

THE NATIONAL LAW JOURNAL

THE 2024 NLJ AWARDS: PROFESSIONAL EXCELLENCE— LITIGATION DEPARTMENTS OF THE YEAR PRODUCTS LIABILITY

OCTOBER 31, 2024

WINNER: WILLIAMS & CONNOLLY

Answered by: Joseph Petrosinelli, Partner

■ **Describe your firm's approach to litigation and your strategy for building successful teams for trials or other matters.**

Our guiding approach is to prepare from Day 1 for taking a case to trial, putting our clients' interests first, and being principled.



■ **Discuss the two biggest litigation cases your firm worked on in 2023 and how you reached successful outcomes.**

We continued our record of success on behalf of Pfizer in the Zantac Product Liability Litigation, securing a complete victory for Pfizer on the eve of trial, where the court held that plaintiff's "innovator liability" theory was not sufficient to show a duty to plaintiff under Illinois law.

Next, we secured victory before the Fifth Circuit on an important preemption issue in the Docetaxel Product Liability Litigation, obtaining a ruling on behalf of Pfizer/Hospira that will facilitate the application of preemption principles to hundreds of claims in the MDL and that affects multiple cases against the makers of 505(b)(2) medicines.

■ **What are the most challenging and satisfying aspects of your work in litigation?**

The most challenging aspects are also the most satisfying: helping clients achieve their goals, solving complex legal problems, and winning at trial.

■ **What is the most important piece of advice you'd share with young lawyers?**

Prepare, prepare, prepare—but prepare with a purpose. There is no substitute for strategic preparation when it comes to understanding the strengths and weaknesses of a case going to trial.