

SETTLEMENT	CASE TYPE	CO-COUNSEL FIRM
\$173,000,000	Mesothelioma and other Asbestos-related Diseases	Simmons Hanly Conroy, LLC – Alton, IL
\$5,000,000	Birth Injury	Donahue & Horrow, LLP – El Segundo, CA
\$5,000,000	Cerebral Palsy	Donahue & Horrow, LLP – El Segundo, CA
\$2,000,000	Nursing Home	Law Offices of David J. Hoey P.C. – North Reading, MA
\$1,000,000	Cerebral Palsy	Donahue & Horrow, LLP – El Segundo, CA
\$890,000	Nursing Home	Hughes & Coleman, PLLC – Bowling Green, KY
\$500,000	Workers' Compensation	Karl Vrana & Associates, P.C. – Raynham, MA
\$482,500	Nursing Home	Doolan Platt & Setareh, LLP – Irvington, NY
\$475,000	Nursing Home	Doolan Platt & Setareh, LLP – Irvington, NY
\$400,000	Nursing Home	Doolan Platt & Setareh, LLP – Irvington, NY
\$350,000	Slip & Fall	Boynton Waldron Doleac Woodman & Scott – Portsmouth, NH
\$275,000	Workers' Compensation	Law Office of Steven P. Brendemuehl – Natick, MA
\$250,000	Nursing Home	Shuttlesworth Law Firm, PC – Birmingham, AL
\$250,000	Nursing Home	Doolan Platt & Setareh, LLP – Irvington, NY
\$225,000	Slip & Fall	Mahaney & Pappas, LLP – Framingham, MA
\$225,000	Nursing Home	Shuttlesworth Law Firm, PC – Birmingham, AL

## Thank You for Contacting Us

As one of the nation's largest legal marketers, Sokolove Law is only as successful as we are today because our focus goes far beyond the lead generation stage. In a highly competitive market, any information we can glean about our consumers can give us the edge needed to convert them to a client.

Sokolove's in-house call center uses the latest technology to gather insight about our prospective clients before a conversation is initiated. Unique phone numbers and URLs identify which ad motivated a person to call or click. Web analytics, such as search terms, URLs, pages visited, length and

number of visits, provide additional details on consumers' behaviors and needs. This underlying data allows us to engage with consumers in a more meaningful way, and to nurture them through the early stages of pursuing a legal claim. Agents can speak directly to a person's interests or concerns before he or she has even voiced them, increase their awareness about the legal process, and alleviate any apprehensions.

This is all possible by integrating our phone system and various web sources with Salesforce via custom development. These small details make the difference between meeting

a customer's need and losing the lead. Here are a couple of examples:

- A chat inquiry came in on our "Verdicts & Settlements" web page, which let the agent know that restitution is of high importance to the consumer. Knowing this, our agent offered facts and resources upfront and put them at ease with moving forward with the legal process.
- A call came in for an ad that ran during a popular game show. After confirming why the consumer was contacting us, the agent quickly built a rapport by telling the consumer about his experience on a game show.

## One-On-One with Sokolove Law CEO Mike Skoler

*As Sokolove Law marks its 40th year in business, we caught up with CEO Mike Skoler, a driving force behind the firm's evolution and continued success for nearly two decades.*

### As Sokolove Law's chief executive officer, what is your background?

Contrary to popular belief, and much to my parents' chagrin, I didn't attend law school (or medical school for that matter). However, I did receive an undergraduate degree in finance and law from American University and went on to get my MBA from Babson College. Prior to joining Sokolove, I was a founding member of Arthur Anderson's Global Corporate Finance Group, focused on mergers and acquisitions, and before that I worked for a private equity firm in Boston.

### Is it safe to say that CEO of a plaintiffs' law firm was not within your realm of possibility?

You might say that. However, I've always tried to keep an open mind when it comes to new business opportunities. Having said that, when I took the position at Sokolove, I thought it would only be temporary. And here I am almost 20 years later so you never know.

### How did your involvement with Sokolove Law come about?

Funny enough, I had dated Jim's stepdaughter for a few years, so I knew Jim socially for about 10 years prior to working with him. We were meeting for lunch one day in 2001 and he told me of his aspirations to scale the firm from an established regional marketer to, as Jim put it, "the largest national marketer of legal services in the country." At the time, Jim thought he needed to grow through acquisition. We talked through his plan, including the pros and cons of organic versus acquisition growth. In typical Jim fashion, he asked me on the spot if I would be interested in helping



MIKE SKOLER, CEO, Sokolove Law, LLC

him grow the firm. His exact words were, "if we work well together, and you're not a total schmuck, you can take over the firm someday..." I was "flattered"!

### Were you immediately on board or did it take some convincing?

Well, Jim can certainly be very persuasive. However, I was attracted to both the economics of the business and the notion that I would be helping people who had been put in harm's way by major corporations. When I was 12 years old, I lost my sister. She passed away after taking two pretty standard medications that were later contraindicated for causing blackouts. Unfortunately, her blackout occurred while she was in the shower and thus turned fatal. The issue with the medications wasn't news to the drug makers, but it was to us, and sadly we had no way of knowing. Naturally,

I grew up pretty angry. I believe that fate had a hand in putting me in a position to help prevent tragedies like this from happening to other families. And if they do occur, to help make sure the companies involved are held accountable.

From a business perspective, I was jazzed by the seemingly limitless opportunities to grow the business and break new ground in the legal industry. Unlike many law firm leaders at the time, Jim believed that a law firm should be run as a business and he was specifically looking for someone with a strong business background to take his firm to the next level. He was truly an innovator in every sense of the word.

### Would you say Jim was your mentor, and how important is the role of mentorship?

Jim was, and still is, very much a father figure and mentor to me. Although he is now long since retired from the firm, we manage to talk a couple of times a month and get together whenever we're in the same part of the country. I still strive to make Jim proud of the firm that bears his name. I think it's extremely important for employees, particularly younger talent, to have that kind of support system.

### Do most people just assume you're a lawyer when they find out where you work?

Absolutely! It was so unique at the time for a plaintiffs' firm to put a nonlawyer in a leadership role, which made it a bit of a headscratcher for some. When I first

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## Co-counsel SPOTlight

Reiter & Walsh, P.C. – Bloomfield Hills, MI

With over 130 years combined experience and a sole focus on handling birth trauma cases, you can be sure that the attorneys at Reiter & Walsh, P.C. are at the top of their game and among the best in their field.

Jesse Reiter founded the firm in 1997 with one goal in mind: to help families faced with the challenges of having a child born with an injury due to negligent medical care. Since then, the Reiter & Walsh attorneys, registered nurses, and support staff have worked tirelessly to help families impacted by cerebral palsy, hypoxic-ischemic encephalopathy, and other injuries and disabilities.

Their comprehensive knowledge of this complex area of law is unparalleled. The firm's legal team is frequently recognized for its advocacy and exceptional legal skills by some of the top legal and business publications and organizations, including U.S. News & World Report/Best Lawyers, National Trial Lawyers Association, Business Magazine, and more.

As leaders in the area of birth injury litigation, members of the Reiter & Walsh legal team often write for and contribute to industry articles and journals, including the Michigan Bar Journal, the Michigan Association for Justice Journal, and the AAJ Birth Trauma Litigation Group Newsletter. In fact, Jesse Reiter served as the chair of AAJ's Birth Trauma Litigation Group, where he played a significant role in educating and leading other members of the bar in this challenging field.

The firm's exceptional record of commitment and dedication to its clients speaks for itself: They have secured millions in verdicts and settlements on behalf of their clients, including a \$42 million judgement for a child with cerebral palsy, and a \$21 million verdict for a child with hypoxic-ischemic encephalopathy with resultant seizure disorder, severe cerebral palsy and developmental delays.

"I admire their professionalism, compassion, and willingness to go the extra mile for



Reiter & Walsh partners (from left to right) Rebecca Walsh, Jesse Reiter & Euel Kinsey

their clients in this very complex litigation area," says Sokolove CEO Mike Skoler. "Jesse and his team are among the best birth trauma attorneys in the country and we are proud to have them as part of our national birth injury network of firms. We look forward to many more years of continued success."

Based in Michigan, the firm handles cases nationwide. On working with Sokolove Law, Jesse Reiter has this to say: "They're an outstanding group to work with. Everyone on the team is extremely organized, very friendly, and easily accessible, and we appreciate their informative newsletters, quick follow-up, and factual intakes."

### Campaign Highlight

## 3M Earplugs

In July 2018, 3M Company (3M) agreed to pay \$9.1 million to settle allegations that it knowingly sold defective earplugs to the U.S. military.

Dual-Ended Combat Arms™ Earplugs (CAEv2) were meant to be used as either traditional earplugs or flipped over to provide normal hearing while protecting eardrums from gunfire and explosions. However, evidence suggests the earplugs were too short for proper insertion into users' ears, effectively rendering them useless.

3M and its predecessor, Aearo Technologies, allegedly knew about design problems as early as 2000, when the earplugs failed to pass safety tests. 3M agreed to pay \$9.1 million to resolve

allegations that the defective product caused hearing loss and impairment, though the company has not admitted to any wrongdoing.

The now-discontinued earplugs were standard issue equipment for soldiers deployed to Afghanistan and Iraq between 2003 and 2015. In those 12 years, the U.S. Defense Logistics Agency distributed millions of dollars' worth of Combat Arms earplugs to thousands of service members – putting these men and women at risk for permanent hearing loss or impairment.

In December 2018, we launched a national campaign targeting military veterans who were issued these earplugs during service, who later developed hearing loss or tinnitus despite using the faulty earplugs. According to the VA, as of 2015, more than 2.6 million veterans were receiving disability compensation for hearing loss and tinnitus – meaning



the pool of potential claimants is sizeable.

In just 3 months, the campaign has generated over 3,500 responses, 1,500 qualified leads and 500 signed cases.

If the current climate is any indication of what is to come for 3M, many more earplug lawsuits will be filed in the near future. With no signs of slowing down, now is a great time to join the campaign. Call us today at **800-305-4009** to learn more.

## One-On-One with Mike Skoler

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started, Jim actually suggested I put the words "not a lawyer" on my business cards. I asked him if I should also add "not a doctor" and really make my parents proud.

### What challenges, if any, did you face in transitioning from corporate finance to Sokolove Law?

The biggest challenge was learning about the legal industry. The verbiage, the law, how a case was handled, and the civil justice system in general was all uncharted territory for me. That was much harder than learning the business. Advertising, call center management, operations, etc. came easy to me. For the first five years I traveled extensively – 200 days a year on average – calling on law firms and attending conferences across the country in an effort to grow our network of co-counsel firms. Nonstop travel with young kids at home was also challenging, but my wife got the raw end of that deal.

### How were you received by the lawyers and law firm leaders you met with?

Many were initially skeptical of our business model and even more so about working with me – a "nonlawyer". However, I made it my business to learn as much as I could about the case types we handled. I listened as trial lawyers lamented the challenges of balancing the practice of law with law firm management and new case acquisition. Understanding their pain points was key to developing effective marketing plans and case screening solutions that would help them extend their reach, increase revenue, and most importantly, allow lawyers to focus on what they do best. Eventually, most firms welcomed the perspective of an "outsider" who had immediate and constructive solutions to their business needs. Looking back, I can say that being a nonlawyer served more as an advantage rather than a hindrance.

### Do you have a particular management style or philosophy?

I like to hire people who are smarter than me in the area that is their domain expertise. There's a classic quote attributed to Steve Jobs about how it doesn't make sense to hire smart people and then tell them what to do. I don't believe in micromanaging my staff and luckily, I don't have to. I'm extremely fortunate to be surrounded by a group of bright, hard-working, dedicated individuals, who consistently go above and beyond what's asked of them. We work hard and have fun.

### What changes have you seen in the industry since you first started at Sokolove, and what do you see for the future?

The industry has changed tremendously. I've always thought that if we were really effective at doing our job, we would put ourselves out of business. Meaning, if we could get corporations to think twice about putting profits before people, they would commit fewer bad acts and we, in turn, would have fewer people to help. I think we are seeing that in the mass tort arena now. There are fewer cases and that's a good thing!

Additionally, as with any growth industry, a steady influx of competitors over the years has put a squeeze on profitability for all players – everyone's fighting for a smaller piece of the pie. But, competition fuels innovation, and it's only inspired us to improve our processes, increase capabilities, and to develop new revenue streams. Our business is not unique in that way – every business needs to evolve with the times and look to reinvent itself every seven to ten years. Above all else, Sokolove Law will continue to do what we do best: help consumers gain access to the civil justice system through innovative marketing, quality representation and client service. 🍀



## Co-counsel Opportunities

What area of your practice would you like to grow? Whether you're looking for cases in your state or from across the nation, chances are, we can develop a well-targeted campaign to generate the specific cases you want to increase your case load.

Sokolove Law knows the legal marketing industry. After all, we are pioneers in the field with almost 40 years of legal and marketing expertise. Our diverse, highly trained team of experts brings you the leads with the greatest conversion potential.

From thorough research to expert marketing and case generation, it all adds up to a powerful advantage over your competition.

Besides our current campaigns for Mass Torts, Birth Injury and Nursing Home cases, we launched a new Construction Accident campaign in early 2019.

Join our Construction Accident campaign. Participation in this campaign is on a state-by-state basis. Available states are limited. Call us today at **800-305-4009** to find out if your state is available.