

The Road To Justice Starts Here

firm keeps growing

AND EVOLVING IN 2023

By Attorney Michael T. Gibson

At the conclusion of each year, I set aside time to review all aspects of our firm in detail. It is report card time, where we look at and dig into our case results, our processes and systems in handling cases, our client experiences and services, and every aspect of our firm, and we look to what we can improve. It is not a simple pass or fail evaluation, but a comprehensive tear down of everything that goes into how this place runs and the service we want to provide to each and every client and prospective client. We also look at what we have done outside of our day-to-day practice in our charitable endeavors, and where we can continue to make an impact in our community.

For 2022, we recovered over \$20 million dollars for clients. Our year-end total almost directly matches our year-end total from the year before. For a firm our size, which has approximately 25 members, this is an amazing total. The fact that we were able to achieve the same in back-to-back years, shows a consistency which is hard to achieve in this business. We also achieved this number with less overall settlements in 2022 than we had in 2023. This means that our average recovery per file actually increased. This is a metric we are always looking to achieve. So, I am happy to see the same continuing to rise. Again, our goal is always to maximize the client's recovery. Each and every case has unique facts, unique amounts of insurance coverage available, and other factors that make it nearly impossible to compare cases to each other. The standard we hold ourselves to is one of continuous improvement. So, even slight upticks and increases in our overall recoveries are important to us.

One of our other goals is to provide the best client service experience in our industry. To make this possible, we want to hire the best staff available, and to structure our office in a fashion that we are easy to communicate with. Over the course of the last year, we made a few additions to our staff that we think greatly improve these items. We hired two senior level paralegals, who together, have over 70 years of experience in personal injury. Employees with this level of experience are hard to find, but they are significant investments in providing highly experienced and knowledgeable staff to help our attorneys in your case. We also redesigned how our attorney teams within the office are staffed and organized. Again, our goal is that each and every client actually has two lawyers working on their case. This includes myself, and either Todd or Amit. Underneath them is one of our senior paralegals, and under them is a case manager and an assistant. So there are at least 2 staff members and 2 attorneys working on each case at every step of your case through our office. Again, all of this is done to make sure your case gets the maximum amount of attention and detail. The system also acts as a check and balance system, with each layer overlooking the layer below. It is to make sure that all appropriate steps are taken at each step of your case, from intake through conclusion. Again, hiring this amount of staff and staff of this experience level requires a significant investment on my part. But the investment is worth it to meet our goal of providing the best client service experience we possibly can.

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nuevas leyes

QUE ENTRARON EN EFECTO EL 1 DE ENERO DE 2023

Por Juan Jose Rodriguez, Abogado de Enlace

El 1 de enero de 2023, varias leyes entraron en vigor en el estado de Florida. Como es nuestra costumbre, en este artículo vamos a explicar algunas de ellas. Estas leyes fueron aprobadas por la legislatura estatal durante la sesión regular o durante la sesión especial para abordar varios problemas estatales como el seguro de propiedad y los daños causados por huracanes.

Entre ellos, la ley de Miya. Aprobada después de que Miya Marcano, de 19 años, fuera asesinada por un trabajador de mantenimiento en el complejo de apartamentos donde vivía, la ley requiere que los propietarios realicen investigaciones de antecedentes de todos los empleados.

En cuanto a la salud pública, SB 292 requiere que los recién nacidos sean examinados para detectar citomegalovirus si no pasan una prueba de audición. Esto ayudará en la detección temprana y el tratamiento del virus, que puede causar pérdida de audición en los bebés.

Para los conductores, SB 6-A ayudará a algunos floridanos a reducir sus facturas de peaje. El programa acreditará el 50% de los peajes a una cuenta si hay al menos 35 transacciones de peaje al mes.

EL HB7049, le esta dando la opción a las agencias del gobierno a publicar noticias o edictos legales en las paginas cibernéticas de la agencia, en vez de hacerlo en un periódico, como era el requisito anteriormente.

La ley SB2-A, que fue aprobada en la sección especial para tratar de solucionar lo de los seguros de las casas, prohíbe las asignaciones de beneficios que antes hacían los dueños para que los contratistas pueden recibir dinero directamente, sin tener que pasar por los dueños de la propiedad. Algo importante, esta prohibición entra en vigor a pólizas de seguro que han sido compradas después del 1 de enero del 2023.

También, para combatir intereses especiales, HB 7001 requerirá que los funcionarios que dejen de trabajar para el gobierno tienen que esperar seis años antes de que puedan comenzar a cabildar. Antes de la ley, el estado requería un período de espera de solo dos años. Es interesante como debido directamente a esta nueva ley de cabildeo, varios funcionarios del gobierno, incluyendo a jefes de agencias estatales y hasta jueces, renunciaron antes del 1 de enero, para evitar esperar 6 años antes que puedan cabildar.

Existen varias otras leyes nuevas, pero las ya explicadas son las principales y las cuales puede que afecten a ustedes directamente. ■

“Firm keeps Growing and Evolving in 2023” continued from page 1.

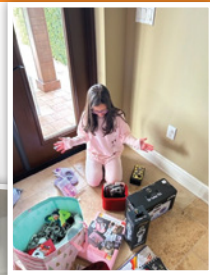
We also have seen the development of some specialty areas of practice within the firm. Our firm has always focused on auto accident and injury cases of all types. Over the last five years, we have expanded that focus to also include Wrongful Death and Catastrophic Injury cases of all type. In the last couple years though, and in particular this past year, we have started to develop niche practices in traumatic brain injury cases and in commercial trucking cases. Our attorneys and staff have all undertaken training sessions in traumatic brain injury cases, and the diagnosis and treatment of the same. This started a few years ago, but we are really starting to recognize and see more and more of these cases. Our familiarity with the presenting signs and symptoms allows us to help clients seek treatment and medical help for the same, thus providing proper diagnosis and documentation of the injury. Having the right evidence of this injury is crucial to presenting this type of claim. We did more of these cases then ever before in 2022. On the commercial trucking side, we are seeing more and more of these accidents as well. Our familiarity with the very specific types of evidence available on these trucks, has allowed us to move quickly in these cases, and to secure vital evidence that is crucial to proving these cases. We are also able to quickly recognize and identify the negligence of the trucking company and driver, from seeing similar fact patterns in previous cases. And finally, we have been successful in Court in keeping the trucking company in the case and pursuing separate corporate negligence claims. These usually involve something the trucking company did improperly in hiring a driver or allowing them to drive the truck. The trucking companies always move to dismiss these claims. We have been successful in not having a single one dismissed yet. This maneuver increases the risk to the trucking company at trial, and opens the door to more discovery on the trucking company itself.

Lastly, our firm continues to make a positive difference in our community and beyond. This includes weekly and daily involvement with local churches, community leaders and charities. We once again donated 10% of gross profit to these causes. We also lend our marketing staff to planning and organizing events on a weekly basis. In addition to our local impact, we participated and sponsored four mission trips. Included in these were mission trips to Honduras, the Dominican Republic and Cuba. It has been quite an honor to see our charitable impact expand beyond our state, and to see us having a small impact in trying to make the world a better place. I have always subscribed to the belief that to whom much is given, much is expected, and that if we take care of our community, our

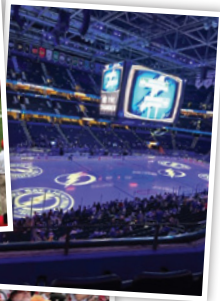
the holidays

WITH THE GIBSON FAMILY

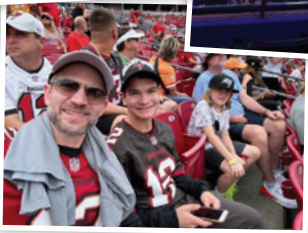
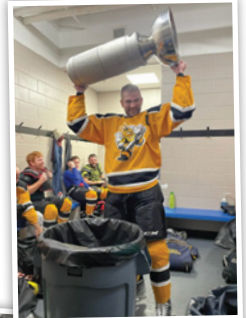
By: Attorney Michael T. Gibson



The Holidays have come and gone, but not before we had the chance to make some lasting memories. We kicked off the same with Eme's Winter Showcase, dance recital. It was my first chance to see her dance with her new company team, that she joined this fall. She did great. You can really see all the hard work and practice she has put into her new endeavor, and we are very proud. We celebrated Christmas with our traditional Noche Buena dinner at Jen's parents' house. It was a fun night of food, games and laughter. It was also really, really cold. We then spent Christmas morning opening presents. This year marked the first time in thirteen years that neither kid had some kind of toy or toys that required Jen and I to spend the whole day doing assembly. Both kids are now mostly into electronics, and most of their Christmas list consisted of gift card requests. It is a change for us, but one we welcomed. After Christmas, we packed up and headed down to our Tampa condo for a few days. There, we got to take in a few Lightning home games. We hadn't made it



to any games so far this year, so it was nice to catch a few. I also took Brady to his first Buccaneers game. Being that I named him after Tom Brady, I had promised him a few years ago that I would make sure he got to see Mr. Brady play. It was an awesome day and we had a lot of fun. But it was hot. I remember now why I prefer indoor sporting events to outdoor events. And finally, right before Christmas, my beloved men's league hockey team, the YellowJackets, who hadn't won a league championship since September of 2016, finally got over the hump and won the Title. We had been to 7 championship games during that six year stretch, and had lost them all. We finally got



it done. I have a full article on this coming out soon, but needless to say, it was a lot of fun. We hope you and your family had a wonderful holiday season, and we wish you all the best in love, health and happiness in the New Year. ■



"Firm keeps Growing and Evolving in 2023" continued from page 3.

community will take care of us. Seeing the impact our firm makes in helping the less fortunate and those in need gives me as much pride and satisfaction as any of our case achievements. We have an ambitious agenda and a full calendar in our community outreach program scheduled for 2023, and we look forward to making a positive impact in our community and beyond.

Again, these are just some of the highlights of the past year. There are also numerous challenges in this business. The Florida Supreme Court continues to change the long-standing rules of civil procedure and practice. Most of these changes will have the impact of making it more difficult to bring forth and have trials in personal injury cases. These rule changes continue to tilt the scales of justice in the favor of big business and insurance companies. The Florida Legislature is also continuously looking to do the same. We continue to stay on top of all proposed legislation and rule changes that could affect the rights of our clients, and we continue to have game plans on how we would adapt to the same, and successfully steer clients through the same. And then there is the competition, all of whom will make almost any promise to any client to sign up their case. One principle this firm has always and will always subscribe to is that we are going to be honest and tell the truth to our clients about what we can do with their case, and our recommendations based on our professional experience. We don't make false promises just to get you in the door. It costs us clients, and business. But in the end, I would rather lose that client than mislead them with promises we cannot keep.

We know that when it comes to choosing a lawyer for your accident, there are many firms that clients can choose. I continue to be so grateful and humbled by each and every client who chooses us. We are not perfect, but we strive to be the best for each and every one of our clients, and we strive to have a positive impact on the community around us. As we move into a new year, I always pray for God to grant us the wisdom and courage to continue to help our clients in their recovery from the events that brought them to us. We take this obligation very seriously, and that is why we endeavor to study, learn, and continuously work to make this firm the best it can be.

Happy New Year and may God bless you and your families. ■



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THE AUTO JUSTICE COMMUNITY heroes of the month

By: Attorney Michael T. Gibson



Rev. Carlos Trabal and his wife, Maria Trabal, have been ministers in the Pentecostal Church of God, International Movement, for more than 27 years. They joined their lives in marriage on May 2, 1992. They have two sons, Emmanuel and Isaac, and two grandchildren. His ministry began at an early age. He was a leader of children, youth, and gentlemen. He served as an assistant pastor at the church in Hollywood, Florida, for five years. He pastored the Church of Belle Glade, Florida for two years and the Church of Miami Beach, Florida for 15 years. He currently is a Pastor in Fort Myers, Florida.

His record includes serving as a chaplain for the police force in the city of Miami Beach, Fort Myers and currently in Lee County. Today he holds the position of Vice President of the Pentecostal Church of God, International Movement in the Southeastern Region of the United States.

His wife, Maria Trabal, has been a teacher and Director of Mizpah Bible Institute. She worked for more than 20 years with the Association of Ladies, Messengers of the Lord. She served as Member, Undersecretary, Treasurer, Vice President and reached the Presidency of the Association. During their ministry they have contributed to the formation of many leaders.

The most recent challenge this couple faced was Hurricane Ian that rocked the County where they live. Immediately, both of them activated the church to assist their neighbors, and the community in the area. They continue to provide support to the community in Ft. Myers and Lee County, as the long process of Hurricane recovery continues.

For all they do to enhance their community, The law offices of Michael T. Gibson would like to honor this couple as our Community Heroes of the Month, and to thank them for all they do to make our State a better place for all. ■

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