



**GEOFF McDONALD & ASSOCIATES, P.C.**

## The Go-To Firm For Workers' Compensation and Personal Injury Cases—Or Both

WHEN A MALFUNCTIONING MACHINE BREAKS ON THE job and injures an employee, the employee and his or her family understandably seek workers' compensation benefits. But the employee may not realize that he is owed more for his pain, suffering and loss of income. The manufacturer, after all, is at fault.

Cases that combine personal injury and workers' compensation are known as third-party cases, and they are familiar ground for the attorneys at Geoff McDonald & Associates. "These are complex, difficult cases with many components, but we relish the challenge," says Geoffrey R. McDonald, who founded the firm in 1991.

The firm successfully brought a products liability action against a manufacturer whose defective packaging caused a worker's fall, leading to brain damage. The firm also obtained a favorable judgment for a delivery person hit by an unsecured ladder.

Workers' compensation cases need not have a personal injury component to be considered by the firm. "We have obtained favorable settlements for workers whose employers failed to obtain workers' compensation insurance, thus exposing themselves to tort liability," says John D. Gilbody, the firm's senior personal injury attorney.

Gregory O. Harbison, who has been named to the *Rising Stars* list, and colleagues Brody H. Reid and Jamie L. Karek have earned the respect of labor and trade unions, as well as victims' families. "We are determined to win in the courts," Harbison says.

They're also determined to win in the General Assembly. The attorneys support legislation that would treat people suffering from on-the-job brain injuries the same as people who die at work. Their passion stems from a case involving a truck driver who was found unconscious and bleeding on the company lot. His claim for workers' compensation was denied because no one saw him fall, and he was too severely brain damaged to tell anyone what happened. He later died from his injuries. If the legislation eventually passes, it won't be the first time the firm has helped change Virginia law.

The attorneys are also active in the community. Harbison is the recipient of the 2008 Krista Latshaw Pro Bono Service Award from the Legal Information Network for Cancer (LINC), a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping people with the business side of cancer.

"We want to help people put their lives back together and get all the legal assistance and compensation available to them," McDonald says. "And we want to hold those at fault responsible to prevent injuries from happening in the future."

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