

Partners Ira Sherman & Joseph Cammarata obtain \$690,000 settlement from trucking company for negligence of tractor-trailer driver



On November 29, 2004, at approximately 4:00 a.m., our client, age 26, stopped his 1989 Geo Prism on the right shoulder of the outer loop of the beltway, near the Kenilworth/Greenbelt exit. Soon after our client stopped his car on the shoulder, a

driver of a tractor-trailer, who was operating his tractor-trailer in two lanes—the right through lane and the shoulder—caused his tractor-trailer to strike and crush our client's Geo Prism. Our client suffered extensive injuries, including a skull bone fracture, bilateral scapular and femoral fractures, and pelvic and hip fractures. Our client underwent multiple surgical procedures and was hospitalized through December 23, 2004. Our client was not weightbearing until approximately March 29, 2005.

Our client had no recollection of stopping on the shoulder or of the collision itself. The driver of the tractor-trailer contended that our client's vehicle was stopped on the shoulder without lights or flashers and that this was a factor in how the collision occurred.

Partners **Ira Sherman** and **Joseph Cammarata** filed a lawsuit against the driver and the trucking company in the Circuit Court for Prince George's County, Maryland. Following discovery, which is the fact-finding stage of the case, the driver and the trucking company agreed to a settlement conference to discuss a resolution of the case. The case eventually settled for \$690,000.

Partner Joseph Cammarata named "*SUPER LAWYER*"

Partner Joseph Cammarata was recently named one of the "Super Lawyers" of the Washington Metropolitan region by the Law & Politics publishing company.

Joe was selected as a Super Lawyer after undergoing a rigorous selection process that incorporated a multistep evaluation system, which took into account his background and experience, and recognition by other practicing lawyers of his outstanding work and professional achievement.

New Maryland law protects victims

Maryland has just changed a law to further protect victims from abusive tactics by insurance companies. Very often, the negligent driver's insurance company will contact an accident victim, before the victim has hired a lawyer, and offer him/her money to settle the case, before that person even knows the full extent of his/her injuries or his/her legal rights. The original law provided that if an injured person, who was not represented by counsel, entered into such an agreement within five days of being injured, then the settlement agreement could be voided within 60 days after the date of the signature on the settlement agreement.

The state of Maryland has changed the law to provide that the settlement agreement is now voidable if entered within 60 days of the injury. In other words, if you enter such an agreement at any time within 60 days of being injured, you have an additional 60 days to change your mind. It is crucial that if you entered into such an agreement that you call us—as soon as possible—to review the agreement and discuss your case. Of course, the best practice is not to sign any agreement with any insurance company without first calling us to discuss your legal rights and options.

www.chaikinsherman.com

Visit our new, state-of-the-art website and send us your e-mail addresses



We have done it again! We have revamped our website, and it is now open to the public. It has a totally new design and more information than ever. We have added even more answers to frequently asked questions on a wide array of topics, as well

as detailed information about all of our practice areas. We are also continuously updating the website with new content so that you have the most up-to-date legal resource at your fingertips. You can also check out our new "blog," which can be found on the website and has regular postings providing even more news and helpful information. Of course, you can still find digital copies of all our past newsletters, and information about our lawyers, cases we have worked on, and client testimonials.

The new web design makes it even easier for you to contact us. In addition to having a "Contact" option on the menu, there is a "Free Online Evaluation" box on almost every page, which allows you to input information about a potential case, which will go immediately to one of the partners for a response.

We have also been making an effort to obtain our clients' e-mail addresses so that we can send you news and updates about the firm via e-mail. If you have not already given us your e-mail, just go to the website, at www.chaikinsherman.com, click on "Contact us," and send it to us. We will add you to our growing e-mail list. Even if you have given us your e-mail, check out the website and send us an e-mail letting us know what you think.



**Chaikin & Sherman
Associate Attorney
Steve Kaminski
racks up win in D.C.**

Associate Attorney **Steve Kaminski** won two great verdicts earlier this year. In January, Mr. Kaminski tried a case against Safeway involving a woman who slipped and fell on eggs in the Safeway on Piney Branch Road. The eggs had been on the floor for quite a long time without Safeway making any effort to clean up the hazardous spill.

Safeway denied any responsibility for the hazard. In fact, Safeway adopted a strategy many defendants adopt in court these days—Safeway accused the plaintiff of making the whole incident up. Of course, Safeway's strategy fell apart during trial as Mr. Kaminski picked apart Safeway's story by highlighting inconsistencies in the testimony and demonstrating that their witnesses were not being truthful. The jury returned a verdict that was almost four times the plaintiff's medical bills.

In February, Mr. Kaminski took a case to trial against State Farm for failing to live up to its promise to pay uninsured motorist benefits to our client, who was hit by an uninsured driver. Again, Mr. Kaminski turned the defense lawyer's attempts to criticize our client around on State Farm. Mr. Kaminski also took advantage of State Farm's decision to not call a doctor they had hired to examine our client as a witness at trial, suggesting to the jury that State Farm was hiding evidence from them. The jury returned a verdict that was almost five times the plaintiff's medical bills.

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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.

Donald Chaikin retired & doing well in Florida

We are proud that we have represented many of our clients for generations. Occasionally a client will call us and say that their grandmother or grandfather recommended the firm because "our family has been a client of your firm for 30 years." It is gratifying to meet the children and grandchildren of our clients. **Donald Chaikin** and **Ira Sherman** have practiced law together since 1980 and Mr. Sherman knows many of these families.

We were there for you then, we are here for you now, and we will be here for you for the generations to come. Several of our long-standing clients suggested that this newsletter include an update on Mr. Chaikin. Mr. Chaikin is doing well. He has been retired in Florida for the last several years, and although Parkinson's disease has slowed him down a bit, he is enjoying himself and has the pleasure of being surrounded by his children and beautiful grandchildren. Thank you for your concern.

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Chaikin, Sherman, Cammarata & Siegel participates as a sponsor of the Ethiopian Community Development Council annual dinner

CSCS is proud to announce that we served as a dinner banquet sponsor on May 22, 2007. CSCS was recognized as a significant contributor to this organization, which provides social services and economic support to the Ethiopian community within the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area. We are proud to have participated at the highest possible level in this most important annual event.

Client Corner

Our client, **Gus Williams**, owns and operates a company called GNS Construction, which specializes in concrete driveways, sheet-rock walls, or any other type of construction. If you have a project, call him at **(301) 366-5175** or **(202) 701-3035**.

In this section, we acknowledge the achievements, events, special recognitions, honors, awards, and promotions of our clients. If you would like to be part of our newsletter, please contact us; we will put you in the next edition.