

WHO'S WHO | in Women in Professional Services

By LISA MORRIS JOSEFAK

RHONDA L. MEYER, ESQ

Pegalis and Erickson, LLC

Rhonda L. Meyer, Esq. is an associate at the law firm of Pegalis and Erickson, LLC in Lake Success. Meyer has more than 20 years of experience representing medical malpractice plaintiffs. She has extensive experience with medical malpractice cases involving birth injuries resulting from negligent obstetrical and peri-natal care, neonatal medicine, cardiothoracic surgery and orthopedic surgery.

At Pegalis and Erickson, Meyer handles the pre-trial work for the firm's youngest clients – babies who sustained severe neurological injuries at birth that require a lifetime of care. Most notably, her pre-trial work helped the firm win some of its highest verdicts to date. Meyer has prepared numerous cases that have resulted in multimillion dollar verdicts and settlements. Her diverse experience includes medical legal cases involving radiation oncology, pediatrics, pulmonary medicine, vascular surgery, infectious disease, nephrology, neurosurgery, and cancer related medicine. Her cases have included those of wrongful death, emotional distress claims resulting from fetal demise, maternal deaths, and birth trauma resulting in Erb's palsy. Meyer also has successful appellate practice experience.

The firm is seeing a positive trend in early resolution of medical negligence cases, Meyer said.

"This trend is allowing for a decrease in pre-trial costs," she said. "Early resolution, when appropriate, shortens the time in which medical negligence cases are processed. Also, resolving cases earlier than was previously common, may help keep the overall cost of resolving the matter lower."



The trend of early resolution can be considered beneficial to many parties including the plaintiff, the defendant, the courts and local taxpayers, she said.

"Less court time, means there is less costs for the courts, and thus the taxpayers," Meyer said. "Injured persons often have high medical costs and are also experiencing the loss of earnings, so they need to be compensated sooner, rather than later. The defendants' insurance carriers typically would rather avoid the costs associated with litigation for negligence cases that they think may eventually have to be settled anyway."

Economic trends effect the decision that insurance carriers make, she said.

"In years past, when interest raters were high it was economically beneficial to wait for the legal process to wind its way to trial," Meyer noted. "Their reserves were making money. Now, with interest raters being so low, it does not make economic sense to spend money on defense costs in addition to the settlement amount."

Meyer is admitted to practice in New York and United States District Court for the Southern District of New York. She is a member of New York State Trial Lawyers Association, Nassau Bar Association, Long Island Women's Agenda, and the Huntington Lawyers Club.

An avid soccer player, Rhonda has played with the Long Island Ladies' Soccer League for the past 25 years. Her volunteer time over the years has been dedicated to girl's sports, as a volunteer coach of girl's soccer at the Northport Youth Center Soccer League, basketball at St. Hugh Church in Huntington Station, and softball for the Huntington Tri-Village Little League.

Meyer earned a law degree from Hofstra University School of Law and an undergraduate degree from State University of New York at Stony Brook.

Pegalis & Erickson, LLC, is one of the nation's premier law firms, representing seriously injured individuals and their families in cases of medical negligence for more than 40 years. Consistently acknowledged by its peers and national media for outstanding success on behalf of its clients, Pegalis & Erickson has an unequaled track record of consistent and highly recognized jury verdicts including the distinction of receiving two of the highest medical malpractice jury verdicts in the State of New York – a \$116 million verdict for an infant who sustained brain damage due to medical negligence during labor and delivery and a \$114.8 million verdict for a woman who sustained anoxic brain injury.

Patient safety, medical accountability and attention to detail are the paramount concerns of the firm. At Pegalis & Erickson, clients receive a unique level of close contact and personal attention from the firm's nine seasoned attorneys who have worked together for more than a decade – and in many cases even longer.

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