

Four Attorneys Promoted to Shareholder at Simmons Hanly Conroy

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ALTON – Simmons Hanly Conroy, one of the nation’s largest mass torts firms, is pleased to announce the promotion of four attorneys to shareholder, effective Jan. 1. The firm’s new shareholders are Holly Nighbert, Brendan A. Smith, Gary DiMuzio and Sanford "Sandy" Smokler.

Nighbert and Smith are based in the firm’s Alton office, while DiMuzio and Smokler work out of New York.

“These four attorneys represent a wide range of our firm’s capabilities, seeking justice for those harmed by pharmaceutical and medical devices, mesothelioma and other environmental hazards, sexual abuse and more,” said Simmons Hanly Conroy Chairman John Simmons. “Their promotions are well-deserved, and I look forward to their future success for our clients.”

Since joining the firm in 2012, Nighbert has helped recover millions of dollars on her clients’ behalf. Her practice focuses on complex and pharmaceutical litigation,

representing individuals and communities affected by dangerous drugs or defective medical devices. Her representative cases include DePuy Pinnacle hip implants, Invokana, Lipitor, Propecia, transvaginal mesh and most recently prescription opioids. She served on the trial team for all three bellwether trials in the DePuy Pinnacle Hip Implant multidistrict litigation (MDL), which secured more than \$1.7 billion in verdicts. Currently, she represents county and municipal governments from more than 18 states against the pharmaceutical companies in the National Prescription Opiates MDL. Nighbert earned her J.D. from the University of Dayton School of Law.

A member of the Complex Litigation Department, Smith focuses primarily on sexual abuse, pharmaceutical and medical device litigation. He litigates cases nationwide, representing thousands of clients who have been harmed by products such as Elmiron, testosterone replacement therapy (TRT), Essure, Zofran and Xarelto. He recently served in a liaison counsel capacity in the TRT MDL and supported the Plaintiff's Steering Committee in executing the complex terms of the litigation's four master settlement agreements. The federal and state litigation included 8,000 cases filed against more than 20 pharmaceutical defendants. Before joining the firm, Smith served as a law clerk for several judges and received his J.D. from the Saint Louis University School of Law.

DiMuzio joined the firm in 2019, bringing 25 years of litigation experience, most recently as of counsel at a Virginia firm while also managing his own Texas-based firm. During his career, he has successfully represented plaintiffs in a wide variety of cases involving mesothelioma, lung cancer, leukemia, liver cancer, silicosis, plant explosions and environmental contamination. He recently served as lead trial attorney for one of the first in-person trials in Louisiana courts post-COVID. The case involved plaintiff Henry Pete who was diagnosed with mesothelioma after unloading raw asbestos from New Orleans docks in the late 1960s. The trial resulted in a \$10 million jury verdict, one of the largest results for a single plaintiff in the history of the state. DiMuzio earned his J. D. at the University of Houston Law Center.

Smokler brings more than 24 years of experience to the Complex Litigation Department. Focusing his practice on mass torts including medical device, pharmaceutical and opioid litigation, Smokler's role centers on discovery, fact investigation and evidence development. His strategic and clear thinking approach to breaking down complex topics during a trial has secured significant results, specifically the bellwether trials for both the DePuy Pinnacle and National Prescription Opiate MDLs, which resulted in billions of dollars awarded in verdicts and settlements. In addition, he was a member of the first Bextra personal injury trial team in the United States, a case that led to an \$894 million settlement. Smokler received his J.D. from Brooklyn Law School.

About Simmons Hanly Conroy, LLC

Simmons Hanly Conroy is one of the nation's largest mass tort law firms. Primary areas of litigation include asbestos and mesothelioma, pharmaceutical, consumer protection, environmental and personal injury. The firm's attorneys have been appointed to leadership in numerous national multidistrict litigations, including Prescription Opiates, Vioxx, Toyota Unintended Acceleration, BP Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill, DePuy Pinnacle and the Volkswagen Emission Scandal. Offices are located in Alton, Ill.; Chicago; Los Angeles; New York City; San Francisco; and St. Louis. Read more at www.simmonsfirm.com.