

RAYNES & LAWN

TRIAL LAWYERS

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Philadelphia, PA 19103

215-568-6190 • www.RaynesLaw.com



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RECENT RECOVERIES:

\$20M

Sexual Abuse

\$24M

Construction Site

\$37.8M

Train Derailment

\$40M

Birth Injury

Because every case is different, the description of awards and cases previously handled do not guarantee a similar outcome in current or future cases.

WHO WE ARE:

Established in 1969 as Raynes McCarty, Raynes & Lawn, has spent the past 54 years fighting for injured victims and their families in catastrophic personal injury matters. Raynes & Lawn is recognized by lawyers and judges alike for its outstanding courtroom successes and the manner in which it represents its clients. Each attorney at the firm brings unequalled talent, commitment, and compassion to their clients. If you or a loved one has been critically injured due to someone else's negligence please call us today at 215-568-6190. The call is free and confidential.

WHAT MAKES US DIFFERENT:

Raynes & Lawn is recognized not only for securing outstanding results, but also for its commitment to each client. Our firm prides itself on representing people, not "handling cases." While the firm has secured billions of dollars in recoveries, it has done so while shunning headlines to protect the dignity and confidentiality of our clients.



Relationship + Respect = Results

PRACTICE AREAS

- Birth Injuries
- Brain and Spinal Injuries
- Burn Injuries
- Car Accidents
- Civil Rights
- Construction Accidents
- Consumer Products
- Dram Shop/Alcohol Liability
- Medical Malpractice
- Premises Liability
- Product Liability
- Truck Accidents
- Workplace Accidents
- Wrongful Death

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RAYNES & LAWN IS GROWING THE FIRM WITH THE ADDITION OF ATTORNEY BRENDA HARKAVY

We are excited to welcome Brenda A. Harkavy to our team. Brenda will fit right in. She is an extraordinary person, and terrific attorney with an already long resume of legal accomplishments.

She is a seasoned civil litigator and former Special Victims Unit prosecutor who has litigated hundreds of child sexual and physical abuse, intimate partner violence, stalking, human trafficking, and homicide cases to verdict. As a civil litigator she has continued to seek justice for women and children, including fighting against racial disparities in maternal and infant healthcare, and seeking recovery against institutional enablers of sexual abuse. Brenda, who is licensed to practice in PA, NJ, NY and MD, will fight for Raynes & Lawn clients in both state and federal courts in medical malpractice, sexual abuse, and civil rights cases.

For over 50 years our firm has focused its mission on achieving substantial, record-setting results for our clients through relentless, yet dignified advocacy. At Raynes & Lawn, we know it is not about us, it is always about the client. We are excited to have Brenda join us as we continue our mission.

CLIENT STORIES

Harold Goodman represented Marisa Vicosa in her pursuit for justice following the murder of her two young daughters who were killed by their father, Marisa's ex-husband, Robert Vicosa. Marisa had gone to the home of Robert Vicosa, a former Baltimore police officer, on her birthday to see her daughters. However, just as she was leaving, her ex-husband forced her to the basement where he and a female accomplice restrained and sexually and physically tortured Marisa at gunpoint. They would not let her leave for nearly two days nor would they let the girls leave either. Marisa finally convinced Robert to let her go back to her house to retrieve some items for the girls. As she was leaving, Robert threatened to kill her and their daughters if she did not return or told anyone of what had happened. Scared and frightened, Marisa went to the York Area Regional Police Department to report her abduction and torture and her pleas for help to rescue her daughters. Upon hearing Marisa's account, an officer assembled a team to address the crisis and called his superiors at their homes alerting them to the situation. Neither the Police Chief nor the Lieutenant in charge reported to duty. An officer then took Marisa to court where the emergency judge issued a protection from abuse order and a search warrant authorizing police to enter and search Robert Vicosa's home and, critically, to rescue the girls. Sadly, the police chief decided not to have those court orders served. Instead, he ordered the on-duty officers to stand down and declined to even set up surveillance that night. So, for 36 hours the court orders were not served on Robert. When police finally arrived, the house was empty. Searches then ensued throughout South Central PA and Maryland. Four days after the emergency Order and warrant had been issued, Robert Vicosa's car was found in a remote culvert containing the dead bodies of six-year-old Giana, seven-year-old Aaminah as well as Robert Vicosa and his female accomplice. All had been killed by gunshots inflicted by Robert Vicosa. Moved by the incredibly tragic story she reported to him, **Harold Goodman** was determined to help Marisa obtain justice for herself, Giana and Aaminah. Harold understood that doing so would be a very difficult legal challenge given the immunities the law provides municipalities and their police officers for negligence in the performance of their duties. Undeterred, Harold set out to prove these young girls had lost their lives because of a "state created danger" that would circumvent the immunity defenses. After months of meetings with the district attorney's office, the state attorney general's office and counsel for the county and police department, Harold convinced the defense, without the need to start protracted litigation, to tender to Marisa all of the available insurance coverage for the police. More important to Marisa than the multi-million-dollar recovery is that she now has a voice that is being heard, as she, with Harold still by her side, sets out to effect change in the coordination of law enforcement's response to child emergencies in Pennsylvania.



Tim Lawn and **Regina Foley** secured a multi-million-dollar recovery in a complex NJ medical malpractice action. A New Jersey personal injury firm was asked by former clients to undertake the representation of their elderly mother, who was paralyzed from what her family felt was a delay in performing back surgery at a local hospital. The New Jersey lawyers, themselves very accomplished personal injury trial lawyers, recognized that this would be a very challenging medical malpractice case as their client had a lengthy medical history, which included many pre-existing issues with her back and spine. The firm reached out to Tim Lawn for help. Tim agreed to take on the representation, and he and Regina Foley joined in as co-counsel and led the prosecution of the lawsuit. After taking the depositions of the seven doctors and six nurses involved in the client's care at issue, and consulting and working closely with six medical experts of various medical specialties from across the country, Lawn and Foley were prepared to prove that the defendants should have recognized that the client's blood thinning medication caused a spontaneous bleed in her lower back, resulting in a hematoma that was pressing on her spinal cord. The multiple hour delay in diagnosing this hematoma and surgically removing it caused permanent damage to the patient's spinal cord. At a mediation that took place just one month before the start of trial in Burlington County, NJ, a sizeable, seven-figure settlement was secured which will provide for the client's medical needs for the remainder of her life.

Noah Goodman recently persuaded the Pennsylvania Superior Court to rule in favor of his client, an employee who alleged that his former employer had breached their separation/settlement agreement entered when he left the company's employ. Noah convinced the appellate court that subsequent to the agreement with our client, the company took steps that diluted the share value of their stock, which made up a good deal of our client's settlement. The net effect resulted in a loss to the former employee of more than \$2 million. The Superior Court agreed with Noah, and ruled in our client's favor. Additionally, the court held that "stock" was a form of "wages" protected by Pennsylvania's Wage Payment and Collection Law, a ruling that results in a mandatory award of counsel fees and could lead to an additional 25% increase in the recovery for our client in the form of liquidated damages.



FIRM NEWS

Stephen Raynes recently returned from Killarney, Ireland, where he attended the annual meeting of The International Academy of Trial Lawyers. Recognized as one of the most preeminent trial lawyer organizations, membership in the IATL is by invitation only, which is extended to trial attorneys who have demonstrated exceptional courtroom skill and the highest standards of professionalism and ethics. Membership is limited to just 500 Fellows from the United States. Raynes & Lawn presently has four attorneys who are fellows of both The International Academy of Trial Lawyers, and the similarly recognized, American College of Trial Lawyers, more than any other Plaintiff's firm in Pennsylvania.



FELLOWS Pictured Above: Bernard W. Smalley, Sr., Timothy R. Lawn, A. Roy DeCaro, Stephen E. Raynes

Regina Foley has been appointed President-Elect by the Board of Directors of the Pennsylvania Legal Aid Network, Inc. (PLAN). Regina was appointed to the Board in 2019 and recently served as its Treasurer. PLAN is the state's coordinated system of organizations providing civil legal aid for those who have nowhere else to turn. PLAN's nine independent, regional legal programs and six specialized legal resources programs represent over 100,000 clients yearly through a continuum of critically needed legal information, advice and representation for low-income individuals and families who face urgent civil legal problems that affect basic needs such as food, shelter, employment, consumer problems, health care and family safety. PLAN strives to carry out the principle of "Justice for All" by providing civil legal aid for those who have nowhere else to turn. Regina is honored to serve on its Board, and will be a tremendous leader of this important organization.

Ms. Foley was also recently re-appointed to the Philadelphia Bar Association's Commission on Judicial Selection and Retention. The Judicial Commission serves all Philadelphians by providing voters with guidance on the qualifications of candidates for judicial office.



SPOTLIGHT:

Tim Lawn Helps Restore Fairness for Victims of Medical Negligence.

Venue is the legal term meaning the county within the state where a lawsuit is filed. Pennsylvania's longstanding venue rule permits a lawsuit to be filed in any county where the defendant lives, regularly conducts business, or where the events giving rise to the lawsuit occurred. Following years of lobbying by those seeking to limit the rights of malpractice victims, in 2002 the Pennsylvania Legislature changed the venue law for just medical malpractice actions, stating those could ONLY be filed in the county where the alleged negligent care was provided. That special rule for "malpractice venue" remained in place for more than 20 years until the Pennsylvania Supreme Court repealed it effective January 1, 2023. Our own **Tim Lawn** played an interesting role in that process.

In 2018 the Supreme Court Rules Committee recommended that the Court repeal this malpractice venue rule, but the Court refrained from doing so, acceding to the Pa. Senate's demand that the legislature's Budget and Finance Committee study the effect removing this special malpractice rule would have on health care services in Pennsylvania. After months of work, the Committee held public hearings in June 2019 during which it took testimony from many witnesses from groups fighting to keep the special rule in place, such as the Pennsylvania Medical Society, The Hospital Association of PA, and the Insurance Federation. The committee took sworn testimony on behalf of malpractice victims from three attorneys; **Tim Lawn** was one of those attorneys invited to testify.

Tim testified that this special rule not only violates the fundamental principle that all are to be treated equally under the law; it has also reduced the incentive for hospitals to prevent medical errors. Tim cited studies showing that malpractice is now the 3rd leading cause of death in this country, yet, due in large part to the rule change for malpractice venue, the annual number of malpractice cases filed in Pennsylvania decreased by more than 47%. Tim noted that at the same time the CDC, NIH, Medicare, and other agencies were implementing strategies to reduce malpractice, the Pennsylvania Legislature did the opposite - it passed this rule limiting malpractice victims' access to the courts. Tim pointed out that when there has been an increase in injuries and deaths on our highways, in our airplanes, or at our workplaces, the prudent legislative response has been to "find out why and fix it." Yet, when injuries and deaths from medical malpractice were rising, the legislature didn't seek to learn why and fix it, but rather responded by limiting the rights of victims.

As he left the hearing room, Tim was stopped by Thomas Previc - a well-respected Harrisburg lobbyist for more than 30 years. Tom told Tim that his was "perhaps the most compelling testimony he had ever seen before a legislative committee." Some months later, when most expected their report to strongly recommend keeping the special malpractice venue rule, the Budget & Finance Committee issued their report stating that their study was "inconclusive" as to what effect, if any, repealing the special venue rule would have on Pennsylvania. Weeks later the COVID pandemic essentially shut down the state. After the pandemic, in August 2022, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court re-addressed the issue. With an inconclusive legislative study providing no compelling reason for keeping it, the Court issued an Order repealing the special venue rule for medical malpractice actions effective January 1, 2023.