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Attorney Slager Cares about His Brain Injury Clients as well as the Courts

Plaintiff's lawyers sometimes get a bad rap for bringing frivolous lawsuits and clogging up the courts.

But don't try applying that label to Paul Slager, a partner at Silver Golub & Teitell LLP in Stamford, CT. One of the nation's leading brain injury lawyers, Slager has no interest in bringing meritless claims. And he would prefer no one else did either as evidenced by the passage below in this exclusive interview with *Sports Litigation Alert*.



Paul Slager

Question: *What drew you to the concussion litigation space?*

Answer: Brain injury survivors have historically been very misunderstood because their injuries, while tremendously debilitating, are often not immediately obvious or visible. As a result, effectively representing victims of head trauma requires not only patience and compassion, but also a willingness to understand injuries that may appear subtle, but actually profoundly affect the lives of those who have been injured. In my experience, brain injury survivors have historically been underserved by the attorneys that represent them. Few attorneys understand brain injury and its significant effects, and fewer yet are energetic or creative enough to present a brain injury survivor's case in a powerful and persuasive way. My interest in representing brain injury survivors comes from my desire to do these things so that brain injury survivors have a strong advocate on their side.

Q: *What would be your typical client?*

A: One thing I learned early in my work with those who have suffered a brain injury is that there really is no typical client. There are many causes of brain injury, and the range of my cases historically reflects this, from brain injuries sustained as a result of medical negligence to cases involving injuries from collisions and explosions. In the cases I handle, though, there are some common threads. For starters, I only represent brain injury survivors in lawsuits when my

investigation reveals their injuries clearly were caused by careless or intentional acts of another person.

It is important to note, however, that many brain injuries are not the result of negligent or intentional acts. While these situations are every bit as challenging for the survivor, this does not mean a lawsuit is always warranted. On the contrary, I believe a lawyer that brings a case that lacks merit, simply because a significant brain injury has occurred, does both the survivor and the legal process a disservice.

The other common characteristic of my clients is that each of them has been profoundly affected by their injuries in ways that impact their daily lives. The specifics of how and why they are affected, however, range widely.

Q: What is the biggest challenge of representing a client in this space?

A: The main challenges stem from two principal issues: (1) working with a brain injury survivor often means working with all of the client's disabilities, which can at times be frustrating and time-consuming and (2) proving the seriousness of an injury that is not immediately apparent is risky and requires creative (and sometimes expensive) techniques and strategies.

Q: Your firm has been active in awareness, treatment and other areas outside the courtroom, why?

A: We believe that the population of brain injury survivors has long been misunderstood and underrepresented. Having worked with many survivors, we want to give back, not only by vigorously representing survivors in their cases, but also by advocating for survivors through awareness and access to services. Speaking personally, my own work on the Board of Directors of the Brain Injury Alliance of Connecticut (formerly the Brain Injury Association of Connecticut), including serving as President of the Board of Directors for five years, has been enriching on many levels, both personally and professionally. First, I have met and worked with many wonderful survivors and their family members as well as many of their service providers, which alone was worth my investment of time and energy on the Board. They have significantly broadened my understanding of brain injury, which is personally enriching and also helps me more effectively advocate for survivors in court.

Q: What separates your firm from others in the space?

A: Three things: (1) our understanding of how brain injury affects the day-to-day life of survivors, which is based on our experience representing so many survivors

over many years; (2) our scrutiny of cases before accepting them, which ensures that we pursue only the most meritorious cases; and (3) our willingness to invest tremendous resources in each and every case we accept.