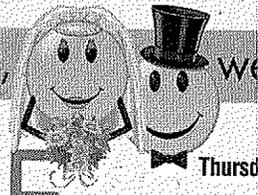


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PEOPLE OF NORTHVILLE

Township attorney named one of top 10 for 2006

By Pam Fleming
STAFF WRITER

Northville Township resident Brian J. McKeen, a medical malpractice attorney, has a new claim to fame.

He was recently selected by Michigan Lawyers Weekly news-magazine as one of the top 10 lawyers of the year for 2006.

Selection to this group is recognition that the recipient has made significant contributions to the law and to society. He found out he had earned the honor in late 2006 and will be honored at a special dinner in the near future.

"It's very gratifying," he said about being named to the top 10. "But, the most important thing is the recognition of my clients."

He said one of his most prized possessions is a plaque given to him by a former client — the mother of a teenage child with cerebral palsy. The plaque, signed by the child, reads, "At the end of your life

nobody will remember how much money you made or how many cars you owned. But they will remember that you made a difference in the life of a child."

McKeen, whose office is in Detroit, has helped a variety of clients in his 24 years as an attorney, ranging from obtaining judgments for injuries to a plaintiff during a routine LASIK eye surgery procedure to cases dealing with severe birth trauma.

In 2006, he won a \$15 million verdict against Henry Ford Health Systems in a case involving a newborn with cerebral palsy as a result of the hospital's error during the child's delivery.

McKeen also won a \$55 million judgment against Henry Ford Health Systems/Cottage Hospital, which is one of the highest medical malpractice awards in the state.

A jury ruled in favor of a 5-year-old girl who had severe brain damage as a result of not being treated properly during a respiratory arrest.

Brian McKeen at a glance

Brian McKeen is on the Board of Governors of the American Association for Justice, formerly the Association of Trial Lawyers of America. He is co-chair of the Professional Negligence Section of this organization and the Birth Trauma Litigation Group and is active in the Michigan Trial Lawyers Association. He and his wife, Brenda, have two children, Alex, 7, and Alaina, 5. McKeen's an avid golfer and carries a 5 handicap at Meadowbrook Country Club in Northville.



He said through court settlements, he's been able to help clients pay for medical or attendant care expenses.

McKeen founded his law firm in 1998 after years of trial practice.

He is a coach for the American Association for Justice's medical negligence exchange group, which sponsors educational programs, roundtable discussions and the sharing of information among attorneys.

McKeen, who frequently lectures about developments in medical malpractice law, spoke at the Jan. 2-9 Boston University School of Medicine 7th Annual Conference on Medical Negligence and Risk Management near Cancun, Mexico.

He has a lot of interaction with physicians in his work and said medical malpractice attorneys can actually help them avoid litigation.

"So many physicians approached me in Mexico to say they appreciated me coming and the comments that I made," he said. "They told me we both have patient safety in mind."

McKeen earned his undergraduate degree from Central Michigan University in Mount Pleasant and graduated from Cooley Law School in Lansing in 1982. While in law school, McKeen clerked for the late Oakland County Circuit Court Judge Robert C. Anderson.

It was during this time that he became interested in a career in medical malpractice law. "Working in his courtroom and watching some of his trials, I found it intellectually stimulating," McKeen said.

Malpractice lawsuits arise when there are deviations from the accepted standard of medical practice, according to McKeen.

He said litigation is a tremendous deterrent to substandard care and that many lawsuits have led to positive changes in patient care.

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