

Daily Journal

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TOP 25 PLAINTIFF LAWYERS

Let's face it, plaintiff lawyers add the bling to the legal industry. But too often, we in the media focus on the large monetary judgments and settlements their cases garner and on their big personalities — in and out of the courtroom. We don't pay enough attention to the public and corporate policy changes their cases bring about.

In this inaugural issue, we tried to change that.

We selected just 25 California plaintiff lawyers to honor. We could have honored more but, in our opinion, these are the ones who consistently force broad change in the law, industry and society. Some are well-known, like Elizabeth Cabraser, Joseph Cotchett and Tom Girardi, and others are relative upstarts like Lawrance Bohm, whose eye-popping employment-related verdicts have grabbed us by

the proverbial lapels and forced us to pay attention.

As you read about these men and women, there is a common thread — and it doesn't have dollar signs; they truly care about having an impact. The work they are doing to hold governments and industry accountable will last long after the bling has dimmed.

— The Editors

2015 • TOP • PLAINTIFF • LAWYER

Thomas V. Girardi

Girardi | Keese

Los Angeles

SPECIALTIES: Personal injury, product liability, mass torts and class actions

Alexander Dreoun / Special to the Daily Journal



“Although Bryan got badly hurt, the truth of the matter is, he’s helped a lot of people,” Girardi said of his client Bryan Stow who was savagely beaten by two fans at Dodgers Stadium in 2011. In July 2014, a Los Angeles jury awarded Stow \$17.9 million dollars.

According to Girardi the case was close throughout. “The guys who beat him up are the two felons, not the Dodgers. And so when you start assessing fault in a situation like that, you say, hey, wait a minute, what is the Dodgers’ problem here?” In 2011, the Dodgers chose not to have uniformed police officers or guards in towers throughout the parking lot, measures that could have prevented the attack on Stow, Girardi

said. At trial, Girardi was able to show the jury that without those cuts in security at Dodgers Stadium Stow’s serious injuries could have been avoided. *Stow v. Los Angeles Dodgers LLC et al.*, BC462127 (L.A. County Sup. Ct., filed May 24, 2011).

Since the verdict, sports venues across the nation have beefed up security, and Major League Baseball has new security guidelines in place for the 2015 season. “That’s the great part about being a trial lawyer,” Girardi said. “You can definitely help sometimes, to clear up a problem, so that maybe it won’t hurt other people.”

— Hetert-Qebu Walters