

Of Counsel

A REPORT TO CLIENTS & ATTORNEYS VOLUME 18, NUMBER 2

Smoker's widow awarded \$21 million in case against Big Tobacco

Philip Morris, R.J. Reynolds to pay \$14 million in punitive damages, \$7 million in compensatory damages

Fred Theis was entitled to the truth. The Florida man who died in 1997 after a lifetime of smoking was entitled to know what the cigarette manufacturers knew about smoking. During the years Fred smoked, he was entitled to know about fake filters. He was entitled to know that "light" cigarettes were not less potent than regular cigarettes. And he was entitled to be free of poisoning from ammonia and diammonium phosphate. If Fred had known the truth, he might still be alive today.

SDSBS attorney **Hardee Bass**, along with Gary Paige of Gordon & Doner, P.A., argued in court that the cigarette manufacturers had engaged in blatantly false advertising to hide the scientific proof that smoking posed serious health risks. Their arguments convinced a jury to award \$14 million in punitive damages and \$7 million in compensatory damages to Fred's widow,



SDSBS attorney Hardee Bass, client Faye Theis and Gary Paige.

Faye Theis. The verdict was issued May 23, 2018, against the two largest cigarette manufacturers in the country – Philip Morris and R.J. Reynolds. It held the manufacturers 60% accountable for punitive damages and 15% accountable for compensatory damages resulting from Fred's death. Fred was held 25% accountable. The verdict also found the manufacturers liable for conspiracy and fraud.

Born in Louisville, Kentucky, Fred began smoking as a freshman in high school. He graduated from Bellarmine University and became a certified public accountant with a successful practice in Englewood, Florida. For more than 35 years, he smoked as many as three packs of cigarettes a day driven by an addiction to nicotine that occurred despite Big Tobacco's efforts to deny the risks of using *(Continued on page four.)*

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19 SDSBS Attorneys selected as "Super Lawyers"
CHRIS SEARCY IN TOP TEN IN FLORIDA
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\$4.9 million judgment for doctor's failure to provide timely treatment

On January 21, 2013, Samuel Gray was working as a hospice bereavement counselor in Winter Haven, Florida. As he went about his duties, he felt a sudden acute pain behind his left knee. The pain was excruciating and unrelenting. His co-workers called for an ambulance and sent Mr. Gray to a local hospital emergency room for evaluation and care.

The ER doctors found that Mr. Gray's heart was in atrial fibrillation, which caused an embolus to form in his heart and it lodged in his popliteal artery (a continuation of the femoral artery passing through the back of the knee joint). The embolus blocked almost all blood flow below Mr. Gray's knee and his lower leg was dying without vascular intervention. The ER physician called

Delay of treatment resulted in leg amputation

the on-call vascular surgeon, Panagiotis Iakovidis, CEO of Bond Clinic, P.A. Dr. Iakovidis ordered an additional test, but decided to not evaluate Mr. Gray in the hospital until the following day, 15 hours after being notified of Mr. Gray's critical condition. Treatment of Mr. Gray's vascular crisis was delayed an additional 23 hours until 9:00 a.m. on January 23rd. By this time, Mr. Gray's leg was no longer salvageable and it was necessary to amputate his leg below the knee.

After months of treatment, rehabilitation, and therapy, Mr. Gray sought representation by SDSBS attorney **Ed Ricci**. Mr. Ricci accepted the case in the summer of 2016 and litigated it *(Continued on page four.)*

**SEARCY
DENNEY
SCAROLA
BARNHART
& SHIPLEY PA**
ATTORNEYS AT LAW

SDSBS recently announced that attorney Ed Ricci was selected as a shareholder of the firm



Since joining the firm in 2008, Mr. Ricci has successfully tried numerous personal injury and wrongful death cases to verdict and obtained significant settlements on behalf of his clients. He has advocated for his clients in complicated cases involving product defects, medical malpractice, automobile negligence, and premises liability.

Mr. Ricci was born and raised in Palm Beach Gardens, Florida. He is a graduate of The Benjamin School (1997), Georgetown College (2001), and Georgetown University Law Center (2006). Before attending law school, Mr. Ricci worked as an Auto Safety Policy Analyst at Public Citizen in Washington, D.C., the nation's oldest and largest non-profit consumer advocacy organization. While working for Public Citizen, he helped strengthen federal motor vehicle safety standards and other consumer protection laws.

Mr. Ricci is admitted to practice in the Northern, Middle, and Southern Federal District Courts in Florida. He is a member of The Florida Bar, Palm Beach County Bar Association, Palm Beach County Justice Association, Florida Justice Association, American Association for Justice, and Attorneys Information Exchange Group.

Mr. Ricci has been selected by his peers annually for inclusion in *The Best Lawyers in America*® from 2012 through 2019. Mr. Ricci has also been recognized by *Florida Super Lawyers*® as a Rising Star since 2012. ♦



(Above)
Sia Baker-Barnes
with **Chris Searcy**.
(Right, l-r) **Sia**
and her family:
Edrick Barnes, Sia,
Rosalyn Baker and
Hon. Moses Baker.



Sia Baker-Barnes was recently sworn in as a member of The Florida Bar's Board of Governors. The Board has exclusive authority to formulate and adopt matters of policy concerning the activities of the Bar. The recent edition of the *Attorney at Law Magazine - South Florida* published an interview of Ms. Baker-Barnes. The interview included her comments about becoming an attorney and the challenges and rewards of practicing law. ♦



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Counsel**

A REPORT TO CLIENTS & ATTORNEYS **VOLUME 18, NUMBER 2**

MANAGER: **JOAN WILLIAMS**
MANAGING EDITOR: **ROBIN KRIBERNEY**
EDITOR: **DIANE TRUMAN**
CREATIVE DIRECTOR: **DE CARTERBROWN**

NOTE: The accounts of recent trials, verdicts and settlements contained in this newsletter are intended to illustrate the experience of the firm in a variety of litigation areas. Each case is unique, and the results in one case do not necessarily indicate the quality or value of any other case. Omitting clients' names and/or defendants' names are the result of requests for anonymity.

Pickup truck runs red light and slams into family sedan, killing the driver and injuring the passengers

SDSBS obtained a settlement from truck's owner-operator and the construction company for over \$4 million.

On a morning in October 2017, Jane Doe and her daughter, Amy, were taking Amy's young son Charlie (not their real names) to school. Jane was driving the car southbound on a local highway in south Florida. As she came to a major intersection, her light turned red and she pulled the car to a stop. As she waited for a green light, a large pickup truck pulling a flatbed trailer loaded with a piece of heavy construction equipment neared the same intersection traveling westbound at a speed in excess of the legal limit.

When Jane's traffic light cycled to green, she proceeded forward across the intersection. The light on the side of the intersection with the approaching pickup truck had turned red, and other vehicles had already stopped. Despite the clear indications of his obligation to stop his vehicle, the pickup driver disregarded the red light and drove straight through the intersection. He t-boned Jane's sedan on the driver's side, shoving the whole vehicle across the intersection and into the opposite curbing of the six-lane highway. Local and county police and fire and rescue units were called. Jane, Amy, and Charlie were taken to a local emergency hospital. Not long after admittance to the hospital, Jane died of her

injuries. Amy suffered severe head injuries, fractured ribs, and pulmonary contusions and spent a week in the hospital. Charlie was diagnosed with head injuries but was able to be released the following day.

At the time of her death, Jane was an active 57-year-old wife, mother, and grandmother. Because of the reckless and negligent actions of the pickup truck's driver, the family lost its central and primary source of love, guidance, and support. The family asked SDSBS attorney **Mariano Garcia** to help them seek accountability for their loss.

Background checks of the driver revealed multiple citations for speeding and failure to use due care in years prior to this incident. Mr. Garcia brought a legal demand against the truck's owner-operator and the construction company.

Forensic analysis of the vehicles confirmed that the driver of the pickup made no meaningful effort to stop his vehicle prior to impact. Further, background checks of the driver revealed multiple citations for speeding and failure to use due care in years prior to this incident. Mr. Garcia brought a legal demand against the truck's owner-operator, and against the construction company that employed him to perform work at the time of the crash.

Shortly after negotiations began, the parties reached a settlement of \$4,020,000 representing the full

amount of insurance policy limits available for the tragic incident. The funds will help with Amy's continued medical and therapy treatments and perhaps help with care for the younger children; however, it will not begin to fill the hole left in the heart of this family. ♦



\$4.9 million judgment for doctor's failure to provide timely treatment
(Continued from page one.)



(l-r) Attorney Ed Ricci, Mr. and Mrs. Gray, and attorney Matt Schwencke.

for two years. Dr. Iakovidis never offered more than \$15,000 to settle the case for Mr. Gray. Mr. Ricci was told by defense attorneys that the doctor had done nothing wrong and that Polk County juries were notoriously anti-plaintiff and unwilling to render substantial verdicts in malpractice cases. Mr. Ricci disagreed and took the case to trial with the assistance of SDSBS attorney **Matt Schwencke**.

The trial was held on June 25, 2018, in the Polk County Circuit Court. Mr. Ricci argued that Dr. Iakovidis should have come to the hospital promptly to treat Mr. Gray. Had he done so, blood flow would have been restored to Mr. Gray's leg, and he would never have had to endure the loss of his leg from lack of prompt treatment. The defense argued that the amputation was necessary not because of physician malpractice and delay but because of diabetes, chronic atrial fibrillation, peripheral vascular disease, circulation problems, severe atherosclerotic disease, and small vessel disease.

After a seven-day trial and four hours of deliberation, the jury rendered a verdict against Dr. Iakovidis and Bond

Clinic for \$4.9 million. The final judgment far exceeded the proposal for settlement earlier rejected by the defendants. It is anticipated that the Grays will be able to recover attorney fees and costs in addition to the compensation granted by the jury. ♦

The final judgment far exceeded the proposal for settlement earlier rejected by the defendants.

Smoker's widow awarded \$21 million in case against Big Tobacco
(Continued from page one.)

their products. After multiple attempts to quit smoking, Fred finally did so in 1995. It was too late. A few months after quitting, he was diagnosed with lung cancer. He died February 3, 1997, at the age of 53.

Fred's case rose from what The Florida Bar describes as one of the most important opinions in the history of product-liability litigation – the 2006 Florida Supreme Court decision to uphold the jury's findings in *Engle v. Liggett Group, Inc.* The findings included the fact that cigarettes are addictive and that they cause deadly diseases. Findings of *Engle* also included the fact that cigarette manufacturers placed defective products on the market and concealed information about the addictive nature of nicotine. The manufacturers knew that by concealing such information, the public could be misled in considering the risks of using their products. Acting with gross negligence, the manufacturers made every effort to mislead the public to the detriment of every smoker.

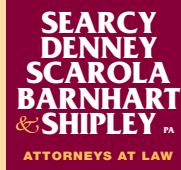
Engle III, as the decision is coined, led to more than 8,000 spin-off (or progeny) cases, filed by plaintiffs in both state and federal courts on behalf of qualified smokers who were harmed because of Big Tobacco's actions. "The ultimate goal of the manufacturers, and the key to preserving their customer base, was addiction, no matter the health risk," stated Mr. Paige in court, adding, "In the 1950s through the 1980s, Philip Morris and R.J. Reynolds wanted Fred Theis to be addicted, and they knew the consequences of their actions would be lung cancer." ♦

At a July 2018 luncheon meeting of the American Association for Justice, **Brenda Fulmer** was presented with the Distinguished Service Award which recognizes members of the AAJ Board of Governors who, during the past year, have been of special assistance to the President of the association. She also received a Certificate of Recognition for her work supporting AAJ's programs. ♦





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In June 2018, **Hardee Bass** was designated by The Florida Bar as a Board Certified Specialist in Civil

Trial Law. Mr. Bass earned the distinction for having the know-how, skill-set, and work ethic that meets the highest standards following evaluation. The certification program has strict requirements for conduct, expertise, and proficiency in order to provide consumers greater information in selecting a legal representative. ♦

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Major medical errors associated with physician burnout

Systemic factors in the work environment greatly contribute to high levels of physician burnout

A study published less than three years ago revealed a significant increase in already high levels of burnout and the imbalance of work-life activities of American physicians, circumstances which have contributed to major medical errors. The Mayo Clinic compiled and published survey results from almost 6,700 physicians on topics including fatigue, burnout, thoughts of suicide, and workplace safety. Ten percent of the respondents said that they had committed what they considered to be a major medical error in the three months prior to taking the survey. This is a frightening statistic: 670 victims of major medical errors in three months!! Thirty-two percent of the respondents reported feeling excessive chronic fatigue.

Burnout is generally defined as emotional exhaustion, loss of meaning in work, and feelings of ineffectiveness. While these debilitating symptoms remained largely unchanged among U.S. workers in general, the study revealed that more than half of physicians are experiencing professional burnout and the rate of burnout continues to increase. It is estimated that almost 400 physicians commit suicide each year – a rate far in excess of other professions.

The stress suffered by physicians and the resulting suffering of patients receiving incorrect or inadequate care is the result of a number of factors. Some of these factors might be moderated through changes to schedules, workloads, or support programs. Some of the improvements may require substantial changes in the culture within which physicians work. Working night and day, week after week, making life-altering or

life-threatening decisions with data input and monitoring greater than ever previously experienced, physicians receive minimal acknowledgement of correct diagnoses or successful medical or surgical results. But their mistakes often become headline news.

Physicians in this modern culture work under the concept of a “production line” – timed to maximize the number of patient consultations and treatments and monitored by computerized data against floods of information that escalate oversight and control. They must make decisions most often without time to think and reflect and research. Add to this stress the burden of providing documentation that has greater complexity than ever, each document justifying the physician’s diagnosis, treatment, and billing necessary to support the health care organization and its physicians.

Physician burnout rates and resulting patient suffering will continue to escalate should no changes be made to the work environment and culture within which physicians must work. The changes must start with health care organizations that employ physicians and manage their responsibilities. Patients must also step up to responsibilities for their own healthcare, education, and awareness, and physicians, while adhering to the culture of “put the patient first,” must take responsibility for protecting themselves and their profession. ♦

“Thirty-two percent of respondents reported feeling excessive fatigue and more than 10 percent said they had committed what they considered to be a major medical error in the three months prior to taking the survey.”

MASS TORT PROJECTS OF INTEREST

Abilify

Pathological Gambling

Bair Hugger Warming Blankets

Infections

DePuy Attune Knee Implants

Premature Device Failure
Tibial Baseplate Loosening

Essure

Organ Perforation

Hernia Mesh

Bowel Obstruction
Mesh Migration

Invokana and Farxiga

Amputations
Kidney Failure
Ketoacidosis

IVC Filter

Device Fracture
Heart and Lung Perforation
Migration

Januvia, Janumet, Byetta, and Victoza

Pancreatic Cancer
Thyroid Cancer

Laparoscopic Power Morcellator

Uterine Cancer

Metal-on-Metal Hip Implants

Device Failure and Loosening
Inflammatory Response
Metallosis

Mirena IUD

Pseudotumor Cerebri
Intracranial Hypertension

Smith & Nephew Modular SMF and REDAPT Hip Implants

Premature Device Failure
Metallosis
Inflammatory Response

Onglyza, Kombiglyze and Kombiglyze XR

Heart Failure

OxyContin, Oxycodone

Local Government Abatement Costs

Proton Pump Inhibitors (Nexium, Prevacid, Prilosec, Aciphex, Protonix, Zegerid, and Dexilant)

Renal/Kidney Failure

Propecia and Proscar

Sexual Dysfunction
Male Breast Cancer

Risperdal

Gynecomastia

Roundup Weed Killer

Non-Hodgkin Lymphoma
Leukemia
Multiple Myeloma
Soft Tissue Carcinoma
Bone Cancer

Stöckert 3T and Sarns TCM and TCM II Heater-Cooler Systems

Nontuberculous Mycobacterial (NTM) Infection

Stryker Rejuvenate, ABG II, LFIT V40, and Accolade Modular Hip Implants

Premature Device Failure
Metallosis
Inflammatory Response

Talcum Powder

Ovarian Cancer

Taxotere

Permanent Hair Loss

Testosterone

Blood Clots
Heart Attacks
Stroke

Viagra and Cialis

Melanoma

Xarelto and Pradaxa

Uncontrollable Bleeding
Death

Zimmer Biomet Shoulder

Device Fracture

Zimmer M/L Taper, Kinectiv, and VerSys Hip Components

Premature Device Failure

Zofran and Depakote

Birth Defects

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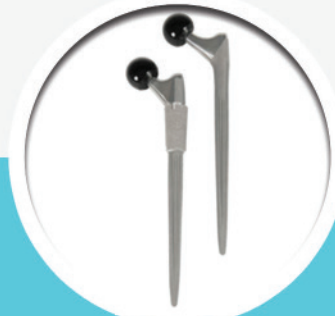
HARM: Dissociation of femoral head resulting in catastrophic injuries; metallosis; elevated cobalt and chromium levels; pseudotumors; bone and tissue damage; and need for revision surgery.



Xarelto and Pradaxa

USE: Treatment for atrial fibrillation, and post-operative blood clot prevention

HARM: Inability to reverse impairment of blood clotting; which causes uncontrollable GI bleeding; intracranial hemorrhaging, and death.



Smith & Nephew Modular SMF and REDAPT Hip Implants

USE: Hip implant devices

HARM: Breakdown of metallic surfaces; abnormal wear; premature device failure; elevated cobalt and chromium; metallosis and pseudotumor formation.



Stöckert 3T Heater-Cooler System

USE: Control a patient's body temperature during surgery

HARM: Non-tuberculous mycobacteria infection



Metal-On-Metal Hip Implants

USE: Hip implant devices with metal head and liner

HARM: Breakdown of metallic surfaces; abnormal wear; premature device failure; elevated cobalt and chromium; metallosis and pseudotumor formation.



Zimmer M/L Taper, Kinectiv, and VerSys Hip Components

USE: Hip implant devices with metal head and liner

HARM: Breakdown of metallic surfaces; abnormal wear; premature device failure; elevated cobalt and chromium; metallosis and pseudotumor formation.

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Meeting Corner:



Jordan A. Dulcie

As an attorney with SDSBS, Jordan A. Dulcie shares the firm's commitment to its clients by vigorously representing victims of personal injury and wrongful death resulting from medical malpractice, motor-vehicle accidents, nursing-home abuse, and product liability. While in law school at Nova Southeastern University, Mr. Dulcie was associate executive editor of the *ILSA Journal of International & Comparative Law* and a law clerk with SDSBS. He also was a law clerk with the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of Florida where he worked in the civil litigation unit.

Born in Palm Beach Gardens, Mr. Dulcie graduated with honors from the International Baccalaureate program at Suncoast High School where he played baseball and football and became an Eagle Scout. At Florida State University, he earned a bachelor's degree in criminology and political science. He was a wide receiver for the Seminoles and won a championship ring for the team's 2010 bowl-game victory over the University of South Carolina Gamecocks. He also was honored as an ACC All-Academic.

Mr. Dulcie belongs to the Palm Beach County Bar Association's Young Lawyers Division, Palm Beach County Justice Association, and serves on the board of the Florida Medical Rights Association. He additionally is a member of the Broward County Bar Association, the Florida Justice Association, and the American Association of Justice. Mr. Dulcie was recently elected to the board of directors of the Young Lawyers Section of the Florida Justice Association. Mr. Dulcie was also recently recognized by *Florida Trend's Legal Elite* as one of the Up and Coming Lawyers of 2018. ♦



Boris Zhadanovskiy

Boris L. Zhadanovskiy graduated magna cum laude from Florida State University with a bachelor's degree in management. Mr. Zhadanovskiy obtained his juris doctorate at Wake Forest University School of Law where he received the prestigious CALI Excellence for the Future Award, an honor reserved for the highest-scoring student in a law-school class. He also received the CALI Excellence award in the Wake Forest University Community Law & Business Clinic which specializes in helping small businesses and indigent members of the community receive legal counsel. Mr. Zhadanovskiy provides a deep knowledge of both business

law and insurance law. His goal is to hold insurance agencies liable when they fail to keep their promises to policyholders.

Mr. Zhadanovskiy, a Florida native fluent in Russian, grew up in West Palm Beach. He worked as a law clerk at SDSBS prior to joining the firm as an attorney. While at WFU, he interned for U.S. District Judge Donald M. Middlebrooks for the Southern District of Florida and the Federal Public Defender's Office for the Middle District of North Carolina. At FSU, he was captain of the Mountain Biking Team and assistant captain of the Road Biking Team. He represented his school in the Southeastern Collegiate Cycling Conference.

Mr. Zhadanovskiy specializes in insurance litigation, medical malpractice, personal injury, and wrongful death. He is a member of the Palm Beach County Bar Association, the Florida Justice Association, the American Bar Association, and is a member of the Young Lawyer Board of the Palm Beach County Justice Association.

Mr. Zhadanovskiy follows his alma mater's creed: Pro Humanitate (For Humanity). ♦



Katherine Kiziah

Prior to joining SDSBS, Katherine Kiziah was an assistant attorney general and the south Florida bureau chief for the Florida Attorney General's Consumer Protection Unit. Ms. Kiziah's work involved prosecuting fraudulent advertising and marketing campaigns, deceptive debt management programs, fake internet schemes, and civil crimes involving timeshares. In addition, she supervised the attorney general's consumer protection enforcement efforts from Martin County through the Keys. She also collaborated with authorities on both the local and federal levels to file injunctions against (and freeze the assets of) large corporations engaged in deceptive and/or unfair trade practices.

At SDSBS, she will put her passion for justice to use as an attorney in the firm's mass-torts litigation unit addressing pharmaceutical and medical-device issues.

Ms. Kiziah serves as the immediate past president of the Palm Beach County chapter of the Florida Association of Women Lawyers, and belongs to the Association's 2016 Leaders in Law class. A community volunteer, she is the vice president of Friends of the Mandel Public Library. She graduated from the University of Florida with a bachelor's degree in business administration and earned her juris doctorate at Nova Southeastern University. ♦

Accolades



Chris Searcy



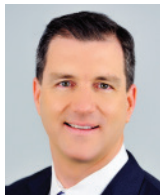
Jack Scarola



Greg Barnhart



Jim Gustafson



Brian Denney



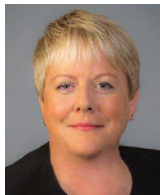
Brenda Fulmer



Karen Terry



Cal Warriner



Laurie Briggs



Jordan Dulcie



Carter Scott

In the summer of 2018, the American Association for Justice presented **SDSBS** with their Evergreen Award. AAJ's Evergreen Fund represents a sustainable approach to growing AAJ's resources to succeed in its mission to preserve, protect, and advocate for a civil justice system that provides those injured by negligence and misconduct a voice for justice. SDSBS is proud of AAJ's recognition of the firm's passion for social justice. ♦

In March 2018, the legal media company Lawdragon announced its selection of the 2018 Hall of Fame inductees – a permanent group of honorees. Included in its category of "2018 Litigators" was **Chris Searcy**. The Lawdragon Hall of Fame celebrates lawyers whose mark on the legal profession is indelible. Mr. Searcy's selection recognized the positive impact of his achievements, career highlights, trends, and personal interests. ♦

The summer 2018 edition of *INFLUENCE Florida Magazine* recognized **Chris Searcy** as one of the "100 Most Influential People in Florida Politics." Chris King, an Orlando entrepreneur and Democratic gubernatorial candidate, commented: "In everything he does, Chris Searcy acts with his heart. Along with the great success he and his powerhouse firm have had, Chris still has a strong and abiding concern about dealing with injustice in the political arena."

The news article also mentioned that Mr. Searcy was instrumental in the fight to bring fair districting to the State of Florida, redrawing its political maps to put its voters back in charge. Mr. Searcy's recognition by *INFLUENCE Florida* was very welcomed and certainly very deserved. ♦

Florida Trend recently announced its selection of "2018 Legal Elite," a prestigious roster of attorneys chosen for recognition by their peers. Included in the selection were **Chris Searcy, Jack Scarola, Greg Barnhart, Brenda Fulmer, Jim Gustafson, Karen Terry, and Cal Warriner**. The selections exemplify a standard of excellence in the profession that has garnered the respect and esteem of colleagues. The resulting lists represent fewer than 1.2% of active Florida Bar members who

practice in Florida. Also included in *Florida Trends* "2018 Up and Comers" – a special category for attorneys under the age of 40 who have exhibited leadership in the law and their community – were **Jordan Dulcie** and **Carter Scott**. ♦

The Florida Justice Association held its annual convention this summer, and SDSBS attorneys were honored with several awards recognizing their work. **Chris Searcy** gave a well-received presentation on "The Art of Closing." **Brenda Fulmer** received the Cornerstone award for membership recruitment. **Jim Gustafson** was presented with the FJA president's Ben Franklin Award for the advice and guidance he provided to FJA. **Laurie Briggs** was re-elected to FJA's board and executive committee. She was also presented with the president's Ben Franklin Award for her special assistance to immediate past president Dale Swope. For the fifth year in a row, she received the Cornerstone Award for her efforts in recruiting and retaining FJA memberships. **Carter Scott** was announced president-elect of the Young Lawyers Board, and **Jordan Dulcie** was appointed as a member of that Board. ♦

In April 2018, The Florida Bar president-elect Michelle Suskauer appointed **Brian Denney** to serve on the Bar's Professional Ethics Committee through a term ending in 2021. This committee is charged with answering ethics inquiries from members of the Bar concerning the inquirer's own proposed conduct. In addition, the committee reviews informal advisory opinions issued by The Florida Bar ethics department attorneys and may issue formal advisory opinions to guide Bar members in interpreting and applying the ethics rules. ♦

In April 2018, **Laurie Briggs** was appointed vice-chair of The Florida Bar's Student Education and Admission to the Bar Committee. She will serve through the 2018/2019 Bar year. The Committee monitors law schools to determine if they are adequately preparing their students for the practice of law and makes specific recommendations to the Board of Governors and law schools. The Committee also monitors proposed legislation affecting legal education. ♦

Speaking Opportunities



Brian Denney organized a seminar for the Palm Beach County Bar Association's Personal Injury/Wrongful Death Committee. The event

was held in April 2018. Mr. Denney also organized and moderated a seminar in May 2018 for the Fourth District Court of Appeals, titled "A to Z Trial Lawyer's Guide to Preserving Appellate Scrutiny". **Greg Barnhart** spoke at the seminar on opening and closing arguments. ♦



Vince Leonard provided a presentation to the Personal Injury/Wrongful Death Committee of the Palm Beach County Bar Association. The

presentation, held in April 2018 at the Fourth District Court of Appeal, was titled "Behind the PI Curtain: An Insider's View." Mr. Leonard's topic was "An Insurance Adjuster's Perspective." In June 2018, Mr. Leonard spoke at a meeting of the Florida Association of Insurance Agents on "Errors and Omissions 2018: What We Have Learned." His topic was "Insurance Agent Exposure from the Vantage Point of a PI Firm." ♦



In May, **Katherine Kiziah** participated in Career Day at Palm Springs Elementary School in Palm Springs, Florida. She spoke

with several second-grade classes about being a lawyer and the judicial branch of the government. She set up mock trials with half of the students representing the government and half of the students representing a person accused of stealing. One student acted as a judge to determine guilty or not guilty. The students were all great, and several indicated a budding interest in legal professions. ♦



SDSBS sponsor of Legal Aid Society's 30th Anniversary Pro Bono Recognition Gala

In May 2018, Jack and Anita Scarola co-chaired the Legal Aid Society's 30th Anniversary Pro Bono Recognition Gala held at the Palm Beach County Convention Center in West Palm Beach, Florida. Mariano Garcia emceed the event which recognizes lawyers who go above and beyond in providing pro bono legal services for the most vulnerable members of the community. SDSBS was the main sponsor of the event. ♦

Taking...

Time to Care



In "Spirit Week", SDSBS staff competed in spring cleaning to gather all sorts of items for the needy

In May 2018, SDSBS declared "Spirit Week," a staff competition for spring cleaning and giving. With a team trophy offered as an incentive, staff gathered new or gently used items to be donated to organizations in Palm Beach County, including Dress for Success (women's clothing and accessories); Peggy Adams Animal Rescue League (pet supplies and food); Joshua Thrift Store in The Lord's Place (clothing and household goods); and Resource Depot (office, arts, and craft materials). Sustained by pizza lunches and the spirit of cleaning and sharing, SDSBS staff filled box after box of contributions for people in need. ♦



"A Second Chance-Puppy and Kitten Rescue" benefits from fishing tournament, "Big Dog Fat Cat", sponsored by SDSBS

In July 2018, Nick DeBellis participated in the "2018 Big Dog Fat Cat KDW Tournament" held at the Sailfish Marina in Palm Beach, Florida. The fishing tournament attracted 244 boats and raised funds to benefit "A Second Chance Puppies and Kitten Rescue, Inc." SDSBS was a sponsor of the tournament. The organization works to save surrendered and abandoned pets in the local community. ♦



SDSBS Tallahassee staff participated in "Tails and Trails" event, and "A Full Summer," to help animals and to gather meals for hungry people

In May 2018, the SDSBS staff in Tallahassee, Florida, participated in an event to help raise awareness and funds to support the Animal Shelter Foundation in Tallahassee. SDSBS was a sponsor for the annual "Tails and Trails 2018 Race" with staff participating in the race. In June 2018, the staff participated in "A Full Summer," an event held each summer for volunteers to get together to package meals for the hungry and food insecure in the local area. Summer is particularly challenging because school-based meal programs are not available. The event assembled well over 60,000 meals and provided additional 2,600 canned food meals. ♦



"Red Nose Day" creates lots of fun and raises money for a number of charities

In May 2018, SDSBS staff participated in "Red Nose Day," providing fundraising activities that benefit organizations including Boys and Girls Clubs, Children's Health Fund, and Save the Children. The non-profit Comic Relief, Inc., started the Red Nose Day to bring people together, have fun, and raise money to change lives of kids who need help. Since its launch, the organization has raised over \$1 billion. ♦





A REPORT TO CLIENTS & ATTORNEYS VOLUME 18, NUMBER 2

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Jack Scarola



Greg Barnhart



Sia Baker-Barnes



Brian Denney



Brenda Fulmer



Mariano Garcia



Jim Gustafson



Jack Hill



19 SDSBS attorneys selected as 2018 Florida Super Lawyers

**Attorney Chris Searcy included in
list of Top 10 Florida Super Lawyers**

In June 2018, *Super Lawyers Magazine* announced its selection of 2018 Florida Super Lawyers. **Chris Searcy** was included in the list of Top 10 Florida Super Lawyers. Included in the list of Top Florida Super Lawyers were **Jack Scarola, Greg Barnhart, Sia Baker-Barnes, Brian Denney, Brenda Fulmer, Mariano Garcia, James Gustafson, Jack Hill, Karen Terry, Cal Warriner, and Laurie Briggs**. *Super Lawyers* also announced its selection of 2018 Rising Stars, and the list included **Hardee Bass, Cam Kennedy, Andrea Lewis, Ed Ricci, Matt Schwencke, Carter Scott, and Donald Ward**. *Super Lawyers* is a rating service of outstanding lawyers from more than 70 practice areas who have attained a high degree of peer recognition and professional achievement. The selection process includes independent research, peer nominations, and peer evaluations. ♦



Cam Kennedy



Ed Ricci



Karen Terry



Cal Warriner



Hardee Bass



Laurie Briggs



Andrea Lewis



Matt Schwencke



Carter Scott



Donald Ward