

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA'S
BEST
LAWYERS®

2009 EDITION

THE DEFINITIVE GUIDE TO LEGAL REPRESENTATION
IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

KEVIN BOYLE'S
FIVE YEAR
LEGAL BATTLE

WHO ARE THE
LAWYERS OF THE YEAR?

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Los Angeles Times Magazine

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THOMAS GIRARDI
EXPOSING THE SECRETS OF HOT FUEL

GIRARDI | KEESE

"The cases we have absolutely, really matter," sums up Thomas Girardi, a founding partner of Girardi & Keese, a plaintiff's personal injury firm that stands up for those individuals that have been wronged through negligence or corporate wrongdoing. At the forefront of the battles against powerful companies such as the makers of the drugs Vioxx and Fen-phen, the firm is most famously known for its work in the class action suit that found Pacific Gas & Electric responsible for contaminating drinking water with the carcinogen hexavalent chromium, the case that found notoriety in the movie "Erin Brockovich."

THIS PAST YEAR ALONE, THE FIRM HAS GOTTEN RESOLUTIONS of over \$9 billion, with Mr. Girardi acting as lead counsel on both the landmark Vioxx case that forced Merck to settle a \$4.85 billion liability and the case that held Semper Energy responsible for \$2.2 billion for gouging rate payers in California. It's not surprising that such achievements come from a firm steeped in greatness, one whose distinguished leagues include the President Elect of the Los Angeles Trial Lawyers Association, a member of the Board of Governors of the State Bar, and twelve members of the American Board of Trial Advocates. Mr. Girardi himself is an immediate past-President of the 500-member International Academy of Trial Lawyers, a past-National President of the American Board of Trial Advocates, and was most recently appointed to the Judicial Counsel, which acts as the governing body of the entire California court system.

ESTABLISHED IN 1965, GIRARDI & KEESE has seen the pharmaceutical industry grow increasingly cocky over its avoidance of lawsuits as political turmoil has prevented any sort of legislation from keeping it in check. Drug companies are currently banking on the possibility of a federal preemption determining whether corporations are immune from lawsuits pertaining to products approved by the FDA. With the Supreme Court ruling not set to arrive until November, this decision has the potential to dismiss all pending lawsuits from individuals who have been harmed by the numerous drugs that have been FDA-approved and then recalled, robbing them of their due compensation. More importantly, the pharmaceutical industry would escape with only a slap on the wrist, and little monetary motivation to cease the shoddy practices that have resulted in so many harmful drugs being released. The possibility of loopholes such as this are what keep Mr. Girardi and his colleagues planted firmly on the right side of good vs. evil. "This is the only message that any of the corporate America understands. The industry needs to be able to say to itself, 'This isn't worth it. We need to test these things better, give better warnings to physicians so they're more careful in prescribing these drugs,'" says Mr. Girardi.

THE ATTORNEYS AT GIRARDI & KEESE know their line of work is not for the faint of heart, and many have been helping the firm in its battle for decades. Fortunately, a great pleasure comes from the certainty of doing the right thing, a sense that rests in the consciousness of each member of the firm as they lead the fight against negligent corporations. "The pressure to succeed is enormous because you represent real people, and the cases are of serious importance. You've got to win these things," says Mr. Girardi.

FIRM FACT:

The Los Angeles Daily Journal nicknamed Thomas Girardi "The Billion Dollar Gentleman" after he obtained more than \$1 billion in verdicts and settlements over a two-year period.

"WE'RE THE ONLY MESSAGE THAT ANY OF THE CORPORATE AMERICA UNDERSTANDS."

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