

Meeting Corner:



Laurie J. Briggs

Laurie Briggs was recently selected as an associate attorney for SDSBS. Since 1994, she has worked as a paralegal for SDSBS on cases involving products liability, catastrophic automobile accidents, personal

injury, and commercial litigation. Raised in Afton, New York, Ms. Briggs received her Bachelor of Science degree in business education from the State University of New York at Albany, and her Masters of Science degree in education from State University of New York at Plattsburgh. She later graduated from Nova Southeastern University Shepard Broad Law Center with a Juris Doctor degree and was admitted to the Florida Bar in October 1993. Ms. Briggs currently works with SDSBS attorneys David Sales, Cal Warriner, and Brenda Fulmer on mass tort litigation. She is a member of the Florida Bar, Florida Justice Association, American Association for Justice, the American Bar Association, and the American Civil Liberties Union. Ms. Briggs is president of the firm's employee charity, SDSBS Giving B.A.C.K. (Basic Acts of Community Kindness), and serves as president of the board of directors for Friends of Abused Children, Inc., a local charity dedicated to assisting children in foster or protective care. ■



Edward V. Ricci

In May 2008, Edward Ricci joined SDSBS as an associate to assist in prosecuting auto negligence, crashworthiness, medical malpractice, and other significant tort claims. Mr. Ricci previously worked as an associate

at another prominent consumer justice firm. Prior to attending Georgetown Law Center, he worked as a policy analyst for Public Citizen, the nation's largest and oldest consumer advocacy group. He worked to implement safety regulations in the wake of the Ford-Firestone debacle of the 1990's. He was involved in the research that led to the issuance of tire pressure monitoring system standards that are now mandatory on all new motor vehicles. Also, he was one of the authors of the roll-over crashworthiness and minimum stability standards included in the Surface Transportation Reauthorization Act. Mr. Ricci is a member of the Florida Bar Association, Palm Beach County Bar Association, Palm Beach County Justice Association, Florida Justice Association, American Association for Justice, and Attorneys Information Exchange Group for Crashworthiness. He serves on the board of directors for Hearts and Hope, a group that provides grief counseling to children and families who have lost a loved one. Mr. Ricci was recently appointed as a director for the Young Lawyers Section of the Florida Justice Association. As FJA leaders of tomorrow, the Section provides networking opportunities for new lawyers and provides a support system as they enter practice. ■

Simple Gallbladder Surgery Turns Into A Battle for Life



For Mrs. Y, a young mother of two and a nurse, an outpatient gallbladder procedure turned into a battle for her life. Following an examination, Dr. X had told Mrs. Y that she needed the procedure, and that it would be simple. The procedure was, however, not simple for Dr. X. Mrs. Y was amazed to find out, following surgery, that Dr. X had cut the wrong duct. Instead of cutting the cystic duct, he had severed the common bile duct. The doctor was so confused following his error that he had to call another hospital for guidance on what to do next. Ultimately, even his attempted corrections were botched. Mrs. Y was later transported to another hospital for procedures to reverse the damage done by Dr. X. She has numerous scars from the multiple procedures, and faces potentially long-term complications in the future.

A doctor recommended a simple outpatient gallbladder procedure. However, during surgery, he mistakenly cut the wrong duct. The severity of the mistake was compounded by his inability to know what to do next and his failed attempts to correct his error. The patient had to be taken to another hospital for procedures to reverse the damage.

Mrs. Y and her family sought representation from SDSBS attorney **Karen Terry**. At the deposition of Dr. X, he testified that he had not had other complications in past surgical procedures. The attorney, however, had secured all of Dr. X's surgical reports from the hospital, and these reports showed that Dr. X had caused similar problems for other patients. Shortly after Ms. Terry's cross-examination, the parties reached a settlement for the doctor's full insurance limit, avoiding a lengthy and expensive trial. ■