

Daily Journal

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Top Women Lawyers

This supplement is devoted to recognizing excellent lawyering and leadership skills among women attorneys in California. To pick a list of 75 litigators and 25 corporate transactions and regulatory specialists, editors at the Daily Journal reviewed hundreds of nominations from law firms, public agencies, nonprofits and universities.

Women are helping major litigation and deals and on the cutting edge of regulatory work. They are leaders and rainmakers in their law firms in numbers never seen before.

—The Editors

Christine D. Spagnoli

Greene Broillet & Wheeler LLP, Santa Monica

PRACTICE TYPE: litigation

SPECIALTY: personal injury, products liability

In her catastrophic personal, injury, and product liability practice, Spagnoli has a relatively small caseload in terms of numbers. She may spend six months on a single case. But when she wins, she wins big.

The largest auto liability verdict of 2011 belonged to her: a \$73 million dollar award from the Ford Motor Co., but even that was peanuts compared to a multi-billion verdict she previously won against General Motors Co.

Her subspecialty revolves around the design of cars and failure of tires to function properly.

In the past year or so, she has been involved in several cases that resolved out of court on undisclosed terms. Following her specialty in automotive suits, her opponents in these recent cases were auto manufacturers like Aston Martin Lagonda Ltd.

The case against the British luxury carmaker had at its heart the death of a doctor who was rear-ended in the car. "I think our evidence was very persuasive that the design and manufacture of the seat contributed to the death,"



she said. One week before the trial was set to begin in April 2012, the case was settled for a confidential amount.

The Consumer Attorneys Association of Los Angeles named her Trial Lawyer of the Year for 2012. She was the first woman in the history of the organization to receive the honor.

She has served as president of the Consumer Attorneys

Association of Los Angeles, the Consumer Attorneys of California, and Attorneys Information Exchange Group. Along with those organizations, she is a member of the International Academy of Trial Lawyers, the American Association for Justice, Public Justice Association, and the American Board of Trial Advocates, among others.

— Chase Scheinbaum