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Trial Lawyer of the Year 2008 Finalists Nam

Three legal teams that won justice for hundreds of people who had been molested by Catholic clergy in California, abused female prisoners in Michigan, and residents exposed to hazardous pollution in West Virginia have been named finalists for Public Justice Foundation's 2008 Trial Lawyer of the Year Award.



The teams, comprising 28 attorneys, will be honored at the Annual Gala and Awards Dinner on July 15 in Philadelphia, where the winner will be announced. Their cases were chosen from a field of 20 nominated extraordinary cases involving a range of issues, from fraudulent pricing practices by a major pharmaceutical and gender bias on Wall Street, to access for the disabled and the rights of Hurricane Katrina victims.

The finalists, listed in alphabetical order of the lead counsel's last name, are:

- **Raymond P. Boucher** and **Anthony M. DeMarco** of Beverly Hills, California; **Katherine Freberg** of Irvine, Calif.; **Stephen Rubino** of Margate, N.J.; **Terrence Giles** of Houston, Tex.; **Irwin Zalkin** of San Diego, Calif.; **Timothy Hale** of Santa Barbara, Calif.; **Laurence Drivon** of Stockton, Calif.; and **John Anderson** of St. Paul, Minn., for winning \$1.2 billion in settlements with the Catholic Church for more than 700 sexual abuse survivors. The settlement *Los Angeles Archdiocese and San Diego Diocese Catholic Abuse Litigation*, also required the release of long-secret documents that gave evidence to the Church's cover-up of the abuse.
- **Michigan attorneys Deborah LaBelle, Richard Soble, Patricia A. Streett** and **Shannon Dunn** of Ann Arbor; **Molly Reno** of Whitmore Lake; **Michael Pitt, Peggy Goldberg Pitt** and **Cary McGehee** of Royal Oak; and **Rona Reosti** and **Ralph Sirlin** of Pleasant Ridge, for pursuing justice for female inmates who had been subjected to sexual abuse and retaliation by state prison guards. *Neal v. Michigan Department of Corrections*, was the first case to hold that Michigan's Civil Rights Act applies to prisoners.
- **Mike Papantonio, Virginia M. Buchanan, Ned McWilliams** and **Brian Barr** of Pensacola, Fla.; **J. Farrest Taylor, Angela Mason, Joseph D. Lai** and **J. Keith Givens** of Dothan, Ala.; and **Robert F. Kennedy, Jr.** of New York, who won a \$380 million class action lawsuit against chemical companies that spewed hazardous substances into the air and soil around Spelter, Virginia, for decades. Representing 8,000 residents, the team in *Perrine DuPont de Nemours and Company* ultimately forced DuPont to clean up the zinc smelting plant disaster in Spelter.

Click [here](#) to read more about the finalists' cases.

Click [here](#) to order tickets to the Annual Gala and Awards Dinner on July 15th

Philadelphia.

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