neurocognitive injuries, securing an uncapped settlement fund valued at \$1 billion+ and a medical testing program, approved by the Third Circuit and denied certiorari to the U.S. Supreme Court. In the Syngenta corn litigation, I was appointed to the plaintiffs' Settlement Committee and served as chief negotiator, with partner Stephen Weiss appointed to the plaintiffs' executive committee, representing nationwide farmers economically harmed by premature commercialization of GMO corn. They secured a preliminarily-approved \$1.51 billion settlement,

the largest agricultural litigation settlement in U.S. history.

■ **WHAT'S THE BIGGEST LESSON YOU LEARNED PRACTICING LAW?**

It's less important where you sit at the meeting table than what you say at the table once you get there. If you come prepared and have the respect of all around you, the head of the table is anywhere you sit.

■ **SHARE AN INTERESTING FACT ABOUT YOUR FIRM THAT FEW KNOW.**

There is one criterium among all others that is the litmus test for all lateral hires—whether the candidate is a nice person.

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*Answers submitted by Christopher Seeger, partner.*



## MEDICAL DEVICE

THE LANIER LAW FIRM

■ **TELL US ABOUT YOUR BIGGEST WIN OR WINS THIS YEAR.**

We won a \$247 million federal court verdict in November 2017 on behalf of six people who suffered serious medical complications from metal-on-metal hip implants made by Johnson & Johnson and its subsidiary, DePuy Orthopaedics. That verdict represents one of three cases tried by the firm in less than three years against Johnson & Johnson based on similar claims. Those three verdicts cumulatively have totaled nearly \$2 billion.

■ **RECENTLY, WHAT'S BEEN THE MOST SIGNIFICANT CHANGE IN YOUR PRACTICE AREA AND HOW HAVE YOU ADJUSTED?**

The most significant change in our practice is one that effects all practice

areas; That is the electronic and digital age. Our abilities to communicate through different medium have enhanced our skills at trial. We combine oral, written and visual materials together to convey a coherent story to a judge and jury. If you have not adapted to this evolution, you are not serving your clients well.

■ **SHARE AN INTERESTING FACT ABOUT YOUR FIRM THAT FEW KNOW.**

We are involved in an organization called Guatemala Sana which provides high quality care and education for children in the underdeveloped rural areas of Guatemala.

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*Answers submitted by Richard Meadow, national mass torts director.*

# SEEGERWEISS<sup>LLP</sup>

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IS PROUD TO BE SELECTED 2018 ELITE TRIAL LAWYERS  
IN TWO CATEGORIES

THE NATIONAL LAW JOURNAL

**ELITE TRIAL LAWYERS**

2018

MASS TORTS: WINNER  
SEEGER WEISS LLP

THE NATIONAL LAW JOURNAL

**ELITE TRIAL LAWYERS**

2018

PRODUCT LIABILITY: WINNER  
SEEGER WEISS LLP

Seeger Weiss LLP is one of the preeminent trial law firms in the nation, known for its high-stakes, landmark verdicts and settlements in multidistrict mass tort and class action litigation on behalf of consumers, athletes, farmers, municipalities, and other injured parties. Since its founding in 1999, the firm has led and tried some of the most complex and high-profile litigations in the U.S. in both state and federal courts, including multiple bellwether trials.



## MEDICAL MALPRACTICE

ROBINS KAPLAN

■ **TELL US ABOUT YOUR BIGGEST WIN OR WINS THIS YEAR.**

This year, we represented a woman who contracted a serious infection while undergoing eye surgery. The infection, which occurred when the defendant hospital infused contaminated irrigation fluid into our client's eye during surgery, ultimately destroyed the retina, resulting in the loss of the eye. Following a two-week trial, the jury awarded \$3.1 million. We have also negotiated settlements in confidential medical malpractice matters totaling over \$58 million.

■ **WHAT'S THE BIGGEST LESSON YOU LEARNED PRACTICING LAW?**

Work ethic is the most significant and important value one can have. Tenacity, never giving up, and striving to do your

best for all of your clients, regardless of case size or client background, is key.

■ **RECENTLY, WHAT'S BEEN THE MOST SIGNIFICANT CHANGE IN YOUR PRACTICE AREA AND HOW HAVE YOU ADJUSTED?**

Medical malpractice cases are becoming more and more difficult to successfully handle. Electronic medical records have dramatically increased the cost of pursuing such claims, and yet there appears to be an ever-increasing need for plaintiff lawyers who are willing to handle these claims for injured consumers.

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*Answers submitted by Peter Schmit, partner, chair, national personal injury and medical malpractice group.*



## OTHER AREAS OF NOTE

CORBOY & DEMETRIO

■ **TELL US ABOUT YOUR BIGGEST WIN OR WINS THIS YEAR.**

Corboy & Demetrio was retained to represent airline passenger Dr. David Dao two days after he was unceremoniously removed from a plane. Cell phone video of his bloody removal went viral. At a news conference streamed live worldwide, I addressed what was a mounting sentiment – airline passengers were sick of being treated like cattle. I schooled the audience on the airline industry's legal duty in the treatment of passengers as well as its common-sense duty. In only 18 days from the incident, we obtained a confidential settlement from the airline, pre-suit. It led to two congressional hearings on the subject and favorable changes in airline policies.

■ **RECENTLY, WHAT'S BEEN THE MOST SIGNIFICANT CHANGE IN YOUR PRACTICE AREA AND HOW HAVE YOU ADJUSTED?**

Mediation now dominates our practice area. Instead of persuading 12 individuals that our client is on the right side of a dispute, we have adjusted to the need of persuading just one.

■ **SHARE AN INTERESTING FACT ABOUT YOUR FIRM THAT FEW KNOW.**

We reject 21 of 22 medical negligence cases that come to us. When our name appears on a lawsuit, all are aware there's a very good reason why.

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*Answers submitted by Thomas A. Demetrio, co-founder.*

## PHARMACEUTICAL LITIGATION

BAUM HEDLUND ARISTEI & GOLDMAN

■ **TELL US ABOUT YOUR BIGGEST WIN OR WINS THIS YEAR.**

Our firm was co-lead counsel in the *Johnson v. Monsanto* trial which resulted in a \$289.2 million jury verdict. The jury found Monsanto's Roundup herbicide caused Johnson to develop non-Hodgkin lymphoma. Baum Hedlund's prior release of the "Monsanto Papers" along with the verdict have reverberated around the world drawing attention to Roundup's health risks and Monsanto's corporate misconduct. Following the verdict, the judge reduced punitive damages from \$250 million to \$39.2 million, but preserved the jury's basic findings, bringing the total damages to \$78.4 million. In light of his terminal diagnosis, Johnson decided to

accept the remittitur with the hope that the case will resolve in his lifetime.

■ **WHAT'S THE BIGGEST LESSON YOU LEARNED PRACTICING LAW?**

Finding explosive internal documents and getting them into the hands of qualified experts win cases. Continue to fight after experiencing losses. Persistence is key. Never put all your eggs in one basket.

■ **SHARE AN INTERESTING FACT ABOUT YOUR FIRM THAT FEW KNOW.**

We have a very collegial working environment where everyone, from the data entry guy to the senior partner are treated with respect and dignity.

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*Answers submitted by Michael Baum, managing partner; president.*



## PRIVACY/DATA BREACH

BERGER MONTAGUE

■ **TELL US ABOUT YOUR BIGGEST WIN OR WINS THIS YEAR.**

This has been an incredible year for our consumer and employment departments and for our firm as a whole. I've had the opportunity to work on a large number of important cases and of course every case is important to our client in that particular case, who we serve. It is always about the clients and achieving the goals that they set out at the beginning of the representation. That's how we define success.

■ **WHAT'S THE BIGGEST LESSON YOU LEARNED PRACTICING LAW?**

Relationships matter. Treat all of them with respect. This includes opposing counsel. It also includes everyone you come in contact with from the

time you wake up to the time you go to sleep.

■ **RECENTLY, WHAT'S BEEN THE MOST SIGNIFICANT CHANGE IN YOUR PRACTICE AREA AND HOW HAVE YOU ADJUSTED?**

As plaintiffs' litigation lawyers, our practice is always changing and we need to adjust constantly to meet the demand. In the areas of consumer and employment where I practice, for example, arbitration is becoming more prevalent. So we have adjusted and become quite adept at defeating arbitration clauses and if we cannot, then obtaining large recoveries for our clients in arbitration.

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*Answers submitted by Shanon Carson, managing shareholder.*





## PRODUCT LIABILITY

SEEGER WEISS

■ **TELL US ABOUT YOUR BIGGEST WIN OR WINS THIS YEAR.**

Between June 2017 and March 2018, I served as lead and co-trial counsel in a series of case-defining bellwether trials in the testosterone replacement MDL. As lead trial counsel in the *Konrad v. AbbVie Inc.*, I secured a \$140+ million award for Jeff Konrad, an AndroGel testosterone replacement user who suffered a heart attack shortly after starting the drug. As co-trial counsel in *Mitchell v. AbbVie Inc.*, I helped secure verdicts of \$150+ million, and, on re-trial, \$3.2 million for AndroGel user Jesse Mitchell—a lifelong smoker and defense bellwether selection who suffered a heart attack on AndroGel.

■ **WHAT'S THE BIGGEST LESSON YOU LEARNED PRACTICING LAW?**

Every case must be developed as a trial case. Therefore, start at the end and work backwards. The temptation is always the reverse. Try to resist it. Start with the jury charge and trial themes, identify your points to prove, then go get the discovery.

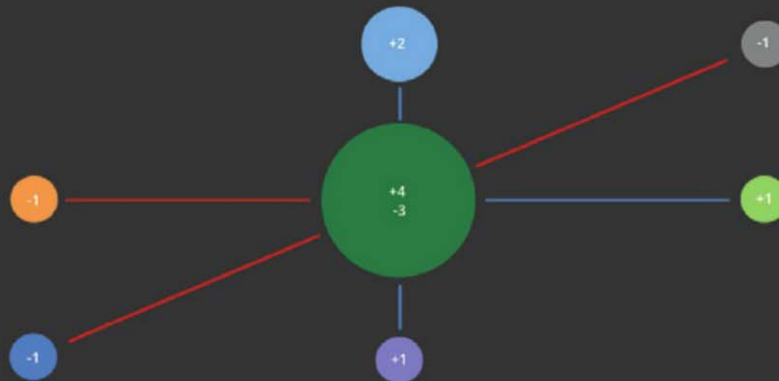
■ **SHARE AN INTERESTING FACT ABOUT YOUR FIRM THAT FEW KNOW.**

Seeger Weiss is nearing its 20th anniversary. Notwithstanding that the firm was founded on April 1, 1999, our announcement listed April. No one thought it was a good idea to begin on April Fool's Day.

*Answers submitted by David Buchanan, partner.*

# IN WHAT PRACTICES ARE YOUR COMPETITORS GROWING?

Ask Legal Compass: [at.alm.com/legalcompass](http://at.alm.com/legalcompass)



## PRODUCT LIABILITY

THE LANIER LAW FIRM

### ■ TELL US ABOUT YOUR BIGGEST WIN OR WINS THIS YEAR.

A St. Louis jury awarded \$4.69 billion to our clients (22 women and their families) who alleged that decades of daily use of Johnson & Johnson's (NYSE: JNJ) asbestos-laden talcum powder products caused their ovarian cancer. While there have been other trials in which juries have determined that talc products contained asbestos and caused mesothelioma cancer, this case marks the first talc/asbestos-induced ovarian cancer verdict in the United States. Talc is the primary ingredient in Johnson's Baby Powder and Shower to Shower products. Medical experts testified that microscopic asbestos fibers enter the body when talcum powder is inhaled or applied to the genital area.

### ■ RECENTLY, WHAT'S BEEN THE MOST SIGNIFICANT CHANGE IN YOUR PRACTICE AREA AND HOW HAVE YOU ADJUSTED?

Social networking has completely transformed the practice of law over the last few years. People within the legal industry have ever expanding avenues of social media tools available to accomplish any number of legal undertakings. Social networking has changed recruitment, the gathering of evidence, networking, the location and discrediting of witnesses, and even how attorneys communicate with their clients.

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*Answers submitted by W. Mark Lanier, owner, founder.*



**Stowell & Friedman, Ltd.**

Attorneys at Law: Defending the rights of employees for 25 years

### IS PROUD TO BE SELECTED 2018 ELITE TRIAL LAWYERS IN RACIAL DISCRIMINATION, EMPLOYMENT RIGHTS, AND CIVIL RIGHTS.

For three decades, Stowell & Friedman has vindicated its clients' civil rights and successfully taken on the biggest names on Wall Street defended by some of the most prominent law firms in the country. The firm has successfully challenged mandatory arbitration of employment discrimination claims, sexual harassment and hostile work environments, discriminatory entrance and promotional exams, mandatory retirement policies, discriminatory pay and distribution of resources, wrongful terminations, and retaliation against employees who speak out against discrimination. Through jury trials, arbitrations, and settlements, the firm has recovered over \$900 million for its clients who were victims of race, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, maternity, age, and disability discrimination in the workplace. The firm has also negotiated settlements with employers who agreed to expansive programmatic relief and meaningful reforms designed to restore equal opportunities to all employees.

THE NATIONAL LAW JOURNAL

**ELITE TRIAL LAWYERS**  
2018

**Stowell & Friedman, LTD.**

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## RELIGIOUS DISCRIMINATION

SIEGAL & RICHARDSON

■ **TELL US ABOUT YOUR BIGGEST WIN OR WINS THIS YEAR.**

We represent students throughout the United States who have been victims of hostile environments based on race, religion, national origin or sexual orientation on college campuses and schools. We battle also to stop racist regulations brought by campus organizations.

■ **WHAT'S THE BIGGEST LESSON YOU LEARNED PRACTICING LAW?**

Fight like your life depends upon it.

■ **RECENTLY, WHAT'S BEEN THE MOST SIGNIFICANT CHANGE IN YOUR PRACTICE AREA AND HOW HAVE YOU ADJUSTED?**

The Office of Civil Rights of the Department of Education has recently

provided rulings that are beneficial to students seeking to protect rights.

■ **SHARE AN INTERESTING FACT ABOUT YOUR FIRM THAT FEW KNOW.**

Our firm is an example of diversity and harmony.

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*Answers submitted by Joel Siegal.*



## SECURITIES LITIGATION

GRANT & EISENHOFER

■ **TELL US ABOUT YOUR BIGGEST WIN OR WINS THIS YEAR.**

On July 13, the Amsterdam Court of Appeals in the Netherlands approved the largest-ever securities settlement in Europe. Belgium insurance company Ageas N.V./S.A. (formerly known as Fortis) agreed to pay of \$1.5 billion (€1.3 billion) to multiple groups of U.S. and European institutional and individual investors. The historic settlement resolves claims arising out of the 2007 acquisition of Dutch bank ABN Amro by Fortis ahead of the financial crisis.

■ **WHAT'S THE BIGGEST LESSON YOU LEARNED PRACTICING LAW?**

G&E is global counsel representing the foundation Stichting Investor Claims Against Fortis, which had over

180 participating institutional investors with over 80 million shares.

■ **SHARE AN INTERESTING FACT ABOUT YOUR FIRM THAT FEW KNOW.**

G&E has scored numerous high-profile wins in shareholder appraisal actions, setting precedents for enforcing investor rights, and recouping significant share value. However, a number of appraisal litigation cases have been challenged recently in Delaware courts, and opportunities to take on new cases have been shrinking. As a result, G&E has been actively developing other litigation platforms and taking on new cases, including environmental matters.

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*Answers submitted by Jay W. Eisenhofer, managing director.*



## SECURITIES LITIGATION

BERNSTEIN LITOWITZ BERGER & GROSSMAN

### ■ TELL US ABOUT YOUR BIGGEST WIN OR WINS THIS YEAR.

The firm was able to resolve a significant litigation against Wells Fargo for \$480 million. The case alleged that Wells Fargo made a series of false statements to investors regarding the strength of its business and results when, in reality, the company was engaged in improper conduct, including the opening of millions of unauthorized accounts to create the impression that it was attaining certain critical performance metrics. The litigation was resolved based upon the extraordinary efforts of our client, Union Asset Management Holding, AG as well as the litigation team at our firm that worked tirelessly to develop and ex-

ecute a sophisticated litigation strategy that resulted in a meaningful recovery for the class.

### ■ WHAT'S THE BIGGEST LESSON YOU LEARNED PRACTICING LAW?

Seeing first-hand the value of having a litigation team that is creative, coordinated and well-organized. In this practice, one can never underestimate the importance of knowing the weakness in one's own case and using that understanding to build the strongest case possible. Most importantly, acting with the utmost integrity—with the court, one's team and an adversary—is a necessity.

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*Answers submitted by Gerald Silk and Salvatore Graziano, managing partners.*



## ELITE WOMEN OF THE PLAINTIFFS BAR

SUSMAN GODFREY – KALPANA SRINIVASAN

### ■ WHAT'S THE BEST LESSON YOU LEARNED PRACTICING LAW?

Walk the walk. Nothing says more about your practice than the quality of the work you do – whether in your writing, dealing with your clients or standing up in court. Treat each opportunity, big or small, as a chance to showcase your strengths and put your best foot forward.

### ■ WHAT'S THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE WOMEN LAWYERS FACE AND HOW HAVE YOU SURMOUNTED THAT CHALLENGE?

Getting to stand on the frontline. Women lawyers are doing incredible work at all levels. But not enough of these talented women hold leadership roles in big cases or get substantial

court time at trial or in major hearings. I was lucky enough to practice as a young lawyer at Susman Godfrey, which fostered those opportunities very early on, and it has always served (and remains) a priority for me as a woman in the profession.

### ■ HOW WOULD YOUR PEERS DESCRIBE YOUR IMPACT ON THE PROFESSION?

I hope I have shown my peers—and more importantly those female lawyers following us—that your career does not have to be defined by any single thing or follow one particular trajectory. Finding work that is challenging and motivating—and working with others who keep it fun—makes all the difference.



## ELITE WOMEN OF THE PLAINTIFFS BAR

THE CASTAÑEDA FIRM – CHRYSTA CASTANEDA

### ■ WHAT'S THE BEST LESSON YOU LEARNED PRACTICING LAW?

Nurturing a practice takes time, and the time invested today multiplies into future opportunities. The time and attention that I have given my career always returns benefits, even if it is unclear at the time how the investment will pay off.

### ■ WHAT'S THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE WOMEN LAWYERS FACE AND HOW HAVE YOU SURMOUNTED THAT CHALLENGE?

When I graduated from law school in 1991, approximately 15 percent of partners at big law firms were women and that number hasn't really changed. It takes courage to disregard that lack of progress and to stay focused on the

future. My best tip for surmounting the challenge is to support the careers of other women.

### ■ HOW WOULD YOUR PEERS DESCRIBE YOUR IMPACT ON THE PROFESSION?

I hope they think would say that I am making a difference in the profession by finding novel approaches to complex cases and expanding the understanding of the legal principles that govern my practice area, which is primarily commercial energy litigation. I hope they benefit from the opportunities that I try to share with others, including women professionals. Finally, I hope they think that I am a good leader and that they benefit from working with me.



## ELITE WOMEN OF THE PLAINTIFFS BAR

PANISH SHEA & BOYLE – DEBORAH CHANG

### ■ WHAT'S THE BEST LESSON YOU LEARNED PRACTICING LAW?

Winning AND losing are both parts of being a trial lawyer. Sometimes you will win when you should lose and sometimes you will lose when you should win; the true lawyer learns to do both with equal grace and magnanimity. You learn far more when you lose than when you win. And sometimes when you lose a case, you win something far more important.

### ■ WHAT'S THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE WOMEN LAWYERS FACE AND HOW HAVE YOU SURMOUNTED THAT CHALLENGE?

On the plaintiff's side, many clients initially want and expect a man in court and doing all the important parts of

the trial. Likewise, there are still times when appearing in court that the judges (male and female) and opposing counsel assume that the male members of the trial team are lead counsel. To surmount that challenge, I have learned to just focus on the work and let my passion, hard work, and creativity show the client and everyone else why I am an indispensable. If you stop taking it as a personal affront, you can use it to your advantage: With such low expectations and attentions diverted elsewhere, you can actually be a very effective secret weapon. Knock the chip off your own shoulder, don't let your personal feelings get in the way of the important task at hand, and just do the work as efficiently and effectively as you can.



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David Sanford's work on behalf of female partners in BigLaw has lit up the mainstream and legal media and has focused a bright light on the issue of pay inequity in BigLaw.

Sanford Heisler Sharp has put gender discrimination in the legal industry on the front-burner and is forcing BigLaw management to address discriminatory practices.



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## ELITE WOMEN OF THE PLAINTIFFS BAR

ROBINS KAPLAN – HOLLIS SALZMAN

### ■ WHAT'S THE BEST LESSON YOU LEARNED PRACTICING LAW?

I have learned enumerable lessons but the top five are: 1. Always be (over) prepared; 2. do not argue with the court; 3. do not lose your cool; 4. always have a Plan B; and 5. return every call and email with 24 hours.

### ■ WHAT'S THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE WOMEN LAWYERS FACE AND HOW HAVE YOU SURMOUNTED THAT CHALLENGE?

Biases, conscious and unconscious, are the biggest challenge for women lawyers. Women lawyers are treated as underqualified or not suited for their job and not taken seriously, even with the right credentials and education. Now that I am the senior lawyer, I try

to curtail any sexist comments, explicit or otherwise. After having frank conversations with other lawyers, I find it reassuring that they are generally receptive to the constructive feedback and willing to adjust their behavior.

### ■ HOW WOULD YOUR PEERS DESCRIBE YOUR IMPACT ON THE PROFESSION?

I suspect that my peers would recognize my efforts to be a balancing force in the room. In antitrust litigation, meetings can quickly heat up given the amount at stake. I work hard to diffuse these heated situations with a healthy dose of reason. It is gratifying to be regularly invited into mediations and settlement conferences.



## ELITE WOMEN OF THE PLAINTIFFS BAR

LIEFF CABRASER HEIMANN & BERNSTEIN – ELIZABETH CABRASER

### ■ WHAT'S THE BEST LESSON YOU LEARNED PRACTICING LAW?

The law is a long game. It advances over time—if challenged and pushed. Like anything worth winning, we must fight to keep our victories. While we never know the hour when small changes will reach a tipping point of profound change, we must act as if this can happen any day.

### ■ WHAT'S THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE WOMEN LAWYERS FACE AND HOW HAVE YOU SURMOUNTED THAT CHALLENGE?

“Women lawyers “ haven’t yet lost our adjective of limitation. That means, horrifically, that we still aren’t accepted as persons with the full right to be just “lawyers”- even though the majority

of lawyers will soon be women. Sadly, the only group that needs no adjectives are straight white males: apparently, the only regular people. We all have the right to be ourselves and at the same time to be full-fledged, “regular” people. I try to promote this by acting as if I have every right to be where, and who, I am, without permission, apology, or explanation.

### ■ HOW WOULD YOUR PEERS DESCRIBE YOUR IMPACT ON THE PROFESSION?

I hope: “When she didn’t like the law, she went out and made some of her own.” But I’ll take: “She showed up, worked hard, and cared.”

## ELITE WOMEN OF THE PLAINTIFFS BAR

COHEN MILSTEIN SELLERS & TOLL – BETSY MILLER

### ■ WHAT'S THE BEST LESSON YOU LEARNED PRACTICING LAW?

Ask meaningful questions, listen carefully to what is important, and only then propose a path forward. I am a practicing lawyer, professor of negotiations, and leadership coach. These experiences have taught me that successful strategies rely on a clear and complete understanding of people, their perspectives, and the objective facts.

### ■ WHAT'S THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE WOMEN LAWYERS FACE AND HOW HAVE YOU SURMOUNTED THAT CHALLENGE?

Educators know the importance of giving children both “mirrors” and “windows.” Mirrors reflect your own experience and identity; windows

provide a view into different experiences and perspectives. I have seen many examples of men succeeding at the highest levels, but vastly fewer models for how to do that authentically as a woman. I value my male colleagues (windows), vigorously pursue women mentors (mirrors); and blaze my own trail as a mirror and window for others.

### ■ HOW WOULD YOUR PEERS DESCRIBE YOUR IMPACT ON THE PROFESSION?

That I have a dogged passion for raising awareness about the importance of cultivating leadership at all levels of seniority. I am known as a forceful litigator who brings a unique mindfulness to my practice.



## ELITE WOMEN OF THE PLAINTIFFS BAR

COHEN MILSTEIN SELLERS & TOLL - KALPANA KOTAGAL

### ■ WHAT'S THE BEST LESSON YOU LEARNED PRACTICING LAW?

I've been fortunate to learn the practice of law from Joe Sellers, Christine Webber and others at Cohen Milstein, who demonstrate daily that practicing law is no different than the rest of life—integrity is paramount. Go to work every day with your clients front of mind.

### ■ WHAT'S THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE WOMEN LAWYERS FACE AND HOW HAVE YOU SURMOUNTED THAT CHALLENGE?

Ruth Bader Ginsburg reflected recently on the significant challenge lawyers who are parents face, juggling work and family. She's right. While women have been disproportionately affected, to fix the problem we must see that

all lawyers are impacted. My goal—I haven't accomplished it yet—is to be honest about what it takes to do this work and be engaged in my family life, and create the space for others to find their own paths.

### ■ HOW WOULD YOUR PEERS DESCRIBE YOUR IMPACT ON THE PROFESSION?

I hope my peers would describe my impact in how I have sought to bring the values that animate my work as a litigator on behalf of my firm's clients—a commitment to fairness and equality of opportunity—to bear on our profession, by working within my own firm and throughout the bar, challenging us to confront our shortcomings and seeking creative ways for us to do better.





## ELITE WOMEN OF THE PLAINTIFFS BAR

COHEN MILSTEIN SELLERS & TOLL PLLC - JULIE REISER

### ■ WHAT'S THE BEST LESSON YOU LEARNED PRACTICING LAW?

I have learned to identify the qualities I admire in other attorneys and look to adapt them into my own style. Conversely, I am careful to avoid emulating qualities that hinder progress or make attorneys less productive. Noticing the best in others has made me a stronger litigator and leader.

### ■ WHAT'S THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE WOMEN LAWYERS FACE AND HOW HAVE YOU SURMOUNTED THAT CHALLENGE?

In my practice, it is common for me to be the only woman in the room. I have overcome feelings of discomfort by recognizing that sponsors come from unexpected places. In my case, knowing I have strong client support because of

relationships I work hard to establish, has allowed me to focus less on the gender of those in the room and more on the ideas that each person contributes.

### ■ HOW WOULD YOUR PEERS DESCRIBE YOUR IMPACT ON THE PROFESSION?

My peers recognize my strength in identifying compelling cases and then tenaciously litigating them. Because I'm reliably over-prepared, they trust my judgment and seek my input on strategy. Of course, many of my cases involve teams of lawyers and I think on a more granular level, those teams would say that my constant efforts to keep things moving in the right direction, with a healthy dose of humor, helps create a shared sense of mission and collegiality that fosters success.



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## THE 2018 ELITE TRIAL LAWYERS

The National Law Journal and ALM Media honored law firms across 23 categories for demonstrated, exemplary performance in cutting-edge work on behalf of plaintiffs on Oct. 5, 2018, at the Bellagio Hotel in Las Vegas. Practice areas noted included: antitrust, business torts, employment rights, mass torts and product liability.

This year's special honorees included nine women lawyers named to the Elite Women of the Plaintiffs Bar: Betsy Miller, Kalpana Kotagal and Julie Reiser of Cohen Milstein Sellers & Toll; Elizabeth Cabraser of Lieff Cabraser Heimann & Bernstein; Deborah Chang of Panish Shea & Boyle; Hollis Salzman and Tara Sutton of Robins Kaplan; Kalpana Srinivasan of Susman Godfrey and Chrysta Castaneda of The Castañeda Firm.

PHOTOS BY ADAM SHANE



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**OTHER AREAS OF NOTE**

CORBOY & DEMETRIO

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## **PHARMACEUTICAL LITIGATION**

BAUM HEDLUND ARISTEI & GOLDMAN

## **PRIVACY/DATA BREACH**

BERGER MONTAGUE

## **PRODUCT LIABILITY**

SEEGER WEISS

THE LANIER LAW FIRM

## **RACIAL DISCRIMINATION**

STOWELL & FRIEDMAN

## **RELIGIOUS DISCRIMINATION**

SIEGAL & RICHARDSON

## **SECURITIES LITIGATION**

BERNSTEIN LITOWITZ

GRANT & EISENHOFER

## **ELITE WOMEN OF THE PLAINTIFFS BAR**

Kalpana Srinivasan

SUSMAN GODFREY

Chrysta Castaneda

THE CASTANEDA FIRM

Deborah chang

PANISH SHEA & BOYLE

Hollis Salzman

ROBINS KAPLAN

Elizabeth cabraser

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Kalpana Kotagal

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