

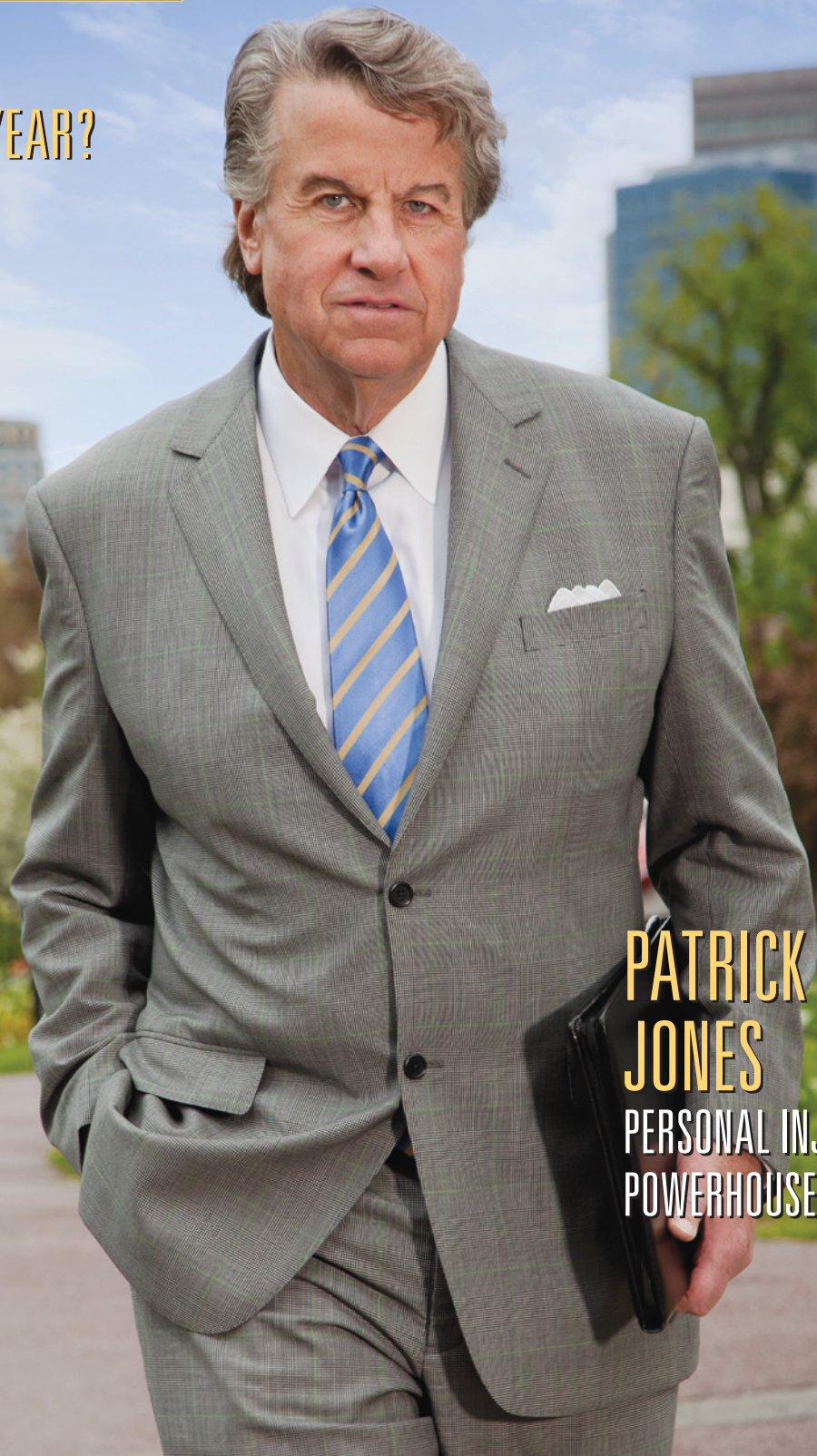
B O S T O N ' S

BEST LAWYERS[®]

2011 EDITION

THE DEFINITIVE GUIDE TO LEGAL REPRESENTATION IN THE GREATER BOSTON AREA

WHO ARE THE
LAWYERS OF THE YEAR?



**PATRICK T.
JONES**
PERSONAL INJURY
POWERHOUSE

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THE WORLD'S PREMIER GUIDE

An **ALM** Publication

PATRICK T. JONES

and the Seven and a Half Year Long 'Station Fire' Case

There is no way to comprehend how far and long the aftermath of a tragedy can extend. Just ask trial lawyer Patrick T. Jones, who recently concluded a 7.5 year case pertaining to the events of the now infamous fire at West Warwick nightclub, The Station, which resulted in the deaths of one hundred people and physical and psychological injuries to more than two hundred. Pyrotechnics set off during the opening by the headlining band's tour manager ignited flammable acoustic foam on the walls, beginning a fast-moving fire that quickly engulfed the club; patrons and staff of the overcrowded venue stampeded towards the entrance, and many were unable to locate or reach an exit in time to escape the fire and smoke.

Headlines spread as fast as the fire, and an investigation was immediately launched. Though the band and club owners were obviously closest to the ignition, their insurance and assets did not even approach the amount needed to compensate so many victims and families. The real challenge became the identification and imposition of liability on other individuals (and parent entities) that had sufficient control of the circumstances surrounding the fire.

Enter: Pat Jones.

Perhaps best known for his representation of Victoria Snelgrove's family following her accidental shooting and death by Boston police officers following a Red Sox game, Mr. Jones was the head of his firm's catastrophic personal injury and medical malpractice department, and had amassed some fire litigation expertise throughout Boston and the nearby region. He frequently travelled to Rhode Island for trials; however, in the early part of the decade, the state had imposed restrictions that kept out-of-state attorneys from trying cases within the state, and so Mr. Jones found himself taking the Rhode Island Bar Exam at the unlikely age of 52. In early February 2003, twenty days after he was sworn in, The Station went up in flames, and he found himself in a unique position to take on the cases and referrals that soon began to pour in, eventually representing more than eighty estates or injured survivors.

Mr. Jones took on the role of associate lead counsel, acting alongside co-lead counsels Mark Mandell, of

Mandell, Schwartz & Boisclair; Max Wistow and John P. Barylick of Wistow & Barylick; and attorneys from five other firms. Together, the consolidated cases asserted claims on behalf of 98 deceased Plaintiffs, 210 injured Plaintiffs, and multiple estate representatives, spouses and minor children. Thirty-four decedents were from Massachusetts, as were eighty-seven survivors. "This was a regional tragedy, not limited to just Rhode Island. It was a fire that affected the whole region of northern Connecticut, southern Massachusetts, and Rhode Island."

Mr. Jones and his colleagues identified more than twenty potentially culpable parties that had some hand in the events that played out. For many of the defendants, this created potential liability for their employers or parent companies.

"It was an effort to really create sufficient risk on the part of these defendants, who had limited culpability and limited control of the environment, to try to create a fund of money for these people who had suffered a great deal."

After the court had ruled on dispositive motions, and with others pending, most parties engaged in mediation conducted by legendary mediator Paul Finn of Massachusetts, who played a significant role in achieving and distributing settlements in excess of \$176 million. After so many years of proceedings, the first checks for victims and families went out in the mail in June of 2010.

Though Mr. Jones is quick to refuse praise and recognition for his work, he is happy to deflect it to the other attorneys and staff involved. "I don't think any trial lawyer is a one-man band. Any trial lawyer who has achieved any measure of success has done so because he or she has been supported by a great organization and infrastructure that allows them to stand up and be an advocate for other people," he says.



"THIS WAS A REGIONAL TRAGEDY, NOT LIMITED TO JUST RHODE ISLAND."

—PATRICK T. JONES

COOLEY MANION JONES LLP



From Left: Ralph R. Liguori, Timothy C. Kelleher III, Peter J. Schneider, Donna R. Corcoran, Patrick T. Jones, Robert A. DeLello, Richard W. Paterniti



COOLEY MANION JONES IS A TRIAL FIRM THAT HAS ACHIEVED national recognition for its handling of some of the most complex, high-stakes and historic personal injury cases in New England. Since its founding in 1984, the firm has garnered a reputation for its many successes and was recently named a tier one Boston law firm in 2011 for medical malpractice and personal injury litigation by *U.S. News & World Report*.

FOUNDING PARTNER PATRICK T. JONES LEADS THE CATASTROPHIC personal injury practice group which is comprised of Pat Jones, Donna Corcoran, Tim Kelleher, Rob DeLello, Peter Schneider, Ralph Liguori and Richard Paterniti, seven accomplished lawyers who handle a select number of high-end catastrophic personal injury cases, including medical malpractice, product liability and general liability claims. In 2009, Jones was named one of Boston's most influential lawyers by *Massachusetts Lawyers Weekly*. Pat and his partners have cumulatively well over 100 years of experience in personal injury matters which allows them to anticipate and prepare for any situation that may impact their clients.

"ONE OF THE MANY FACTORS THAT SETS US APART FROM OTHER personal injury firms is our approach to each case. Clients work with a hand selected team, led by two attorneys possessing the specific knowledge required for each case and who are supported by a staff of skilled paralegals, nurses, administrative assistants and industry experts," explains partner Rob DeLello. "The depth of our experience and access to resources ensures that each case is properly prepared for trial and leads to successful results."

THE CASES HANDLED BY CMJ ARE ROUTINELY ranked among the highest settlements in New England. Partner Richard Paterniti attributes this achievement in part to the steadfast commitment, the specialization of the practice and the abilities of the lawyers in this practice group, but also recognizes that they all share a core goal; specifically, they look to make a difference in the lives of their clients. "The stability of the team over the past two decades is a benchmark of the commitment we share for each other and to our clients. This longevity is something that is rarely found at other firms," Paterniti says.

THE FIRM'S ATTORNEYS HAVE BEEN RECOGNIZED BY A NUMBER OF publications for their result-oriented approach to advocacy, such as *Super Lawyers* and *The Best Lawyers in America*®. Many of CMJ's attorneys are members and leaders of prominent legal organizations, including the Massachusetts Academy of Trial Attorneys, the American Bar Association, the Massachusetts Bar Association and the American Association for Justice.

CONTINUING TO BUILD ON ITS COMMITMENT TO IMPROVING LIVES, Cooley Manion Jones is heavily involved in charity work and contributes, either directly or through its members, significant support to local, regional and national academic institutions and non-profit organizations. The firm's attorneys also contribute to the community by serving as professors and guest speakers at local law schools and colleges and participating in various Massachusetts bar associations' continuing legal education programs.