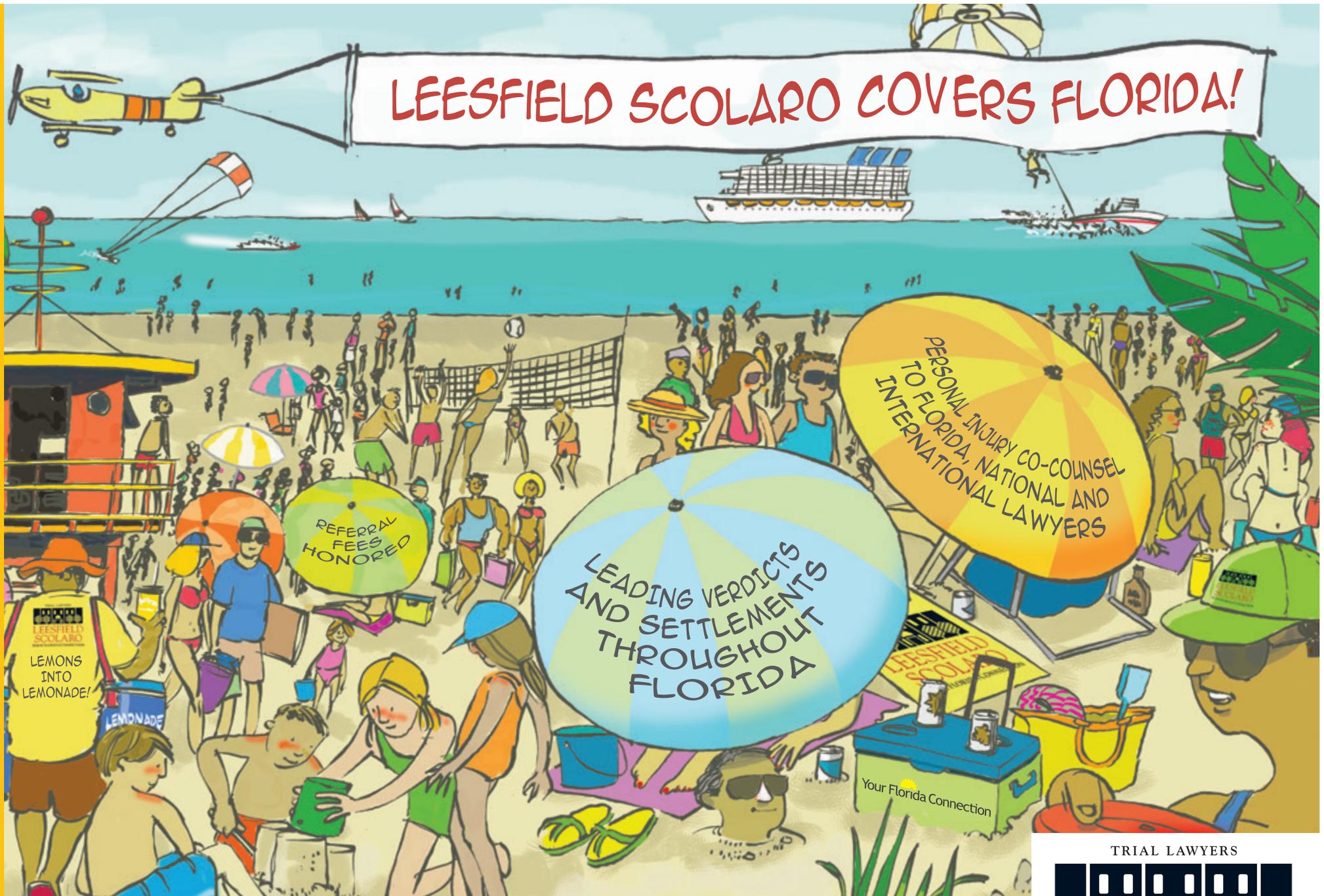


Call our Florida Hotline: 800-836-6400 • E-mail [Leesfield@Leesfield.com](mailto:Leesfield@Leesfield.com) • Visit [Leesfield.com](http://Leesfield.com)



# Petition

From the Florida Offices of  
**Leesfield Scolaro**

Miami • Key West •  
Central Florida • South Beach •  
Nationwide





# Florida Recreational Recoveries

**RA LEESFIELD** won a **\$19.8 million** verdict against American Honda in a motorcycle/recreational case. Then, he and Partner **Tom Scolaro** won a **\$2.5 million** verdict for a young client injured on a moped. Partner **Carol Finklehoffe** followed with an **\$850,000** settlement

for a devastating Jacuzzi injury, and Partner **Justin Shapiro** now has had numerous recent boating and recreational recoveries, including a Florida Keys **\$800,000** jet ski incident (2015), as well as a jet ski settlement in Miami-Dade County for **\$1 million** (2015). Other

recreational cases include **\$1 million** for a United Kingdom couple killed in a Central Florida touring motorcycle collision, and **\$4.5 million** for injuries from an overturned "dune buggy" in Central Florida. Florida recoveries in bicycling cases are on the rise. Our recent results include a **\$3.1 million** leg injury in Miami (2015), **\$1.2 million** for a Seattle bicyclist injured in Monroe County (2015), **\$1.8 million** for Boca Raton bicyclist (2015), and **\$5 million** for a Key West

nurse/cyclist.

Representation of clients injured during leisure activities has increased as more Americans take advantage of free time and industries create more opportunities for outdoor fun. **Ninety-nine million** visitors a year enjoy the vacation experience consistent with Florida's outdoor lifestyle. They join **20 million Floridians** who must be protected by pro-active courtroom and legislative remedies.

## Resort Tort Report:

- **\$10 million** recovery for miniature golf electrocution.
- **\$8.25 million** parasailing recovery for **Chicago** and **Pennsylvania** families.
- **\$7.25 million** parasailing wrongful death and brain injury recovery for teenage sisters.
- **\$5 million** settlement for Minnesota child paralyzed from ATV rollover.
- **\$5 million** hot tub electrocution in Palm Beach County.
- **\$3.1 million** pool drowning settlement in Broward County.
- **\$3 million** cruise ship recovery for bus excursion injury.
- **\$1.2 million** recovery for the wrongful death of a child struck by defendant's boat while snorkeling in Key West.
- **\$850,000** recovery for women injured on a jet ski in St. Augustine.
- **\$800,000** settlement for Jacuzzi injuries in Central Florida.
- **\$500,000** award for child injured by resort shark attack.

For detailed information, please call 800-836-6400 or go to [www.Leesfield.com](http://www.Leesfield.com).





## Inside Your Petition

- 2** **Florida Recreational Recoveries**  
Neglect in the Recreational Industry.
- 3** **Lemons to Lemonade**  
Tenacity, tenacity, tenacity!
- 4** **Selecting Co-Counsel**  
What do you seek in Florida co-counsel?
- 6** **Cruise News You Can Use**  
Update and practice tips on cruise ship liability.
- 7** **Of Public Interest...**  
At the forefront of legislative changes.  
Maximize your options to reduce ERISA Liens.
- 8** **Cases from Other Places!**  
Keys to serving out-of-state co-counsel and clients.
- 10** **Covering Our Own Backyard**  
Continuing the Expansion of Firm Practice  
in South Florida.
- 11** **A 40-Year Tradition**  
Leesfield Scolaro maintains a strong presence in  
Key West and Monroe County.
- 12** **Leesfield Scolaro Covers Central and  
North Florida**  
Serving Central and North Florida as Firm continues  
Of Counsel Relationship with Bounds Law Group.
- 13** **Expansion brings new opportunities to  
Leesfield Scolaro**
- 14** **25 Years of Caring**  
Leesfield Family Foundation and the Leesfield/AAJ  
Law Student Scholarship Program.



**H**ARD WORK and creativity can turn “lemons to lemonade.” Your clients demand resourceful and aggressive litigation to win a lifetime of financial security. This issue of **Petition** reports recent and retrospective results for clients who selected our firm.

It was faulty construction that caused the defendant driver (\$50,000 insurance coverage) to leave the road and strike our client’s vehicle. Research and lots of digging uncovered defective road construction, resulting in a life-changing **\$10,050,000** result. We have always understood the importance of turning lemons to lemonade, when possible. In 2015, a young airline pilot sustained lifetime

neurological injuries in a Miami-Dade County premises liability case with only **\$1 million** of coverage. Thinking “outside the box,” **Tom Scolaro** brought about a **\$7 million** result and economic security for our client (**\$6 million** above

**\$50,000 coverage into \$10,050,000**

coverage). In Fort Myers, with minimal insurance on a delivery car, **\$9 million** was collected by the insightful work of Partners **Ira Leesfield** and **Carol Finklehoffe**.

Partner **Justin Shapiro** would not give up when a young Pensacola family was seriously injured by a New York driver. The result: a **\$600,000** recovery. And, just recently,

he fought for a **\$1 million** recovery to compensate a victim of boating negligence in Biscayne Bay. These and many other cases brought new opportunities for our clients.

Through your confidence, we fulfill the goals of our firm and meet our clients’ needs with experience and case dedication.

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to work together and for your clients. To find out more about our commitment, please go to [www.Leesfield.com](http://www.Leesfield.com).

Sincerely,

*Ira Leesfield*

Ira H. Leesfield  
Managing Partner



# Selecting Florida Co-Counsel

## What others are saying about their Leesfield Scolaro experience?

**N SUMMARY**, "you get the job done well and timely, with great client satisfaction."

- In selecting co-counsel to assist in the preparation, settlement or trial of your client's personal injury case, do you want a law firm with 39 years of statewide experience and a strong reputation in Florida?
  - Does the firm have board certified lawyers?
- Do you like, trust and have confidence in the firm you are about to work with?
- Do your clients feel welcome, and is there an ongoing communication regarding important developments between you and the client?
  - What are the best results of - and recommendations for - the firm you are about to choose?

We have the resources and full commitment to complete major cases.

- When you go to [www.Leesfield.com](http://www.Leesfield.com), you will find a firm with an earned reputation for client compassion.
- You will find an organization with a statewide profile that has won the respect of the defense bar, insurance companies and judicial system.
- You will find lawyers who have published, made new case law and facilitated pro-consumer legislation, while lecturing and teaching throughout the country.

We appreciate the confidence you have shown us over the past four decades. When you call about a case, we will get back to you! If we are already working together, thanks for the opportunity. If we have not yet met, please give us a try. Remember, co-counsel and referral fees are honored consistent with Bar Rules.

## What Leesfield Scolaro Co-Counsel are Saying!



"I know Ira, and have served with him on the AAJ Board of Governors for many years. We are both past presidents of our state trial lawyers groups, and I am a member of the Belli Society where Ira is Past President. For decades, Ira has been an outstanding, passionate friend and trial lawyer to so many, including consumers and lawyers in Ohio."

**Mark Kitrick, Esq., Columbus, OH**  
*Past President, Ohio Association for Justice*



"The attorneys at Leesfield Scolaro are all heart, have the highest integrity, full of determination, professional, on the cutting edge of legal theory, and most importantly, friends to their clients and co-counsel."

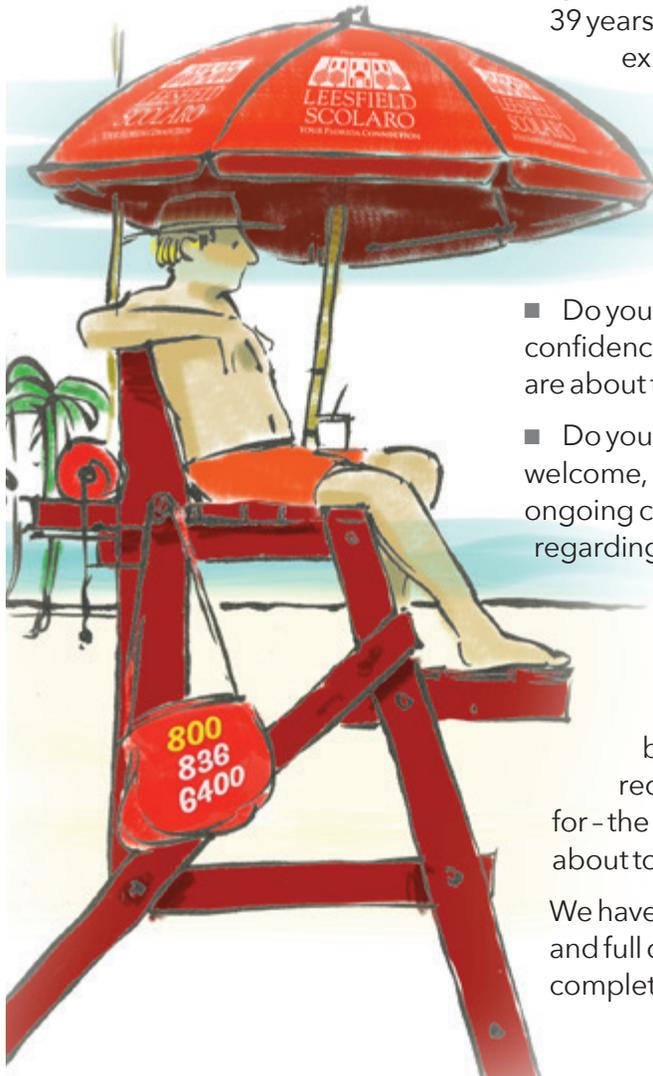
**Alexa D'Amato Barrera, Esq., Egg Harbor Township, NJ**  
*Member, Board of Governors of New Jersey Association for Justice*



"Our Florida cases go to Tom Scolaro and Leesfield Scolaro, P.A. From personal experience, I can assure other Massachusetts lawyers that these are determined, thorough and highly professional trial lawyers.

There is no better choice in Florida than Leesfield Scolaro."

**Louis J. Muggeo, Esq., Salem, MA**





Call our **Florida Hotline: 800-836-6400** E-mail [Leesfield@Leesfield.com](mailto:Leesfield@Leesfield.com) Visit [Leesfield.com](http://Leesfield.com)

**Petition**



“Our firm has worked closely for over a decade with Ira Leesfield and his firm. Their results for New York clients and his involvement in the New York State Trial Lawyers Association make his firm our first choice for Florida cases. Ira’s results for our firm and other New York trial lawyers are well known. I look forward to working with them in the future.”

**Jeff S. Korek, Esq., New York, NY**

*Past President, New York State Trial Lawyers Association*



“I have known Ira Leesfield and his firm for many years. Ira is my first choice in Florida for my referrals. In my experience, the firm’s level of ability and professionalism is superlative. They are also co-counsel who can be counted on to work collaboratively to obtain outstanding results - whether through settlement or trial.”

**Eric J. Ratinoff, Esq., Sacramento, CA**

*Board Member, Consumer Attorneys of California*



“Tom Scolaro and his firm have earned the reputation for creativity and aggressive advocacy with outstanding results for lawyers throughout the country. This is certainly true in Chicago, as Leesfield Scolaro continues three decades of co-counseling with Illinois lawyers. Tom is unstoppable and I look forward to our next case.”

**Adam D. Ingber, Esq., Chicago, IL**



“I worked on a number of cases with Ira Leesfield and his firm for the past 30 years. Many of those cases include Arizona residents vacationing in Florida, or taking cruises out of Florida. My clients love Ira and his firm for their

magnificent work and courteous treatment to both clients and referral counsel. I look forward to continuing my co-counseling relationship with Leesfield Scolaro.”

**Frank Verderame, Esq., Phoenix, AZ**

*Past President, Arizona Association for Justice*



“I have known and worked with Ira and his firm for over 25 years. We served on the American Association for Justice Board for 24 of those years with the opportunity to co-counsel numerous six and seven figure verdicts and settlements. For me, and so many others in Tennessee, Leesfield Scolaro is the “go to” firm in Florida and I rely on him without reservation.”

**Ronnie J. Berke, Esq., Chattanooga, TN**

*Past President, Tennessee Association for Justice and the Melvin Belli Society*



“It is my pleasure to recommend with confidence Ira Leesfield and his firm, Leesfield Scolaro, P.A., for personal injury referrals for Pennsylvania. I have known Ira for over 30 years, having served on the American Association

for Justice Board together. During that time and to present, his firm has obtained excellent results for the clients I have referred, and you can count on him and his firm without reservation.”

**Bernard W. Smalley, Sr., Esq., Philadelphia, PA**

*Past Member, Board of Governors, Philadelphia Bar Association*



“It was my pleasure to work with Ira Leesfield and Carol Finklehoffe in Canada regarding a complicated brain injury motor vehicle case. They were always prepared, organized, and extremely capable. The next time I have a matter requiring the assistance of Florida Counsel, Ira and Carol will be the first people I call.”

**M. Claire Wilkinson, Esq., Ontario, CA**

*Vice President, Ontario Trial Lawyers Association*



## Cruise News You Can Use

**LEESFIELD SCOLARO** and Partner **Carol Finklehoffe** have established a leading position in cruise line litigation throughout Florida and the United States. Although the cruise line ticket provisions provide that most of these cases be filed in the Southern District of Florida, cases against Disney Cruise Line can be brought either in state court in Brevard County or the Middle District of Florida. Other venues include: Los Angeles, CA for Princess Cruise Line and Cunard Line; and the Western District of Washington for Holland America Line.



Carol Finklehoffe, Partner

**Carol** and the firm have made landmark new passenger protection law (*Sorrels v. NCL (Bahamas) Ltd., d/b/a Norwegian Cruise Line*) while applying the recent *Franza v. Royal Caribbean Cruises, Ltd.* to medical negligence cases.

The practice tips at right will help you evaluate your cruise line case. Please remember the cruise line ticket provides for a one-year statute of limitations.

### Practice Tips for Cruise Line Litigation

- Provide written notice to cruise line within 180 days of the incident.
- Immediately send a letter demanding the preservation of relevant evidence, including all surveillance footage.
- Confirm the forum selection clause to ensure you file in the proper jurisdiction and court.
- File suit within the one-year statute of limitation.
- Allege the proper standard of care - "reasonable care under the circumstances."
- Determine if the cruise line created the defective condition.
- Determine if the cruise line was on notice of the defective condition.
- Determine if the cruise line properly warned of the defective condition.
- Determine proper industry standards which are applicable.
- Establish the cruise line approved and/or authorized the design, layout or selection of materials at the incident scene.
- Determine if the cruise line had "exclusive control" and whether *res ipsa loquitur* is applicable.
- Verify whether **DOHSA** or the **Athens Convention** applies to limit recoverable damages.
- Verify where the accident occurred, and if state law can be applied to supplement general maritime law.
- Check the validity of any release - is the cruise line attempting to release itself for its own negligence?
- Properly investigate and plead vicarious liability, agency or joint venture relationships between the cruise line and shore excursion entities or shipboard medical staff.
- Determine the cruise line's relationship with the tour operator in order to establish control.
- Conduct a ship inspection as soon as practicable.
- **Obtain the relevant evidence from the cruise.**
  - CCTV surveillance footage of the scene before and after the incident.
  - All photographs taken at or near the time of the incident.
  - Shipboard statements of plaintiff and all travel companions.
  - Critical crewmembers' names and positions.
  - Evidence of substantially similar incidents for the entire class of vessels.
  - Communications between the vessel and the home office.
  - Deck log.
  - Maintenance and cleaning records.

8A | FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 4, 2015 MiamiHerald.com | MIAMI HERALD

**OPINION**

ALEXANDRA YILCOX, PUBLISHER | SPINDA MARGLES GONZALEZ, EXECUTIVE EDITOR | NANCY ANGLIM, EDITORIAL PAGE EDITOR JAMES L. KNIGHT (561-692)

**THE READERS' FORUM**

### A level playing field for cruise passengers

In August, a U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit stood up for injured cruise passengers in the Sorrels opinion, finding that the right to trial by jury remains intact in maritime cases.

In reversing the trial court's order, the Eleventh Circuit gave Teresita Sorrels her day in court and allows passengers injured by the alleged negligence of the cruise line the same rights as if they were otherwise the victims of land-based negligent businesses.

The landmark case, handled by Leesfield Scolaro's maritime lawyers, Carol L. Finklehoffe and Robert D. Peitz, is the second pro-

consumer, pro-fairness doctrine, chipping away at the otherwise immune and one of the most protected and profitable industries in the world. Just this year, in the case of *Franza v. Royal Caribbean Cruises*, the same appellate court ruled that passengers injured or killed as a result of shipboard medical negligence, in fact, have the right to go to court, a right denied to them for more than 25 years by the previous opinion of *Barbetta v. S/S Bermuda Star*.

The cruise industry has built in their own protection and insulated themselves from equal and fair treatment applied to other wrongdoers.

Most cruise tickets, unknown to the passengers, shorten a typical four-year statute of limitations to only one year.

The cruise lines have also mandated that most cases be brought in South Florida, and they are even now requiring passengers from around the world to file all claims in federal court, increasing the workload of federal judges.

The cruise industry has established a different set of rules by ticket contract and by the extrapolation of maritime case law and ancient doctrines, such as the Death on the High Seas Act and the Athens Convention, as well as certain treatises likewise limiting the rights of cruise passengers.

In the last two pro-consumer orders issued by the Eleventh Circuit, 20 million cruise passengers annually now have certain rights and protections restored.

The cruise industry has been roundly criticized by Congress for a number of safety concerns including, most recently, cases involving rape and sexual assault aboard ships by crew members.

The highly-profitable cruise industry is insured for the losses resulting from their neglect, and should be more forthcoming in restoring losses of their passengers.

— Ira H. Leesfield, Miami



Call our **Florida Hotline: 800-836-6400**

E-mail [Leesfield@Leesfield.com](mailto:Leesfield@Leesfield.com)

Visit [Leesfield.com](http://Leesfield.com)

**Petition**



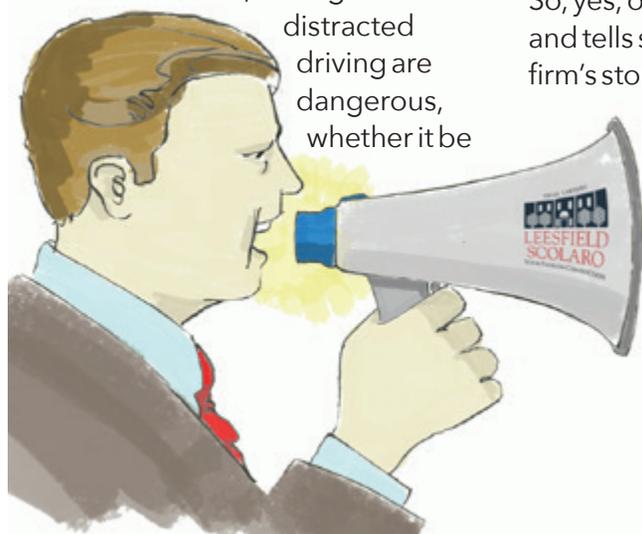
## Of Public Interest...

**F**IRST, we spearheaded legislation requiring carbon monoxide detectors in public facilities, such as hotels and resorts. Then, as we represent a large number of clients for recreational and water sports injuries, we moved in the forefront promoting common sense legislation and regulations for public protection of parasailing and boating activities. Through the courts, we bring accountability for negligent wrongdoing on a daily basis.

We know that drinking alcohol, texting and distracted driving are dangerous, whether it be

on land or at water sports. Our aggressive campaign against texting and driving is recognized statewide and the subject of news articles and legislative reviews. Our strong support of **Mothers Against Drunk Drivers (MADD)** shows the firm's commitment to safer highways and motor vehicle transportation. The same is true for our **Share the Road | Bicycle Safety** efforts. Whenever a danger is recognized, **Leesfield Scolaro** has looked for remedies in court, in the legislature and through public opinion.

So, yes, our cover is fun and tells some of the firm's story. But, the real message is... be safe, be alert, non-distracted, enjoying the Sunshine State with awareness and common sense.



### 10 Important Tips to Help Reduce an ERISA Lien:

1. As soon as you sign client, request Summary Plan Description (SPD), Form 5500 and corresponding Schedule A Forms.
2. Request Stop Loss Policy. You will not obtain it, but it will indicate to the adjuster that you know a thing or two about ERISA subrogation/reimbursement claims. It will help you in negotiations in the long run.
3. Never take the adjuster's words as gospel, especially if the plan is a self-funded "plan." Do your own research!
4. Verify whether the ERISA plan contains every single required term (29 CFR 2520.102-3 - Contents of SUMMARY PLAN DESCRIPTION.)
5. Ensure that the terms of the plan exclude theories such as Specific Fund Doctrine or Made-Whole Doctrine.
6. Ascertain whether the plan allows for a reduction of attorneys' fees and costs. If not, work out a pre-settlement reduction agreement with the plan administrator as soon as possible, and certainly before filing a lawsuit. Do not begin litigation without having a reimbursement agreement in place.
7. Be creative! If only limited coverage is available to your client, offer a reasonable allocation split (after your costs).
8. Be bold! If your client sustained catastrophic injuries, request that the plan waive its entire claim under the circumstances. Justify hardship.
9. Don't hesitate to write to the plan administrator directly, especially if you are requesting a reduction beyond what the plan allows. A plan administrator will be more inclined to work out a deal with you than the adjuster who was instructed not to reduce.
10. Under no circumstances should you ever reimburse an ERISA plan 100% of its claim. If no reduction is offered, litigate the matter.



The electronic display board outside the Leesfield Scolaro Miami offices promotes safety and community programs for hundreds of thousands of motorists every day.



**O**UR FRIENDS and co-counsel from around the country have allowed us to assist their clients in Florida-based cases. Four offices serve the entire state with continued record verdicts and settlements.

It is always a team effort. As referral/co-counsel, you will stay fully involved in the case from discovery to disbursement. Representing out-of-state clients takes a special effort and understanding. Your clients are injured away from home while on vacation, and need help coordinating medical treatment and a high degree of logistical support. We must analyze and assess case damage potential and understand the applicable range of Florida laws.

Our Firm is experienced and dedicated to the special needs of "cases from other places."

**Cases and Clients from:**

**New York**

- Upstate family recovers **\$10 million** in Orlando wrongful death. (2014)
- Manhattan law firm co-counsels for **\$8.5 million** cruise ship recovery. (2014)
- Pilot receives **\$7 million** from Miami defective premises settlement for neurological injuries. (2015)
- **\$1.8 million** wrongful death recovery for estate in Palm Beach auto/bicycle accident. (2015)
- **\$1 million** wrongful death recovery for family of retirement community resident in Broward County. (2013)
- **\$3.25 million** recovery for college student neurologically impaired from a Broward County auto/truck collision. (2014)
- New York City worker awarded **\$15 million** verdict for permanent brain injury in Broward County.
- **\$367,500** settlement for Long Island resident from sidewalk accident injuries in Broward County.
- **\$200,000** recovery for premises liability injuries in Delray Beach. (2015)
- **\$100,000** cruise line passenger recovery for Nassau County woman. (2015)

**California**

- **\$3 million** bus excursion/wrongful death.
- Beverly Hills woman recovers **\$350,000** from South Beach hotel.
- **\$160,000** settlement for cruise ship liability.

**Georgia**

- **\$5.075 million** Key West auto/scooter accident settlement.
- **\$800,000** Central Florida recovery motorcycle accident.

**Michigan**

- Family recovers **\$8.5 million** for brain damage in truck/pedestrian accident in Fort Myers.
- **\$500,000** wrongful death settlement for cruise ship excursion.

**Minnesota**

- **\$5.5 million** ATV paraplegic recovery.
- Knox County couple recovers **\$175,000** for auto collision injuries in Miami. (2015)

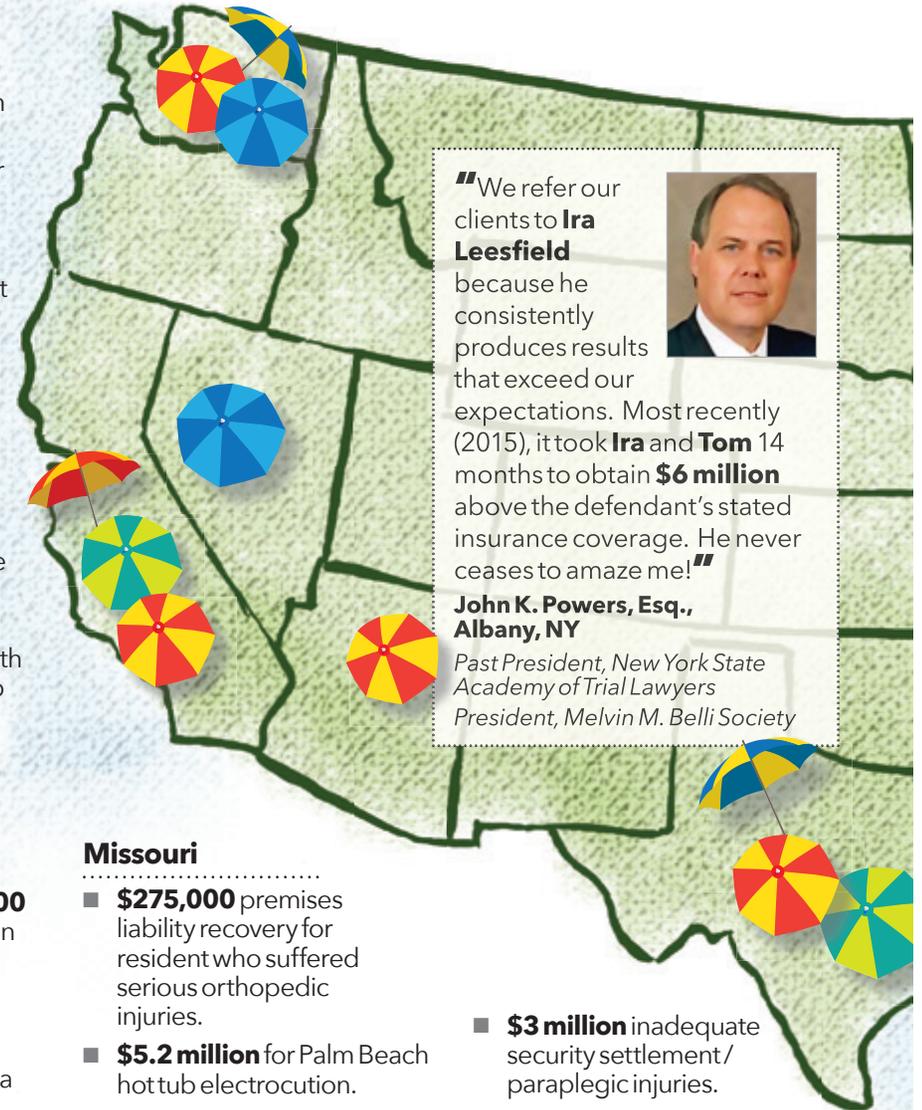
**Indiana**

- **\$5.4 million** wrongful death recovery for Florida aviation accident.

**Arizona**

- **\$950,000** ATV recovery for multiple injuries.

# Leesfield Scolaro - Cas



"We refer our clients to **Ira Leesfield** because he consistently produces results that exceed our expectations. Most recently (2015), it took **Ira and Tom** 14 months to obtain **\$6 million** above the defendant's stated insurance coverage. He never ceases to amaze me!"



**John K. Powers, Esq., Albany, NY**  
Past President, New York State Academy of Trial Lawyers  
President, Melvin M. Belli Society

**Missouri**

- **\$275,000** premises liability recovery for resident who suffered serious orthopedic injuries.
- **\$5.2 million** for Palm Beach hot tub electrocution.

**Illinois**

- **\$2.6 million** wrongful death award for parasailing accident.

- **\$3 million** inadequate security settlement/ paraplegic injuries.

**New Jersey**

- **\$1.8 million** judgment for motorcycle accident injuries in St. Augustine.



Call our **Florida Hotline: 800-836-6400**

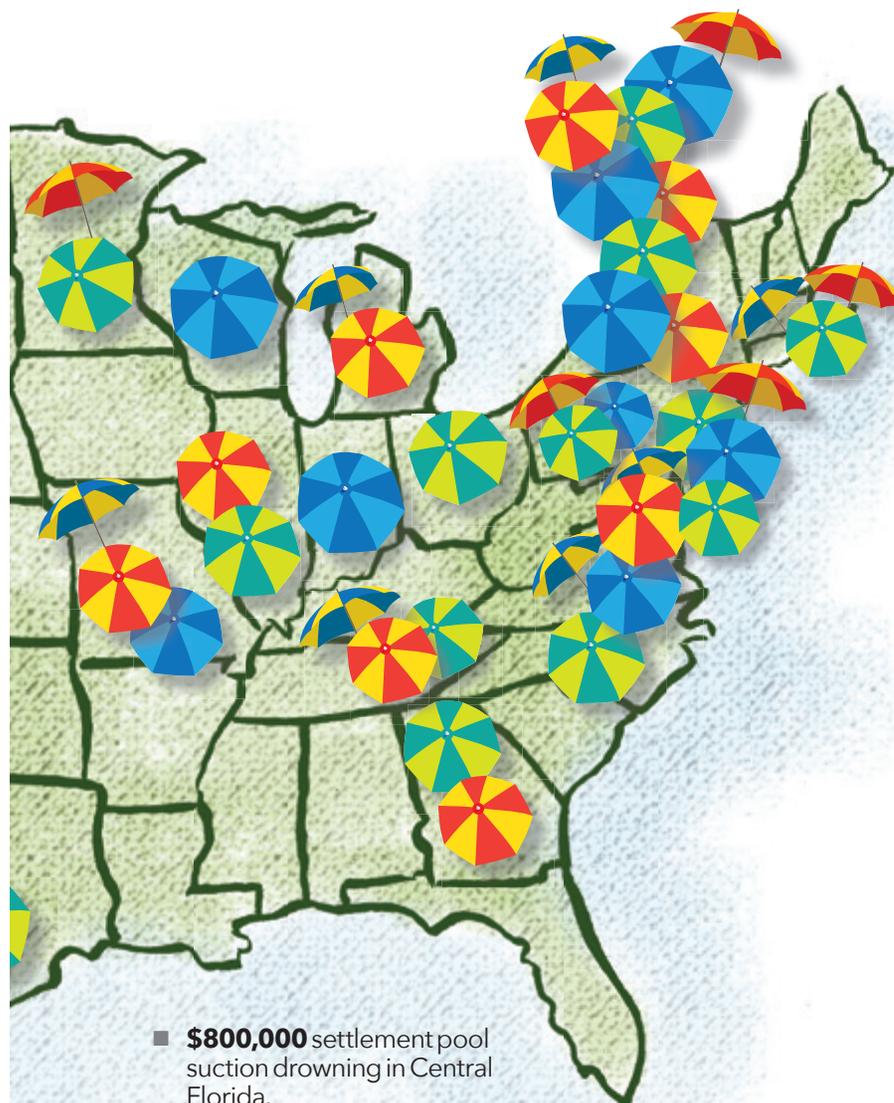
E-mail [Leesfield@Leesfield.com](mailto:Leesfield@Leesfield.com)

Visit [Leesfield.com](http://Leesfield.com)

**Petition**



# es From Other Places!



- **\$800,000** settlement pool suction drowning in Central Florida.
- **\$115,000** recovery for cruise ship liability.

## Maryland

- **\$2.2 million** settlement for medical malpractice.

- **\$162,500** settlement for cruise ship/resort liability.

## Connecticut

- **\$385,000** premises liability settlement for electrocution.

## Massachusetts

- **\$430,000** for premises liability causing orthopedic injury.
- **\$135,000** recovery for negligent transportation of elderly disabled patient.

## Nevada

- **\$425,000** premises liability recovery for injuries.

## North Carolina

- **\$700,000** recovery for brain damage due to Jacuzzi suction entrapment.

## Ohio

- Carbon monoxide poisoning results in **\$750,000** recovery.

## Pennsylvania

- **\$19.8 million** verdict for 27-year-old quadriplegic resulting from defective Honda motorcycle.
- Brain damaged Philadelphia client recovers **\$4.65 million** for parasailing negligence.
- West Chester family recovers **\$500,000** result for special needs daughter.

## Tennessee

- **\$2.9 million** truck/auto collision in Miami-Dade.
- **\$800,000** premises liability in Miami-Dade.
- **\$31 million** insurance class action - Federal Court.

## Washington State

- **\$2.1 million** recovery for 53-year-old man accidentally shot by defective gun - Miami-Dade. (2015)
- **\$1.4 million** recovery for family of 48-year-old man killed while bicycling in Key West. (2015)
- **\$2 million** FTCA medical negligence - Federal Court.

## Texas

- **\$800,000** jet ski injury. (2015)
- **\$900,000** medical negligence.
- **\$1.8 million** Central Florida trucking collision.

## Virginia

- **\$550,000** auto/truck collision settlement.
- **\$100,000** cruise ship liability settlement.

## Wisconsin

- **\$975,000** recovery for truck/auto collision.

## Washington, D.C.

- **\$425,000** medical negligence settlement.

## Puerto Rico

- **\$8 million** aviation recovery.

## Canada

- **\$375,000** Jones Act recovery - Nova Scotia.
- **\$1.5 million** - cruise ship passenger sexual assault - Toronto.

## Netherlands

- **\$170,000** recovery for auto collision injuries.

## United Kingdom

- Wrongful death of British couple yields **\$1.2 million**.

## Germany

- **\$3.25 million** recovery for hotel explosion/catastrophic burns.

## Spain

- **\$2.5 million** award for aviation/wrongful death.

## Italy

- **\$3.2 million** settlement for neurological injuries/premises liability.



# Covering Our Own Backyard

## Miami-Dade, Broward and Palm Beach Counties

**S**INCE 1976, Leesfield Scolaro has worked closely with hundreds of co-counsel and thousands of clients to protect their courtroom rights with life-changing recoveries. Ira Leesfield, a Past President of the Florida Justice Association, joined by the full force of the Firm, continues to advance the economic future of injured South Floridians.

Recently, Tom Scolaro and Carol Finklehoffe obtained a \$2.1 million for a man injured by a defectively designed pistol. (2015) Also in 2015, the parents of a teenage boy neglected while on suicide watch was awarded \$1 million through the efforts of Managing Partner, Ira

Leesfield and Partner, Justin Shapiro. Justin also helped a Miami family involved in a jet ski/boat collision with an award of \$1 million. Verdicts include a \$3,242,000 Federal Court award bringing justice to a Navy serviceman for the tragic drowning of his family. That was followed by a second Federal Court \$2 million verdict for medical negligence resulting in neurological injuries to



"I refer potential clients to Ira Leesfield, not only because of his

outstanding knowledge and experience as a plaintiff's lawyer, but because of his ability to communicate with clients. His sensitivity to their situation and passionate advocacy are beyond reproach. I trust one hundred percent that he will take care of them."

**Roland Sanchez-Medina, Jr., Esq., Miami, FL**  
Past President, Cuban American Bar Association

a newborn. In Broward County, an innocent patient was severely burned on the operating table during a surgical procedure (2014), and a teenage girl visiting her father was killed by defective railing design in a Coral Gables building, resulting in a \$1 million recovery to her family.

Whether it be medical negligence (\$1.5 million for the loss of a premature baby's arm), products liability (\$1.5 million for a faulty respirator), vehicle negligence (\$1.5 million in an auto/truck collision) or faulty premises and failure to supervise a special needs adult (\$750,000 award), Leesfield Scolaro is here to serve South Floridians.

### Recent and Retrospective Results:

#### Miami-Dade

- \$8.8 million settlement for neurological injuries caused by drug interaction.
- \$7 million settlement of quadriplegic for dangerous premises. (2015)
- \$5 million award for tragic brain injuries of U.S. Marine.

- \$3.01 million settlement for life-changing orthopedic injuries to bicyclist. (2015)
- \$2.8 million settlement for construction accident causing massive injuries to 46-year-old family man.
- \$1 million recovery for family of lawyer killed as pedestrian.
- \$1 million settlement for wrongful death of teenager on suicide watch. (2015)
- \$985,000 settlement for boat/jet ski collision. (2015)
- \$350,000 settlement for hotel premises liability resulting in serious fracture. (2014)
- \$1.2 million recovery for 9-year-old pedestrian child run over by SUV.

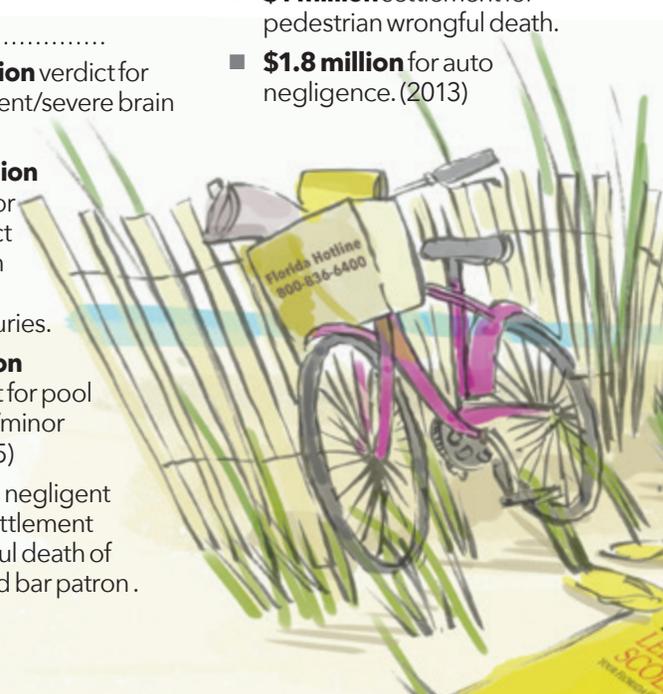
#### Broward

- \$15.1 million verdict for auto accident/severe brain damage.
- \$10.5 million recovery for road defect resulting in death and serious injuries.
- \$3.1 million settlement for pool drowning/minor child. (2015)
- \$1 million negligent security settlement for wrongful death of 26-year-old bar patron.

- \$600,000 settlement for serious burns during medical procedure at hospital. (2015)
- \$500,000 settlement for hotel premises liability resulting in serious hip fracture.
- \$425,000 settlement for hotel's maintenance negligence resulting in serious fractures.
- \$367,500 award for handicapped man for defective sidewalk construction. (2015)

#### Palm Beach

- \$5.25 million settlement for electrocution/wrongful death due to defective home lighting system.
- \$1 million settlement for pedestrian wrongful death.
- \$1.8 million for auto negligence. (2013)



# A 40-Year Tradition

## Key West and the Florida Keys

**WHAT LAW FIRM** has had a consistent success rate with countless personal injury jury verdicts and settlements in Key West since 1973? What firm has an Old Town law office across from the Monroe County Courthouse, where hundreds of Key West families and out-of-state visitors have won record verdicts and settlements?

What personal injury law firm has maintained a 40-year strong presence in the Key West legal and civic community representing multi-generations of Key West families setting record verdicts and settlements in Monroe County?

You probably already know, it is **Leesfield Scolaro!**

With appreciation to our longtime friends in Key West and to the many Monroe County lawyers who have become like family to us, thank you for the opportunity to make a lifetime commitment to the "Conch Republic." Many law firms and local families throughout the Keys have allowed our practice to serve you.



"Ira Leesfield and his firm have had a strong and welcomed presence in Key West for 39 years. I have had the privilege of co-counseling cases for many years with him. There is no law firm more respected or with better results in Key West than Leesfield Scolaro."

**Calvin Allen, Esq.,  
Key West, FL**

We continue our annual commitment to the *Marques Butler Memorial Softball Tournament*, as well as our *28th Annual Conch Fritter Celebration and Seminar* at the firm's offices located at 615-1/2 Whitehead Street. In December 2015, we will again sponsor the Monroe County Bar Association's "*Justice for All Crawl*," to provide funding for scholarships awarded to Monroe County students pursuing an interest in the legal field.

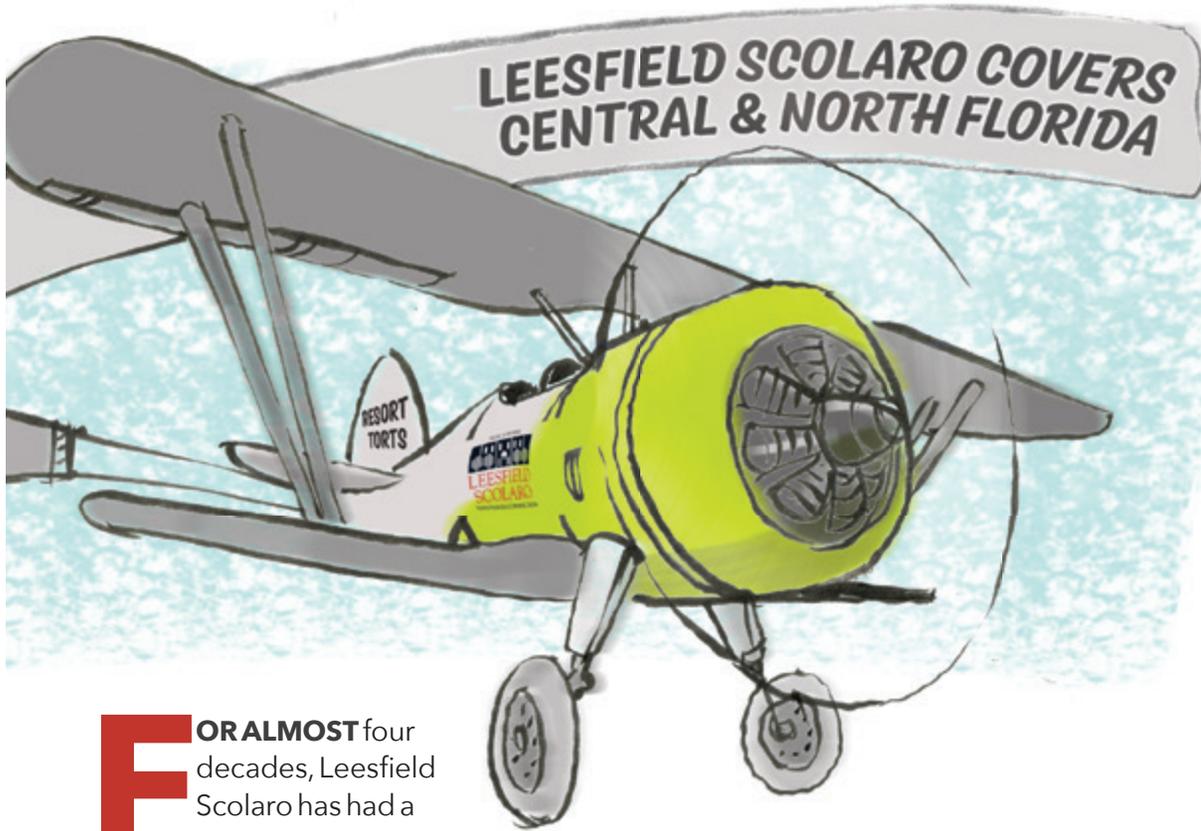
Our office was awarded the "Historic Building Renovation Award" by the **Florida Bar** for design. We have served as a community gathering place for almost four decades demonstrating our commitment to the nation's "southernmost" community.

### **Recent and Retrospective Results:**

#### **Key West and Monroe County**

- **\$40.5 million** verdict - negligent security/resort.
- **\$5.35 million** - truck/bike collision.
- **\$3.3 million** - premises liability/paraplegic.
- **\$2.95 million** verdict - defective pier/wrongful death.
- **\$2.1 million** verdict - scooter / ambulance collision.
- **\$2 million** - medical negligence.
- **\$1.6 million** - wrongful death/boating.
- **\$1 million** - wrongful death/medical negligence.
- **\$1 million** - Jet Ski/boating accident.
- **\$800,000** - wrongful death/aviation.
- **\$799,000** - orthopedic injuries/premises liability.
- **\$675,000** - auto collision.
- **\$580,000** - jet ski accident.
- **\$500,000** - premises liability/loss of finger.
- **\$475,000** - premises liability/wrongful death.
- **\$420,000** - auto/bike collision.
- **\$300,000** - auto collision.
- **\$225,000** - premises liability.
- **\$200,000** - auto/truck collision.
- **\$126,000** - auto/scooter accident.
- **\$100,000** - water park liability/facial injuries.





**F**OR ALMOST four decades, Leesfield Scolaro has had a strong presence throughout Central and North Florida, obtaining leading settlements and record verdicts.

Our firm takes a backseat to none in terms of aviation results having obtained high profile recoveries for the family of a 62-year-old mother and her 38-year-old son killed when their single engine Piper Saratoga crashed (**\$2.8 million**),

as well as a **\$1.8 million** recovery for a prominent environmentalist and activist killed when his chartered twin engine Beechcraft 58 crashed.

Beginning in 2009, we have the privilege of working with trial stalwart Clancey Bounds and the Bounds Law Group, combining ideas, effort and teamwork

to make our Central Florida practice even more helpful and productive. Our work with Clancey has been personally enjoyable and successful for our mutual clients. Clancey Bounds' ongoing successes and recent verdicts establish him as one of Florida's premier medical negligence trial lawyers.

**Leesfield Scolaro Orlando/Central Florida and North Florida results include:**

- **\$10 million** electrocution/wrongful death.
- **\$24.1 million** verdict/medical negligence.
- **\$4.5 million** ATV rollover/wrongful death.
- **\$1.35 million** auto/truck collision.
- **\$500,000** permanent vision loss of 5-year-old child/bungee cord injury.
- **\$750,000** premises liability/carbon monoxide poisoning.
- **\$1 million** auto/truck wrongful death collision.
- **\$2.8 million** medical malpractice.
- **\$800,000** Jacuzzi hotel drowning.
- **\$1.2 million** motorcycle death.
- **\$500,000** negligent supervision of special needs child.
- **\$425,000** settlement for medical/surgical negligence.
- **\$1.1 million** settlement for auto/moped collision.
- **\$1 million** settlement for failure to provide adequate security.



"I have been working with **Ira Leesfield** and his firm since 2008 where I

have seen dedication and caring for clients and their cases that is so rare in today's world of volume practice. Ira is a real credit to our profession. I have known Ira and worked closely with him over the past years on cases of all magnitudes. While anyone can handle a case with clear liability, he has an uncanny ability to find theories of liability and coverage that may elude other lawyers. I can recommend Ira and his firm with high praise."

**J. Clancey Bounds, Esq., Maitland, FL**

*American Association for Justice, State Delegate*

- **\$660,000** settlement for premises liability resulting in serious head trauma.
- **\$247,500** settlement for serious burns during house party.
- **\$500,000** golf cart accident resulting in permanent orthopedic injury.

## Expansion brings new opportunities to Leesfield Scolaro

**A**FTER 16 YEARS of remarkable results and leading verdicts, **Tom Scolaro** is now a named partner at **Leesfield Scolaro**.

Tom's dedication and leadership was acknowledged by the firm name change. "His commitment to the firm, the legal community



Thomas Scolaro

and his statewide recognition by peers has earned him top billing," says **Ira**

**Leesfield**. Tom Scolaro has won verdicts throughout the state of Florida including a **\$15.4 million** in Broward County and a **\$40.5 million** in Monroe County. As a leader in negligent security cases and advocate for

crime victims deserving civil justice, Scolaro has gained statewide praise for the completion of law-changing results improving public safety in the area of carbon monoxide detectors.

Scolaro received his Bachelor of Science, Dean's Honor list, from Manhattan College and his Juris Doctor, with honors, from the University of Miami School of Law. He is a member of the *American Association for Justice*, *Florida Association for Justice*, *Dade County Bar Association*, *Monroe County Bar Association*, and *Cuban American Bar Association*.

### Justin B. Shapiro

**Justin B. Shapiro** became a Partner at the Firm on October 15, 2015. Since joining the Firm in 2011, he



Justin Shapiro

has proven to be an exceptional attorney with outstanding skills, actively

litigating hundreds of personal injury cases for the Firm's statewide practice, and obtaining outstanding results. He will now help lead the Firm's Recreational Litigation Section. "The October 15th date is of special significance since that date marks the anniversary of our Firm, founded in 1976," according to **Ira Leesfield**.

Justin received his Juris Doctor degree, magna cum laude, from the University of Miami School of Law, graduating at the top of his class, and was inducted to the Order of the Coif. He holds a bachelor's degree, cum

laude, from the University of Central Florida.

He is a member of the *Florida Justice Association*, the *Dade County Bar Association* and the *Coral Gables Bar Association*. His verdicts and settlements for severely injured clients have been recognized by leading Florida journals and organizations. He will continue to focus his practice in the areas of personal injury/wrongful death, premises liability, auto and motor vehicle accidents, cruise ship liability and sexual assault.

### Daniel L. Diaz-Balart

**Daniel L. Diaz-Balart** joined the Firm in 2014. He formerly served as an Assistant State Attorney with the Miami-Dade County State Attorney's office, prosecuting thousands of criminal cases and earning extensive litigation and courtroom experience. His finely honed trial experience at



Daniel Diaz-Balart

the Miami-Dade County State Attorney's Office has provided

unique skills as he pursues our high level personal injury practice," says Partner **Tom Scolaro**.

Raised in a prominent Florida political family, embedded in public service, he brings that tradition and culture to the Firm's practice.

Daniel is a graduate of Florida State University College of Law where he served on the school's Mock Trial Team. He currently serves on the Board of Directors of *Switchboard of Miami*. He is a member of the *Cuban American Bar Association*, and the *Florida Justice Association*.

Daniel focuses his practice on complex civil litigation involving severe personal injury and wrongful death.



**T**HE LEESFIELD FAMILY FOUNDATION, with the logistical support of **Leesfield Scolaro, P.A.**, is a proud supporter of organizations and families in need.

This year, the **Leesfield Family Foundation** celebrates a quarter of a century of caring for those less fortunate nationally and in the South Florida community.

Established in 1990, the Foundation initiated a diverse grant program, while also funding annual and periodic scholarships to law students and universities. Its national commitment includes major support to the **Clinton Foundation**, along with numerous religious and charitable organizations assisting those most in need.

Over 40 community grants, with an emphasis on children's needs, have been met by the Foundation on a regular basis. Healthcare and child protection are the centerpiece of its

# 25 years of caring

# LFF

## Leesfield Family Foundation

---

NATIONAL GRANTS

---

COMMUNITY GRANTS

---

SCHOLARSHIPS

For grants and scholarship information, go to: [www.LeesfieldFamilyFoundation.org](http://www.LeesfieldFamilyFoundation.org) | Call: 305.854.4900  
Ira, Cynthia and Jennifer Leesfield, Trustees

community giving with significant gifts to *Baptist Health South Florida Foundation, Inc.*, and a variety of youth programs such as *Overtown Youth Center, Amigos for Kids, Big Brothers/Big Sisters, Foundation for Foster Children, Sundari Foundation, Switchboard of Miami, Inc.*, and *Yes Institute*. Nationally, it assisted victims of Hurricane Sandy through the *Catholic Charities*



Fatherhood Task Force of South Florida honored Ira Leesfield with the "2015 Citation of Honor Award" for his commitment and involvement to encourage schools across Florida to participate in "Fathers in Education Day."

*Archdiocese of New York, the Federation of Protestant Welfare Agencies, and the UJA-Federation of New York.*

For 18 consecutive years, the Foundation has funded law student scholarships with the *American Association for Justice (AAJ)* and the *Florida Association for Women Lawyers, Miami-Dade Chapter (FAWL)*. The scholarships are directed towards women,

minority students and those with special needs, such as working single parents struggling for legal education, who exemplify a high commitment to trial advocacy and public justice.

This year, FAWL honored Ira Leesfield with the "2015 Friend of FAWL Award" and most recently, with the prestigious



"The Fatherhood Task Force of South Florida congratulates the **Leesfield**

**Family Foundation** as a leader in promoting and supporting schools and communities across Florida. We congratulate the Leesfield Family Foundation for encouraging the participation of fathers and father figures in support of children's education and demonstrating civic and social responsibility, contributing to family and community strengthening for the benefit of children. Ira was again recognized with the 'Citation of Honor' Award."

**Holly Zwerling, CEO/President**



"Theodore Klein Award" for his continued support of the organization and commitment to promote gender equality in the legal profession.



"The **Leesfield Family Foundation** has supported the FAWL,

Miami-Dade Chapter scholarship program for the past 18 years, providing scholarships to minority law students who demonstrate a high commitment to trial advocacy and public justice. During my tenure as President of FAWL, Miami-Dade Chapter, after Ira Leesfield read the applications from the law students, he decided that one scholarship was not enough and he funded a second scholarship. This was in addition to his Grand Benefactor sponsorship of the underlying awards luncheon. Our community is much stronger and accessible to all, thanks to the charitable support Ira Leesfield provides."

**Deborah Baker-Egozi, Esq.**  
*Immediate Past President, FAWL, Miami-Dade Chapter*

**LEESFIELD FAMILY FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM**

## Leesfield/AAJ Law Student Scholarship Program



Brenda Kathurima & Ira Leesfield

**B**ORN IN KENYA and fluent in Swahili, Brenda Kathurima was the 23rd recipient of the Leesfield/AAJ Scholarship. Ira Leesfield presented the award during the AAJ Annual Convention in Baltimore, Maryland. She graduated, summa cum laude, from Coppin State University, Baltimore, MD as an Honors College Eagle Scholar, and now attends The University of Maryland, Francis King Carey School of Law.

"I am honored to be the recipient of this prestigious award from such esteemed organizations. As a student paying for my own college education, I cannot express what this award means to me...Your support is what makes my future a real possibility, and for this, I am deeply grateful."

**Brenda Kathurima,**  
*2014 recipient, Leesfield/AAJ Law Student Scholarship*

### Other important scholarships and grants endowed by Leesfield Scolaro, P.A. and the Leesfield Family Foundation include:

- The Eileen Brier Scholarship, University of Miami
- The Thomas H. Henderson, Jr. Scholarship, University of Alabama
- The Daniel S. Pearson Scholarship, University of Miami School of Law
- Harold Foster Memorial Scholarship, Shepard Broad Law Center, Nova Southeastern University
- Funding for the Florence Griffith Joyner "Flo Jo" Scholarship recognizing outstanding female student athletes



"In 1998, I won the Leesfield/AAJ Scholarship, which paid my way to

attend AAJ's Annual Convention in Washington, D.C. This was a career and life-changing event. It initiated my interest in product safety cases, and I remain active in consumer protection as a member sixteen years later. Thanks to Ira and the Leesfield/AAJ Law Student Scholarship."

**Todd A. Walburg, Esq., San Francisco, CA**

*Member, Board of Directors, San Francisco Trial Lawyers Association*



Leesfield Family Foundation

### For more information about the Leesfield Family Foundation Scholarship program:

visit [www.Leesfieldfamilyfoundation.org](http://www.Leesfieldfamilyfoundation.org) or contact Carmen Marrero at 800-836-6400.





VOLUME 16, NO. 1

A publication for lawyers, clients and friends of **Leesfield Scolaro, P.A.** with recent and retrospective Firm results.

**Practice Areas Include:**

- Personal Injury/Wrongful Death
- Auto and Motor Vehicle Accidents
- Boating and Cruise Ship Liability
- Resort Torts/Maritime/Recreational Injuries
- All Travel Related Injuries
- Premises Liability
- Auto Crashworthiness
- Trucking/Highway Design
- Aviation
- Negligent Security
- Products Liability
- Medical and Professional Malpractice
- Nursing Home Litigation
- Federal Tort Claims Act

**Attorneys**

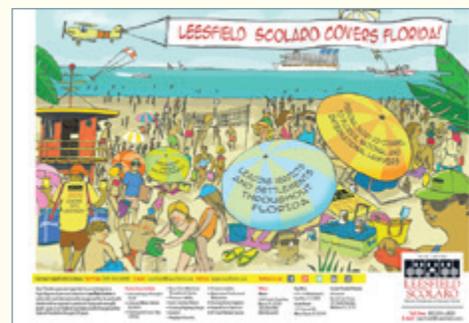
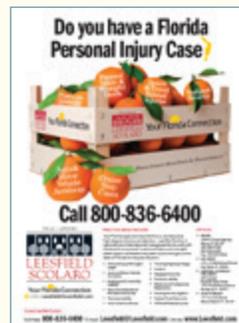
- Ira H. Leesfield
- Thomas Scolaro
- Carol L. Finklehoffe
- Justin B. Shapiro
- Daniel Diaz-Balart

**Offices**

- Miami Office**  
2350 South Dixie Highway  
Miami, FL 33133  
305-854-4900  
800-836-6400
- Key West Office**  
615-1/2 Whitehead Street  
Key West, FL 33040
- Central Florida/Orlando Office**  
*Of Counsel*  
Bounds Law Group  
1751 North Park Avenue  
Maitland, FL 32751
- South Beach Office**  
1111 Lincoln Road  
Miami Beach, FL 33139

## Thank you for picking Leesfield Scolaro for Over 39 Years!

Nearly four decades of service to clients, our co-counsel and the community.



Leesfield-Scolaro



@Leesfield



iraleesfield

