

## BREAKING NEWS:

As we went to print, *Washingtonian Magazine* named partners Joseph Cammarata and Allan M. Siegel two of Washington D.C.'s "Top Lawyers"

...more to follow in our next newsletter.

CHAIKIN  
SHERMAN  
CAMMARATA  
SIEGEL P.C.

*Attorneys at Law*

## HAPPY HOLIDAYS FROM ALL OF US AT CHAIKIN, SHERMAN, CAMMARATA & SIEGEL, P.C.

The entire **Chaikin, Sherman, Cammarata & Siegel, P.C.**, family would like to take this opportunity to wish you a joyful holiday season and a new year filled with health, happiness, and peace. 2009 has been a difficult year for many. We were saddened by the loss of our founding partner, **Donald J. Chaikin**, who died on October 26, 2009, after a long battle with Parkinson's disease. His memory will live on forever in our hearts and in the character of this firm. You can read more about Mr. Chaikin and the impact he has had in our community, and the people he has touched, on page 2 of this newsletter.

It has also been a difficult year for many who have lost jobs or otherwise struggled in a difficult economy. We want to remind all of our clients and friends that we are always here for you in good times and bad. While the firm focuses on helping individuals injured by negligence, please do not hesitate to call us if you have any legal question or issue. If we cannot help you, we will likely be able to refer you to someone who can.

We look forward to a new decade with enthusiasm and optimism. We thank each of you for placing your trust and confidence in us. We are also grateful for your referrals of family and friends. We recognize and appreciate that it is the trust, confidence, and support of our current and past clients that allow us to continue to carry on Mr. Chaikin's legacy.

*We wish you all health, happiness, and prosperity throughout the new year!*

## Chaikin, Sherman, Cammarata & Siegel obtains its third multimillion-dollar result in 18 months

**Chaikin, Sherman, Cammarata & Siegel, P.C.**, proudly announces the resolution of litigation involving malpractice that resulted in profound, permanent injury to an infant. The law firm successfully settled this tragic case for a confidential sum, but one which involves millions of dollars. We are proud that we were successful in obtaining a sum that is sufficient to provide for the needs of this child for the remainder of his life. If you would like to see videos of clients providing testimonials in other multimillion-dollar cases in which the results provide funds sufficient for the remainder of a child's life, please go to the video library link on our Web site ([www.chaikinsherman.com](http://www.chaikinsherman.com)), which is located below our "Contact Us" bar, and select the video entitled "Testimonials."

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# Founding partner Donald J. Chaikin passes away on October 26, 2009, after a long battle with Parkinson's disease

Our partner, mentor, and friend, **Donald J. Chaikin**, died on October 26, 2009, after a decade-long battle with Parkinson's disease. It is impossible to measure the loss to the firm, the community, and those who knew and invariably loved Donald Chaikin.

The obituary submitted to the *Washington Post* summarizes just some of the highlights of Don's life:



## **Donald Chaikin, Past President of the D.C. Trial Lawyers Association and Baseball Commissioner**

Donald J. Chaikin was born on August 12, 1933, and died on October 26, 2009, after a long battle with Parkinson's disease.

Mr. Chaikin was raised in Washington, D.C. He attended the University of Maryland as an undergraduate and American University's Washington College of Law. Mr. Chaikin received his law degree in May 1963 and, shortly thereafter, opened a law practice dedicated to helping members of the community. Eventually, Mr. Chaikin narrowed his practice to representing individuals who suffered personal injury as a result of the carelessness of others. In 1972, he purchased the "Law Building" at 1232 17th Street, N.W., and practiced law there for almost 25 years continually with Ronald Karp in the law firm known as Chaikin & Karp, P.C. In September 1996, Mr. Chaikin entered into a law practice with Ira Sherman and formed the law firm of Chaikin & Sherman, P.C.

In the early 1980s, and particularly in 1982 and 1983, when he was the President of the D.C. Trial Lawyers Association, he led the fight against "no fault" automobile insurance on behalf of the consumers of the District of Columbia against the insurance companies. Mr. Chaikin was also an avid sports enthusiast and was a part-owner of the Philadelphia Bell of the World Football League. He was also a member of the D.C. Baseball Commission when it was first established. The D.C. Baseball Commission was charged with regaining a baseball team for the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area after the Washington Senators left the area. Don Chaikin was a dear and longtime friend of John Wilson, former Chairman of the District of Columbia City Council, and worked closely with then-Mayor Marion Barry. He was an effective lobbyist and advocate on behalf of approximately 10,000 people who sought his advice over his career.

Mr. Chaikin moved from the area in January 2000 and took up residence in Williams Island in Aventura, Fla., with his wife, Mimi. Two years later, Mimi passed away. The law firm continues to carry Mr. Chaikin's name prominently as **Chaikin, Sherman, Cammarata & Siegel, P.C.**, and continues to practice in the Law Building at 1232 17th Street, N.W. Mr. Chaikin is survived by his children, Stephen Chaikin and Marney Florin, and grandchildren Justin, Brandon, Nicole, and Matthew.

## Clients and preeminent lawyers express their sympathy

Many members of the local trial lawyers association expressed their sympathy upon learning of the death of **Donald J. Chaikin**. Several noted that his successful opposition to fight "no fault" automobile insurance defines how we practice law today. Many clients also expressed their sorrow and condolences. One client, Nega Gebremichael, met Mr. Chaikin 20 years ago. At that time, the firm represented Mr. Gebremichael as a result of a brutal, unprovoked attack by a hotel security guard, which caused a traumatic brain injury. Mr. Gebremichael never forgot Mr. Chaikin's willingness to chat with him at any time, sometimes for an hour or more. He also never forgot the advice Mr. Chaikin gave him. With the flowers that Mr. Gebremichael delivered to the office, he enclosed the following note containing a list of the advice Mr. Chaikin gave him decades ago—advice he never forgot.

*The advice I got from  
Mr. D. Chaikin on October 12, 1998*

*Respect yourself to be respected!  
Think Positive!  
Never let yourself down!  
"Listen." "Listen." Let the others do the talking!*

*I WILL KEEP YOUR ADVICE FOREVER!  
YOU WILL BE MISSED AND REMEMBERED  
FOREVER!*

*Nega Gebremichael and Family*

There is no greater legacy than having a lasting, positive impact on another human being. Donald Chaikin had that impact on virtually all who met him.

His standards are embedded in the soul of this law firm and will be forever more.

## LAW FIRM FILES LAWSUIT AGAINST WMATA FOR JUNE 22, 2009 METRO TRAIN CRASH

On June 22, 2009, two Metro trains collided near the Fort Totten Metro Station. The collision occurred when Metro Train 112 violently collided into the rear of Train 214, which had stopped on the tracks. The force of the impact pushed Train 214 forward several feet and caused two-thirds of the lead car of Train 112 to telescope.

The collision resulted in the deaths of 9 people and physical injuries to at least 70 to 80 other people. The law firm of **Chaikin, Sherman, Cammarata & Siegel, P.C.**, is representing the estate of one of the persons killed in the collision, and is also representing an individual who suffered physical and psychological injuries from the collision.

The law firm recently filed a lawsuit against the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (“WMATA”) and Alstrom Signaling, Inc., an entity involved in providing train traffic-control systems to WMATA, in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia. The complaint filed on behalf of the estate of the deceased individual alleged negligence and seeks compensation for wrongful death, and pain and suffering before death.

As part of the negligence claim, the complaint charges that WMATA failed to warn its passengers that the train involved in the crash was not safe and had a tendency to telescope, eliminating passenger survival space within the train. At least three years before the June 2009 crash WMATA was warned by the National Transportation Safety Board that the type of train car involved in the collision needed to be replaced because it was not safe for passengers in the event of a collision.



## Partner Allan M. Siegel obtains two verdicts— State Farm pays policy limits on both

**State Farm offer, \$60,000—Verdict, \$100,000**

**State Farm offer, \$5,000—Verdict, \$67,000**

Partner **Allan M. Siegel** received two verdicts which required State Farm Insurance Company to pay its full policy limits. In the first case, a Montgomery County Circuit Court jury awarded \$100,000 to a man who suffered a mild traumatic brain injury as a result of a car crash that occurred in Silver Spring, Md. Our client was proceeding through an intersection on a green light when the defendant ran a red light, striking our client’s vehicle on the driver’s side door. Shortly after the accident, our client began having problems with his memory. He would see people he had known for years but would not be able to remember their names. He would lose his keys and cell phone frequently. He also had problems remembering things he had read or following the plots of movies or television shows. Our client’s memory problems improved significantly, but he continued to have deficits that required him to write things down, and resulted in his taking longer to remember names and certain words.

The defendant had an insurance policy of \$100,000. Mr. Siegel insisted that the insurance company pay their full policy limits to settle the case. The insurance company refused. They claimed that since the head injury was classified as “mild” at the hospital, and since our client had no external or visible signs of a head injury, his cognitive complaints were not caused by the accident. They offered our client \$33,000 before the trial date and raised the offer to \$60,000 on the morning of trial. Mr. Siegel insisted that the fair value of the claim was the full insurance policy limits. The jury agreed and awarded our client the full policy limits of \$100,000.

In the second case, Mr. Siegel obtained a verdict for \$67,000 in the Circuit Court for Prince George’s County, which far exceeded State Farm’s insurance policy limits of \$25,000. Our client was struck in the rear by an uninsured dump truck. Our client made a claim against her own insurance company, State Farm Insurance Company, for uninsured motorist coverage, as well as the driver of the uninsured truck.

Our client had incurred approximately \$12,000 in medical bills and \$30,000 in lost wages. She had been a State Farm insured for over 20 years. She had never made a claim before and expected that her insurance company would do the right thing and pay her the full \$25,000, since her out-of-pocket expenses far exceeded the amount of coverage. The insurance company offered her only \$5,000. The jury held State Farm accountable under the terms of their contract and awarded our client \$67,000.

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## We are your law firm

We want you to think of us as your law firm.

If you have legal matters that need attention, please let us know. If we cannot handle the matter, we will refer you to a competent firm that can.

Please feel free to refer us to your family, friends, and neighbors for their legal needs. We welcome the opportunity to help.

**Call us. You're going to feel a whole lot better about things.**

## Client Corner

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If you cannot follow us on Facebook and read our Tweets, you must see us on YouTube

**Chaikin, Sherman, Cammarata & Siegel, P.C.**, has entered into the modern era. We are part of "the social network." We make a concerted effort to Tweet at least once a day to let everyone know what is happening at the law firm, and to make at least one Facebook entry a week. We also have at least one new YouTube video on our Chaikin, Sherman, Cammarata & Siegel YouTube Channel every week.

- **Be a Fan of our Facebook Page:**  
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**If you would like to provide a testimonial, please contact Ira Sherman and we will make you a YouTube star! It can be fun for you, your family, and your friends!**

## Chaikin, Sherman, Cammarata & Siegel awards its annual Ethiopian Heritage College Scholarship Award to Ms. Ida Daniel

On August 26, 2009, the law firm of **Chaikin, Sherman, Cammarata & Siegel, P.C.**, proudly awarded its annual Ethiopian Heritage College Scholarship to **Ms. Ida Daniel.**

Ms. Daniel was one of 60 applicants for the Chaikin, Sherman, Cammarata & Siegel, P.C., scholarship. The Chaikin, Sherman, Cammarata & Siegel, P.C., scholarship provides \$1,000 each year to a successful applicant so long as he/she remains in a two- or four-year college or university. Ms. Daniel graduated from Howard High School. Ms. Daniel's scholastic achievements as well as her essay clearly distinguished her from the rest of the applicants. (Her essay can be viewed on our Web site as an attachment to our September 9, 2009, blog.)

A wonderful and joyous presentation ceremony took place in the law offices and was attended by members of Ms. Daniel's family. Distinguished guests included **D.C. Council member Phil Mendelson**, who participated in the presentation ceremony. We are proud sponsors of the Ethiopian Heritage College Scholarship and look forward to following Ms. Daniel's success not only in college, but as the world peacemaker she expects to be. We congratulate Ms. Daniel and her family.

