

Girardi | Keese

Firm's Financial Successes Tell Only Part of the Story

It was the evening of March 31, 2011, and San Francisco Giants fan Brian Stow had gone to Dodger Stadium to root for his favorite team. By the time the night was over, Stow had been catastrophically and irreversibly brain damaged, the victim of a vicious beating by two Dodgers fans.

"Nothing is more satisfying than helping someone who was hurt because a major pharmaceutical company was more concerned about profits than safety."

— Partner Keith Griffin

GIRARDI | KEESE
LAWYERS

Girardi | Keese has 30 attorneys at offices in Los Angeles and San Bernardino, including more members of the American Board of Trial Advocates – 10 – than any other firm. It was one of the first firms to accept mass torts and take them to trial, and continues to be one of the only plaintiffs' firms that handle antitrust work, class actions, product cases, pharmaceutical cases and malpractice cases.

No amount of money could make up for what Stow and his family lost that day, but they achieved a measure of justice on July 9, 2014, when a Los Angeles jury found the Dodgers shared responsibility for Stow's injuries, along with the men convicted of the assault. The team was ordered to pay \$15 million in civil damages to help cover the costs of the round-the-clock medical assistance Stow is expected to need for the rest of his life.

"We're very pleased that this terrible tragedy has been softened somewhat by the jury verdict," says Stow's attorney, Tom Girardi, managing partner of Girardi | Keese. "I think this is a wakeup call for stadiums across the country because people are getting hurt, alcohol consumption is out of control, and they've got to do something about it." The lawsuit contended that lax security and inadequate lighting at the ballpark had created an unsafe atmosphere where criminals felt emboldened to prey on others.

Fighting for 'the Little Guy'

From baseball fans to football players, homeowners to pharmaceutical consumers, Girardi | Keese has been fighting for "the little guy" for nearly half a century. The firm's mission from the start has been to provide excellent counsel to anyone who has been injured physically or financially as a result of someone else's negligent or deliberately wrongful actions.

Over the years, Girardi | Keese has obtained more than \$10 billion in verdicts and settlements, including a recent \$60 million settlement on behalf of 200 Fresno area residents against the owner of a wood treatment plant that was discharging hazardous chromium waste into the air near their homes.

Other noteworthy verdicts and settlements have included:

- \$4.85 billion settlement with Merck for personal injuries associated with the drug Vioxx

- \$45 million jury verdict against the Ford Motor Company on behalf of a 12-year-old boy paralyzed due to a defective seatbelt
- \$1.9 billion settlement with Sempra Energy on behalf of California consumers who were defrauded by the manipulation of natural gas prices
- \$633 million settlement with PG&E for toxic tort personal injury claims by residents of Hinkley, California, in the case made famous by the movie *Erin Brockovich*

Passion and Resources

As impressive as they are, the big dollars tell only part of the story. They fail to convey the enormous impact Girardi | Keese has had on the thousands of individuals who have walked through its doors and sought its help.

"We all learned from Tom that being a trial lawyer is about being the

ultimate warrior for the voiceless," says partner Amy Solomon.

"We continue to represent the man who's been hurt in a car accident or the woman who's broken her ankle after falling on an icy sidewalk, because it's the right thing to do," adds partner Robert Finnerty. "That's one of the amazing things about Tom and our firm."

An ongoing concern for Girardi and his team has been the plight of football players who have suffered long-term brain damage as a result of concussions. Girardi | Keese filed the first concussion-related lawsuit against the NFL in July 2011 and is currently working with attorneys across the country on behalf of some 3,500 former players to evaluate a proposed settlement. Though the NFL has modified its original offer, "There are still some serious issues that hopefully we can eliminate with additional discussions," Girardi says. "Not only has football caused severe brain damage to

many players, but the NFL and the helmet maker knew of the injuries for decades and hid them from players while continuing to reap enormous profits. We see it as our job to make sure they get the care they need."

Meanwhile, in another high-profile toxic tort case, the firm is gearing up for a trial this fall that pits all 1,110 residents of Carson, California, against Shell Oil and a major homebuilder. "Approximately 480 homes were built on the former site of a Shell tank farm contaminated with benzene levels 100,000 times those that are permitted," Girardi explains. "The residents are getting sick. But they can't sell their homes because everyone knows they're contaminated."

Most of the firm's cases are referred by other attorneys nationwide, who know Girardi and his team will represent their clients ably and effectively, even under the toughest circumstances. The firm conducts millions of dollars of research at its own expense to ensure each client has the best chance at justice.

"We have both the passion and the resources to give a voice to people who have suffered personal injury and financial hardship because of the often-deliberate actions of large companies," Girardi says. "There has been a moral component to every one of our cases since day one."

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— Managing Partner
Tom Girardi

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