

DAILY REPORT

A SPECIAL SECTION • JUNE 27, 2018

2018 GEORGIA LEGAL AWARDS



JOHN DISNEY/ALM

Nick Panayotopoulos (clockwise from bottom left), Anna Idelevich, Gary Toman, Shane O'Neill, David Matthews, Alan Holcomb, Brannon Arnold, Matt Marrone and Jack Hawkins of Weinberg, Wheeler, Hudgins, Gunn & Dial, Atlanta.

WEINBERG,
WHEELER,
HUDGINS,
GUNN & DIAL

LITIGATION TEAM OF THE YEAR - GENERAL LITIGATION-MIDSIZE

Another year, another litigation award for Weinberg Wheeler Hudgins Gunn & Dial. In 2017, the 91-lawyer firm won a host of court victories for clients.

Their wins included a defense verdict in a case in which a farmer died after pouring gasoline onto a fire from a can made by the firm's client. The plaintiff claimed the can was defectively designed, but the jury delivered a defense verdict, turning away a request for \$17 million.

In another case, the firm won a defense verdict in a case in which the plaintiff claimed wrongdoing by a truck driver whose vehicle slammed into a car that had spun out of control. In this case, the jury rejected the plaintiff's request for \$3.5 million.

Here is our Q&A with the firm:

Assuming when a case goes to trial that both sides think they have a good chance of prevailing on the law and facts, what can you do to improve the odds for your client?

Outwork the opposition. Challenge your strategy. Question your case. Never, ever quit thinking and preparing. Know the opposition's case better than them. We emphasize case strengths and address bad evidence head-on. We know our opponent's case as well as we know our own and make sure that our witnesses are well prepared. We take advantage of weaknesses in the other side's case and exploit the mistakes

they make at trial. While we try and eliminate surprises, we are always ready to adjust on the fly.

How early in a case can you tell if a case will go to trial or settle?

As soon as the opposition quits posturing and actually evaluates the case. If they quit, we settle. If they don't, we go to trial. The best insight comes from getting to know opposing counsel and understanding his or her client's motivations and risk tolerance. If your opposition is reasonable, then the likelihood of settlement is stronger.

Often, we are brought in to try a case after settlement negotiations have reached an impasse. In those situations, our reputation and experience as courtroom lawyers communicates that our client has positioned itself for trial, which often motivates

our opponents to reconsider settlement options. When we handle a case from the start, our reputation may motivate settlement early on, as our opponents understand that we prepare a case from the outset as if it will go to trial and are unafraid to take a case to verdict.

What time-saving tool helps your team the most?

Hands down, technology. Legal technology, like all technology, is always changing. We partner with outside vendors that stay ahead of the curve and give us an efficient edge in areas like e-discovery, mock trials, trial exhibits and materials, and real-time transcripts.

