

My Toughest Case

compiled by Angie Kay Dilmore

Attorneys witness some crazy life situations – stories so unbelievable they could be straight out of Hollywood. Except that they're not. Lawyers deal with real life people in real life circumstances. In this feature, while maintaining client confidentiality, local lawyers share some of their most interesting cases – the type that pose difficult challenges, but also bestow satisfying, rewarding outcomes.

Heartbreak Serves as a Reminder



Ron Richard
Attorney, Richard Law Firm

My toughest case happened very early in my career, and it's not an exaggeration to say it's a case that haunts me to this day. It involved the death of two young cousins, both girls, ages three and four. They were attending a birthday party with other family and neighborhood friends. A young boy at the party was playing with matches and a fire started. These two cousins – babies, really – were burned to death. It was a horrific tragedy. The mothers of victims came to me for help. I searched to find something that might lighten their burden, knowing there was nothing I could really do to ease their grief. This was a loss they'd carry with them the rest of their lives. The family of the young boy who started the fire were also suffering and they didn't have any financial resources to help the family of the victims. The home where the fire occurred was a rental, but I was able to find a small insurance policy that paid \$25,000. I took no fee so they could keep every penny -- \$12,500 each. I'll never forget having to go to these grieving mothers to tell them all I could get for them, to help compensate for the loss of their child, was \$12,500. It seemed obscene to suggest the life of their child, who had their whole life ahead of them, was only worth this small amount. The girls' families were very gracious and appreciative. They gave me a plaque with the girls' photos on it and I kept it in my office, close to my desk so I could see it every day. I had some tough, lean times in those early years, but that plaque reminded me of why I chose to be an attorney and why I chose to focus on personal injury. There were many times it gave me the inspiration to keep going. I've had a lot of big cases since then, with notable headlines and settlements more than a hundred times the size of that one, but not one of them was ever as hard or as heartbreaking as that case with those two little girls. Unfortunately, I lost the plaque during the damage to our office in the Capital One Tower during Hurricane Laura two years ago. But even without it in front of me, it's a case I'll never forget. When life and business and kids make me feel worn out, I remember that plaque and pictures of those beautiful children and remember, **WE ARE SO BLESSED. IT MAKES ME REMEMBER WHY GOD PUT ME IN THIS PROFESSION.**