



Gary M. Zwain

Founding Shareholder, Special Counsel

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Gary is originally from New Jersey, but has lived in New Orleans since 1975. He graduated magna cum laude from Rutgers University. At that time, law schools were much less expensive in the South. Taking the advice of his college advisor, Gary chose to move to New Orleans because he had wanted to be a lawyer for as long as he could remember. He received his Juris Doctorate from Tulane University Law School in 1978.

Gary's clients include municipal and state agencies, a member of Congress, companies engaged in the oil and gas industry, auto manufacturers, insurance companies and construction companies. His litigation practice encompasses both trial work at the district court level, as well as appellate work in both state and federal courts. He has taken scores of cases to trial, including at least ten complex class certification hearings, both in state and federal courts. Gary's most notable work has come while serving as court appointed defense liaison counsel in a number of multi-party, complex environmental/toxic tort class actions. Examples are In re: Combustion, Inc, In re: Bayou Sorrel and In re: Gaylord Tank Car Explosion. Working with other court appointed liaison counsel, Gary led and ultimately reached successful resolution of complex negotiations and settlements in these cases. Gary also was lead defense counsel responsible for the defense of a large auto manufacturer against a class of persons who alleged his client's vehicles contained a defect that tended to develop "oil sludge" despite proper maintenance. He was successful in putting together a nationwide class settlement that did not require his client to pay any money damages to the class.

Gary also had three opportunities to teach various aspects of the American legal system to law students in Belarus and Russia with the Center for International Legal Studies. He spent thirty days in Minsk in 2008, and in Perm in 2011 and 2012. In those experiences, he learned as much about their systems as they might have learned about ours. He came away with a renewed appreciation for the benefits of our American system of justice, which, despite its imperfections and costs, still provides the best foundation and protection in the world for the primacy of the rule of law in our society.

Areas of Practice

- Environmental / Mass Tort
- Oil and Gas "Legacy" Litigation
- Commercial Litigation
- Class Actions/Complex Litigation
- Insurance Coverage
- Extra Contractual and Bad Faith Litigation

Professional Affiliations

Mr. Zwain was elected as a member of the American Board of Trial Attorneys in 2007. He has been designated a "Super Lawyer" since 2012 through the present. He has been an "AV" rated attorney by Martindale-Hubbell for nearly 30 years. He is a member in good standing of the bars of the U.S. District Courts for the Eastern, Middle, and Western Districts of Louisiana, the U.S. Fifth Circuit Court of Appeal, and the U.S. Supreme Court. He participates as a member of the American Bar Association, the Louisiana Association of Defense Counsel, the National Forum for Toxic Tort and Environmental Issues (FETTI) and the Defense Research Institute, and the New Orleans Pro Bono Organization. In 2015, Gary was recognized by the New Orleans Pro Bono Project as having provided distinguished service. He has published articles in "For the Defense," the "Environmental Claims Journal," as well as in other publications intended for the legal profession. He has delivered talks for DRI seminars as well as for CLE purposes regarding developments in certain aspects of Louisiana law. Gary has been admitted to practice in Louisiana since 1978.