



Stephen Strum

SHAREHOLDER IN ST. LOUIS, MO

Stephen Strum is a shareholder of Sandberg Phoenix. He focuses his practice primarily in the defense of product manufacturers and nursing homes.

He has experience defending product manufacturers in hundreds of catastrophic injury cases involving passenger cars, sport utility vehicles, aircrafts, all-terrain vehicles, go-carts, lawnmowers, electrical circuitry, exercise equipment, wheelchairs and many other consumer and industrial products.

Further, he represents a number of nationally recognized and local nursing home operators in claims involving patient care litigation, risk management and allegations of fraud. Steve has directly handled, evaluated or managed over 500 nursing home cases in over fifteen states, and has acted as regional and national trial counsel for several nursing home operators.

Steve is trained and certified in dispute resolution, arbitration and mediation, receiving his certification from Northwestern University, School of Professional Studies in Chicago, Illinois. He has also received Advanced Mediator Training at United States Arbitration & Mediation ("USA&M"), and is an affiliated mediator with USA&M in St. Louis. Further, he has completed Advanced Mediation Training for Court Certified ADR Neutrals for the United States District Court in January, 2016. Steve is a certified neutral with the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Missouri.

Recently, Steve was appointed to Municipal Judge for the City of Clayton. He was unanimously nominated by an independent selection committee and received the unanimous votes of the Mayor and Board of Aldermen.

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SERVICES

Product, Asbestos & Toxic Tort
Liability

INDUSTRIES

Automotive

Aviation

Consumer Products

Hospitals

Hunting & Sporting Goods

Long-term Care & Senior Living

Manufacturing & Distribution

Physicians & Allied Health

Professionals

Recreational Products

Tobacco & Nicotine Alternatives

REPRESENTATIVE EXPERIENCE

Powell v. Scenic Nursing. In 2021, Steve presented this case for a two-day arbitration before Judge Barbara Wallace. This arbitration was conducted by Zoom. Plaintiff alleged multiple incidents of sexual assault by a nurse over several months. The arbitrator entered a complete award in favor of the nursing home and its employees.

Smith v. Toyota Motor Corporation. In 2018, Steve represented an automobile manufacturer in a case involving the driver of a 1997 Toyota 4Runner who was ejected during a rollover. The plaintiff sustained catastrophic injuries, including a brain injury. The Hannibal, Missouri Federal Court jury rendered a verdict in favor of the manufacturer.

Johnson v. Riverside Nursing. This case against client Riverside Nursing involved a fall by a visitor, who claimed significant back injuries as a result of the fall. After a trial in August, 2016, a Platte County, Missouri jury rendered a verdict in favor of Riverside Nursing.

Fulbright v. National HealthCare Corporation. This nursing home case was presented for a two-day arbitration in October, 2014. An 85 year-old nursing home resident suffered multiple fractures during a transfer into a transport van. The arbitrator entered a complete award in favor of the nursing home.

Owensby v. Riverside Nursing. This nursing home case was scheduled to be tried in Platte County, Missouri in May, 2012. It was filed in 2009, and alleged negligence and wrongful death of an 87 year old resident receiving hospice care. Plaintiffs alleged their father died from administration of too much morphine. After litigating the case for three years, including numerous depositions, the plaintiffs agreed to a dismissal with prejudice without the payment of any money.

Hall v. Cooperative Workshops, Inc. In November, 2011, Steve tried this two-week long wrongful death case in Pettis County, Missouri. It involved the traumatic crushing death of a 56 year-old husband and father. The decedent, a tractor-trailer driver, was standing between another tractor-trailer and a loading dock. Steve's client was an employee of Cooperative Workshops, Inc., who allegedly instructed the tractor-trailer driver that he had permission to back up. Upon backing up, the tractor-trailer pinned the decedent to the loading dock, crushing him to death. The economic losses were approximately \$1 million, and plaintiffs' counsel asked the jury for an award of \$4.5 million. The jury determined the decedent was 100% responsible for his own death.

This case was listed as the #8 defense verdict in the State of Missouri for 2011 by the Missouri Lawyers Weekly.

Nelson v. Walnut Ridge. This nursing home case was tried in Sangamon County, Illinois in May, 2009. A 70 year-old resident experienced a fall, resulting in a fractured hip. In addition, the resident developed dehydration and an infection, resulting in sepsis and death. The Court entered a Directed Verdict in favor of the consulting company defendant. A jury rendered a verdict against the nursing home defendant, and the amount was half the final settlement offer before trial.

Maday v. Scenic View. This nursing home case was tried in the City of St. Louis in April, 2008. An 80 year-old resident was removed from her ventilator by an unlicensed Respiratory Therapist, and died four days later. The plaintiff alleged that no physician had ordered her removal from the ventilator. The Respiratory Therapist was charged and entered a plea of involuntary manslaughter as a result of the incident. Plaintiff's counsel sought \$4.0 million from the jury. The jury rendered a verdict against the nursing home for \$26,000 (the amount of the medical specials).

Schwab v. Rosewood. This nursing home case was tried in Madison County, Illinois in October 2007. An 82 year-old resident fell and fractured her neck, requiring significant cervical surgery. The resident died five months later. The medical specials associated with the injury were \$175,000. Plaintiff's counsel sought \$1 million in closing argument. After nearly 20 hours of deliberations over the course of three days, the jury rendered a verdict for plaintiff just over \$58,000.

Klevorn v. Easter Seals of Missouri. In 2007, Steve represented Easter Seals of Missouri in a case involving a 15 year-old autistic child who sustained a fracture to his arm. Plaintiff alleged intentional abuse of the child while trying to remove a pen from his hand. The case settled just prior to closing arguments.

Miller v. Levering Regional. In 2005, Steve represented a nursing home with respect to the death of a 91 year-old resident who sustained a fall and died sixteen hours later. The jury rendered a verdict for the plaintiff.

White v. Cutler-Hammer. In 2003, Steve represented the manufacturer of a circuit breaker, where plaintiff alleged that a product defect caused a residential fire. The jury rendered a verdict in favor of the plaintiff.

CGU v. Cutler-Hammer. In 2002, Steve represented the manufacturer of a circuit breaker, where the plaintiff alleged it malfunctioned and caused \$1.5 million in property damage. The jury rendered a verdict in favor of the defendant.

Bell v. Toyota Motor Corporation, et al. In 2000, Steve represented an automobile manufacturer in a case involving a sixteen year old paraplegic. After a three week trial, the Joplin, Missouri jury rendered a verdict in favor of the manufacturer. This case was listed as the #2 defense verdict in the State of Missouri for 2000 by the Missouri Lawyers Weekly.

Redfield v. Beverly Health et al. In 1999, he represented a nursing home with respect to the death of a ventilator-dependent quadriplegic residing in the home. The jury returned a verdict in favor of the plaintiff.

Ragle v. Beverly Enterprises, Inc., et al. In 1998, Steve represented a nursing home operator in a wrongful death case as a result of a man who allegedly wandered from the home and died from the sub-zero temperature. The federal court jury rendered a verdict in favor of the plaintiff in the amount of \$1.00. Steve was able to convince the jury that the plaintiff, the decedent's daughter, should receive merely a nominal award since she had not seen her father for nearly 20 years before his death. The jury rejected plaintiff's prayer in the amount of \$6 million. This case was listed as the #1 defense verdict in the State of Missouri for 1998 by the Missouri Lawyers Weekly and an Honorable Mention of the top defense verdicts in the country for 1998 by The National Law Journal.

Wayne v. Burlington Motor. In 1998, Steve represented an individual whose vehicle was struck by a tractor-trailer. As a result, the plaintiff had three cervical discs removed, and was fused from C-4 to C-7. The jury rendered a verdict in favor of his client in the amount of \$2.1 million.

Adams v. Whelan Security, et al. In 1996, Steve represented a security company and its employed guard who shot a teenager, rendering him a C-6 quadriplegic. The jury rendered a verdict in favor of the plaintiff.

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

Serves as a Fellow of the American Bar Foundation, which is made up of lawyers, judges, law faculty and legal scholars who have demonstrated outstanding dedication to the highest principles of the profession and their communities. Only one percent of lawyers to practice in a given jurisdiction are invited to become a member.

Product Liability Advisory Council (PLAC)

Member of the Missouri Municipal and Associate Circuit Judges Association

Steve is a past member of the firm's Management and Strategic Planning Committees, and past member of the firm's Compensation Committee.

Former member of the MICA Board (Migrant and Immigrant Community Action Project)

EDUCATION

J.D., Saint Louis University School of Law

B.A., University of Illinois at Champaign

CIVIC ACTIVITIES

Steve most recently agreed to act as a volunteer job coach through the Saint Louis University Transformative Workforce Academy, helping those who are coming out of prison find and retain meaningful employment.

In 2013, Stephen was awarded the 2012 Coach of the Year by the Missouri Parks & Recreation Association. Over the years, Stephen has coached over 25 boys and girls youth baseball, volleyball and basketball teams.

In 2011, Stephen and his wife, Angela, were honored with the Visionary Award by the Foundation Fighting Blindness. The Foundation is a national non-profit that supports research to help prevent, treat and cure vision diseases.

Steve is a former member of the Board of Trustees for the Migrant and Immigrant Community Action Project ("MICA"), and a past member of the Board of Trustees for Whitfield School. He is a former member of the Board of Trustees for the St. Michael School of Clayton, and former Treasurer and Board member of the Gateway Speedskating Club.

Steve is currently a part-time student at Washington University in St. Louis, studying International Affairs.

Steve is a former mock trial coach for the Crossroads College Preparatory School team. He also coached his children's volleyball, basketball and baseball teams.

Steve was also involved with the Shrewsbury Community Theatre, and over the past few years has been a major actor in their performances of "Annie," "Sound of Music," "Shrek" and "Willy Wonka."

PRESENTATIONS

Co-Presenter, "The Last 100 Days Before Trial (Part I)," Sandberg Phoenix Professional Development Series

Presented to the leadership at the Clayton Police Department on the issues of documentation and defending cases of discrimination

Presented to the Rotary Club of Clayton-Ladue regarding the Clayton Municipal Court and his work as the Clayton Municipal Judge.

Presented to a group of Clayton citizens attending the Clayton Citizens Police Academy 2023 regarding the Clayton Municipal Court and his work as the Clayton Municipal Judge.

RECOGNITION

2017-2022, 2024

BEST LAWYERS IN AMERICA

Best Lawyer

Litigation - Health Care, Litigation - Insurance, Product Liability Litigation - Defendants

2023

BEST LAWYERS IN AMERICA

Best Lawyer

Litigation - Health Care, Litigation - Insurance, Product Liability Litigation - Defendants, Specific Focus: Automotive

2020

SAINT LOUIS UNIVERSITY

Alumni Merit Award

He was awarded the 2020 Saint Louis University Alumni Merit Award, in recognition of his outstanding achievement and dedication to the practice of law and commitment to the mission of the University.

2012-2020

MISSOURI & KANSAS SUPER LAWYERS

Super Lawyer

Medical Malpractice

2018

AMERICA'S TOP 100 HIGH STAKES LITIGATORS FOR MISSOURI

2012-2013

CORPORATE COUNSEL

Top AV Rated Lawyers Guide to Healthcare

Receiving an AV Preeminent rating is a significant accomplishment and testament to the fact that Steve's peers rank him at the highest level of professional excellence.

2005-2007

MISSOURI & KANSAS SUPER LAWYERS

Super Lawyer

Medical Malpractice/Products Liability (2007)

1999

MISSOURI BAR FOUNDATION

Lon O. Hocker Memorial Trial Lawyers Award

This award is given to three lawyers in Missouri under the age of 37 who have shown excellence in the courtroom.