

“Now every time people cross that street, they are safer.

For them, it was never about the money. Their daughter, a prominent researcher from a traditional Asian family, was killed by a driver at a dangerous intersection near Frick Park in Pittsburgh. We sued the City claiming that better safety features were needed at the intersection, and we won the case. But we



did not stop there. After the case was over, we told the City that we would be willing to contribute part of the money from the lawsuit to pay for an overhead pedestrian flasher, and they agreed. The family is very gratified to know that through our efforts this area has been made much safer for all children and adults who use the park.

Making change for the public is part of our job as trial lawyers.”

—John Gismondi,
trial attorney, Pittsburgh



“With my clients, it is so often the story of David vs. Goliath.

When my clients come to my office, they are faced with fighting the giants of insurance companies and nursing homes. They deprive my clients of the justice they seek and deserve. They deny, delay, and drag out their cases. Together we pick up the five smooth stones of truth, preparedness, hard work, commitment, and the courage to obtain justice.



Obtaining justice for my clients--that is why I am a trial lawyer.”

—Rhonda Hill Wilson,
trial attorney, Philadelphia



**I’m a Trial Attorney.
Why I Do What I Do.**

“Cases haunt me - trying to sleep, driving to work, on the treadmill.

Like Tucker Mahoney. He was 17 when his Daisy BB gun went off, leaving him severely brain



damaged. The manufacturers called it a toy, but if they’re toys, they are lethal and those two words don’t go together. In addition to a settlement to help Tucker’s family care for him, the Consumer Safety Protection Agency told the manufacturer to take 7.4 million of them off the market.

The civil justice system is our best check on the free enterprise system.”

—Shanin Specter,
trial attorney, Philadelphia



WHY?

Why do they do it? It can be the most grueling way to live your life as a lawyer. Constant ups and downs. Stories of pain and loss that keep you up night after night. And when you get close to trial, your life is not your own. It's the case. Little time for family, for your boyfriend, for taking clothes to the cleaners. You have to make your family understand. You are always dead tired. Until you take a look at the jury for the first time, and the adrenaline takes over.

Plaintiff attorneys, and the citizens they fight for, play an indispensable role in our society. A check and balance against companies that put dangerous products on the market, the few bad doctors in the profession who make mistakes on the operating table, corporate officials who lie to their stockholders, companies polluting our environment. They are more important than ever at a time when government has taken a back seat in regulating the most powerful forces in our society.

To work for civil justice—so difficult at times—has its rewards as these champions of justice are telling you. Think about it. Talk to one of us. Take an internship at a plaintiffs firm one summer during law school.

A special look in the eye of a client when you tell her good news, protecting citizens in your community from future harm—it's like nothing else in the world.

“My first exposure to the legal system happened When I was a kid.

My father was a victim of medical malpractice and I have vivid memories of my family's struggles. Dad was the sole provider for our family and the accident meant that he was bound to a wheelchair, his days as a coal miner were over. I'll never forget meeting our lawyers when they came to our home for his deposition. Even though I was small, I remember the feeling that everything would be okay. Now, as a trial lawyer, I can provide security for people in the same position my family found itself in many years ago. And, when someone's negligence causes harm, the victims deserve the opportunity to hold the wrongdoers accountable.



Often, we are the last resort for citizens to obtain justice--I can think of nothing more important.”

—Lisa Woodburn,
trial attorney, Harrisburg



“Helping people, making a difference and provoking change.

For me, those words are not a cliché, but how I live me life and why I am a trial lawyer. As a trial lawyer in rural Pennsylvania, every new client who walks in the door presents me with yet another opportunity to help someone new, make a difference in someone's life and effect change for the better for all Pennsylvanians.

I cannot imagine being any type of lawyer other than a trial lawyer.”

—Sud Patel,
trial attorney, Pottsville



Think about trial work as you think about your career

Please send us your resume, ptla@philatla.org. We can also put you in touch with one of our members to discuss trial work as a career.

A publication of the Pennsylvania Association for Justice
President, Steven E. “Tim” Riley, Jr.
PaJustice.org