

SSAMTM

Settlement Services Arbitration and Mediation



The modern mindset of mediation.

It's attitude and intention.

It's purposeful and mindful mediation with an unwavering focus on the endgame of settlement. It's neutrals, vigorously well-prepared, treating each case as their own...because it is. They tend to hang around until the job is done. Neutrals deeply committed to the art and science of mediation as the purest and most productive path toward conflict resolution.

It's client service beyond reproach and compare.

It's case management that works alongside you, actively engaged, bridging divides between carriers and counsel. It's about getting from Point A to Point B, in the quickest, most efficient, effective, and humanistic manner possible. It's about orchestrating genuine and respectful connections between parties and empowering those in dispute with the elegant freedom to control its outcome.

Our neutrals

Philip A. Di Pippo, Esq.

Philip Di Pippo, Esq. has enjoyed a highly successful and unique multi-decade legal career with an exceptional depth of experience across both the defense and plaintiff bars. Now, as a mediator for SSAM ADR, this experience affords Di Pippo a tremendous advantage in his understanding and appreciation of the legal issues and challenges facing counsel and their clients on both sides of a dispute.


Di Pippo has extensive experience in handling all phases of personal injury from inception through trial. He has tried cases in both the federal and state courts, including numerous high-exposure cases of wrongful death, traumatic brain injury (TBI), and high-profile construction accidents.

From 2012 to 2021 Di Pippo ran The Di Pippo Law Group, LLP, while also serving as a founding partner of the Law Offices of Douglas Fanning, before that, Di Pippo

was a founding partner at Latos, Latos & Di Pippo, founding partner of Kopf & Di Pippo and associate with Bower & Gardner and also Wortman, Fumuso, Kelly DeVerna & Snyder, the latter being a top recognized medical malpractice defense firm.

In recognition of his successes, DiPippo has been a member of both the Million Dollar and Multi-Million Dollar Forums; has repeatedly been awarded the distinction of “Lead Counsel” by the Lead Counsel Review Board, was awarded a lifetime membership in “The Best Attorneys in New York” and has been accepted as one of the “Top 10 Attorneys in New York” and “Top 10 Attorneys” in his field of practice. He is an approved arbitrator and mediator for a host of major insurance carriers.

A graduate of St John’s University, School of Law, DiPippo has been a professional race driver for the past 18-years and enjoys sail-boat racing and golf.



“I cannot say enough positive things about Mr. DiPippo. He was excellent. Extremely well prepared. Listened and understood the arguments and patiently dealt with a difficult plaintiff. Halfway through, I had already sent out an email to my colleagues highly recommending him for future mediations...he was that good.”


–Senior Plaintiff Litigator

Thomas Gorton, Esq.

Thomas Gorton, Esq. is a 1980 graduate of St. John's Law School where he was awarded the Corpus Juris Secundum Award for Significant Legal Scholarship, Tom Gorton has more than 35 years of experience as a litigator. During that time, he has tried untold cases throughout the metropolitan area as both a plaintiff and defendant and has appeared on numerous occasions arguing appeals in both the First and Second Departments. Because of his varied experience, Tom is equally comfortable handling a complex labor law case with issues of sole proximate cause and indemnification, as he is an automobile intersection accident with issues of negligence and threshold, or a slip and fall with issues of notice and duty.

A member of CLM, as well as The Multi-Million Dollar Advocates Forum, Tom regularly

lectures at DANY as well as various Bar Associations and Claims Conferences. He believes the keys to effective ADR are a knowledge of one's file, a realistic understanding of the value of the injuries claimed and an open-minded willingness to discuss the practical, legal and evidentiary issues involved in the litigation. Tom resides with his wife and son in Long Beach NY where he is active in the community coaching Baseball and Basketball. He also enjoys an occasional round of golf whenever possible.



“Mr. Gorton was fantastic and really allowed the parties to negotiate. I felt very confident in Mr. Gorton as he navigated through the strengths and weaknesses of each side’s argument. I would like to work with him again and again.”

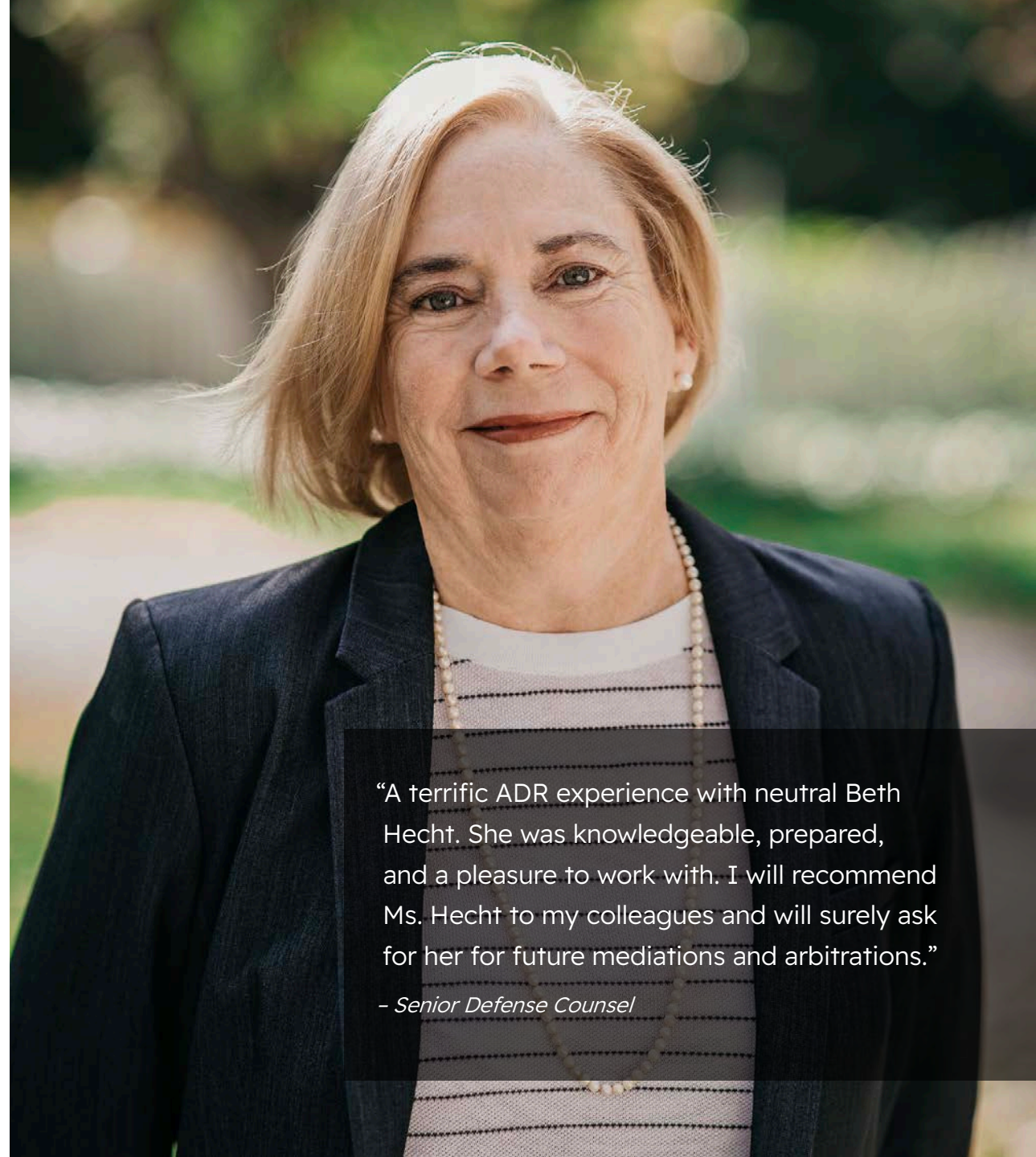
- *Plaintiff Counsel*

Elizabeth Hecht, Esq.

“Beth Hecht is my new favorite mediator. She facilitated a productive discussion, created a trust across all parties and turned what I anticipated would be an adversarial experience into something quite positive and productive.”

- Plaintiff Counsel

For over 30 years, **Elizabeth Hecht** has been trying personal injury cases of virtually all varieties primarily in the Ninth Judicial District and Bronx County. Ms. Hecht’s law practice is represented by a shared focus on both defense and plaintiff work. She has regularly litigated appeals in the First and Second Departments since 1984. Mrs. Hecht is a frequent presenter for the NYSBA and a past Chair of the Trial Lawyers Executive Committee. Ms. Hecht considers her four years as an adjunct professor at St. John’s University School of Law (N.Y. Practice) a professional highlight. She is an avid traveler and on a recent trip to Africa with her husband, became very involved with the fund-raising endeavors of Huru International, an amazing New York based charity committed to improving educational opportunities for young African women.



“A terrific ADR experience with neutral Beth Hecht. She was knowledgeable, prepared, and a pleasure to work with. I will recommend Ms. Hecht to my colleagues and will surely ask for her for future mediations and arbitrations.”

- Senior Defense Counsel

Al Anthony Mercado, Esq.

Al Anthony Mercado, Esq. is an accomplished attorney with 30-years of experience and a career-long commitment to complex medical-legal issues, medical malpractice litigation and mediation, insurance coverage analysis, products liability, healthcare regulatory compliance, and risk management.

As an active practitioner of law and founder of The Mercado Legal Group, Mr. Mercado has extended his reach, expertise, and influence in medical-legal issues now as mediator for SSAM ADR. Mr. Mercado's deep medical background and legal aptitude allows for a sound interpretation of arguments and medical records presented in mediation, leading to the formation of high-level settlement strategies, and resolution as the highest priority.


Mr. Mercado has managed and participated in hundreds of medical-malpractice mediations and arbitrations throughout his career, bringing vast experiential background and understanding of causations, injury/operative values as well as how a case might be adjudicated if it were to go to trial.

A national speaker, Mr. Mercado has lec-

tured extensively on medical-legal issues addressing the needs and interests of plaintiff and defense attorneys, physicians, dentists, carriers, and legal-service vendors within this dynamic environment. He has published articles and blogs on trending issues giving rise to malpractice claims, liability, and injuries.

Throughout his career he has litigated cases representing both plaintiff and defendant, affording Mr. Mercado a unique understanding of motivations on both sides of a case. He has enjoyed an extensive and successful career in evaluating liability, causation and damages as well as identifying and resolving problems and overcoming obstacles in cases.

Mr. Mercado has successfully litigated cases at the trial and appellate level and has successfully prepared and argued appeals in various appellate courts in New York State. Mr. Mercado has also drafted, reviewed, negotiated, and litigated contractual disputes involving physicians, insurance carriers, and large corporations on legal and regulatory matters.



“Medical Negligence Mediation requires an unparalleled attention to detail, and an embrace of both the human experience...and always, The Big Picture. I bring a true professionalism, a sensibility and practicality to the mediation of medical negligence cases...identifying and assessing the liability, apportionment, and damages in a way that only experience, medical expertise, and an empathetic nature can dictate. This is my specialty, my life's work, and I take the responsibility.”

Daniel Cassidy, Esq.

Daniel Cassidy has been trying personal injury cases in the courts of the State of New York for almost 30 years. Now primarily acting as trial counsel to both numerous plaintiff's personal injury firms, as well as for several defense firms, and carriers, Dan has more than 100 jury verdicts. The immediate past president of the Bronx Bar association, Dan was instrumental in raising badly needed funds for those suffering from the effects of Hurricane Maria and was recognized for his efforts by the NYS Assembly, the Borough President and several municipalities and organizations in Puerto Rico. He also is active as an Agent for professional football players in the NFL, CFL, and AAF. He has been active as an arbitrator and mediator. Both counsel for plaintiffs and defendants recognize that as one who has "been in the trenches" for both sides, Dan has a unique perspective of the challenges of litigation, and as such, has been successful in bringing parties together to resolve a high percentage of the cases brought before him.

“Great mediator. Great experience. Great result. Dan demonstrated all the critical skills of a highly experienced mediator and trial attorney. Though skeptical going into this mediation, Dan challenged and supported each party, fostered honest and reasonable conversation, and came out of it with a settlement.”

- Plaintiff Counsel

“Dan is an amazing neutral, and it was his efforts more than anyone else that got this case settled. He is at the top of my neutral list.”

- Senior Defense Counsel



The Honorable Thomas Atkinson

Hon. Thomas D. Atkinson, former New York State Magistrate, Lynbrook Village Justice in the 8th busiest village court in New York State, is now Village Attorney. He also practices personal injury law, representing both plaintiffs and insurance companies and has had vast experience in commercial litigation, corporate finance, securities litigation, and various areas in business law.

Practicing law for decades, Judge Atkinson has served in the capacity as Justice, Mediator and Arbitrator and has developed a reputation for understanding and tending to the needs of his clients. With his dispute resolution experience, he has instituted many new programs in the courts to help a wide range of underrepresented individuals. He is passionate about his work as a mediator and arbitrator and believes that building trust is the cornerstone to successful mediation.



“Tom Atkinson is simply an excellent mediator. He manages all parties, attorneys, our clients and claims professionals with respect, fairness, empathy and a sharp knowledge of law and values. Atkinson simply works hard to get the best outcome and I highly recommend him.”

- Plaintiff Counsel

Joseph Tonetti, Esq.

Joseph Tonetti emphasizes a practical approach to ADR, stressing the importance of pre-Mediation preparation by both sides in achieving the ultimate goal.

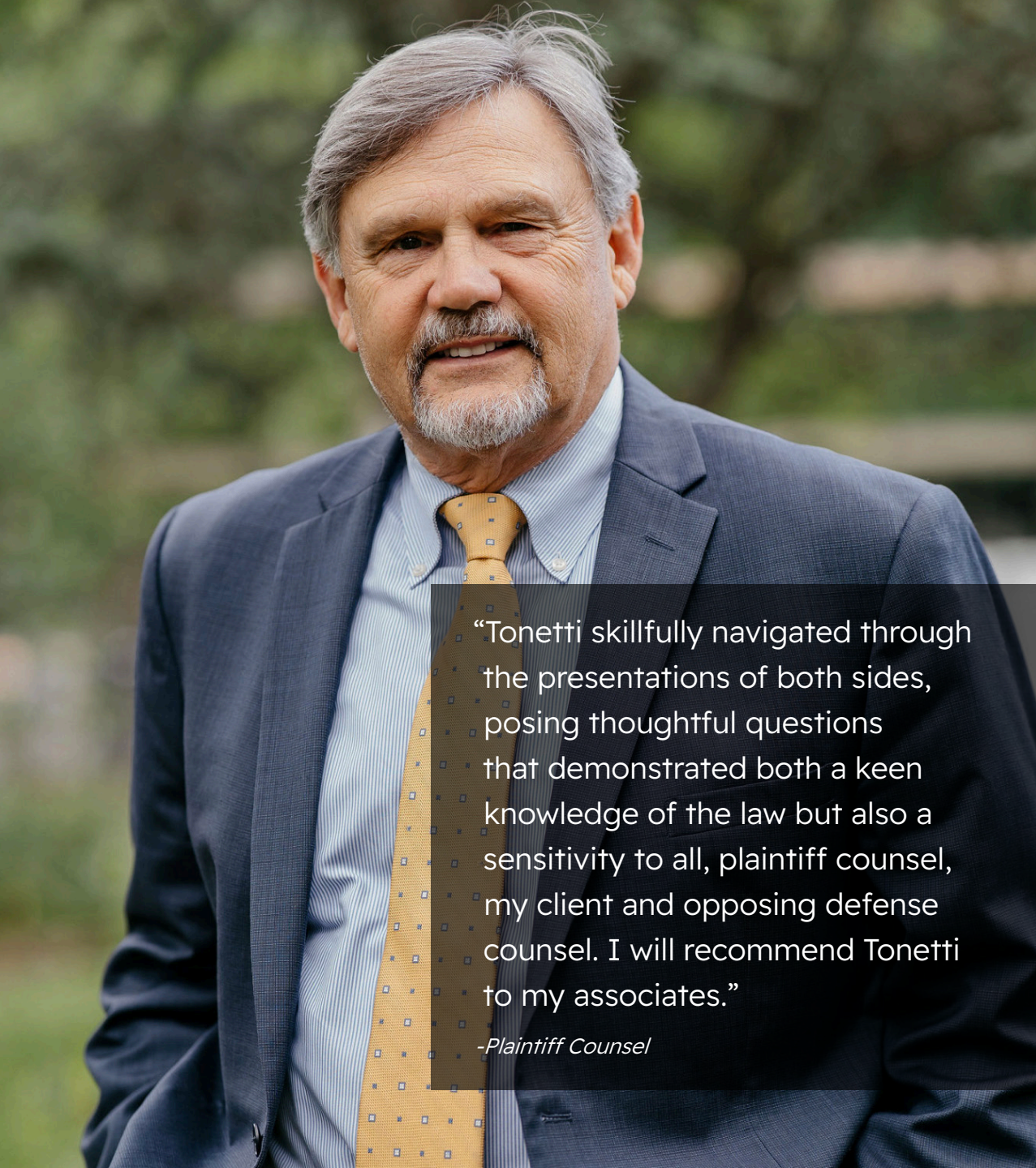
His 38 years of defense experience make him keenly aware of the “check list” nature of carrier evaluation and the time requirements inherent in the corporate structure regarding review and evaluation.

Having been a practicing plaintiff’s counsel as well during that time, Tonetti has experienced the challenges that create stress for Plaintiff’s counsel. He understands the importance of meeting the carrier’s needs as well as the ability to deal with typical issues that arise such as Medicare, ERISA, funding liens, etc. He strives to keep abreast of the latest developments and trends on both sides of litigation in an effort to fos-

ter greater understanding and cooperation between the parties while moving towards common ground.

Tonetti recognizes there are cases that are inherently difficult to settle but that a successful ADR company must be proactive in the pre-Mediation process to ensure that the litigants each understand their roles and responsibilities in the pre-Mediation preparation.

Mr. Tonetti has taught CLE courses to members of the Suffolk County Bar Association that have been targeted and designed to educate plaintiff’s counsel on the expectations of Mediators and Arbitrators in the ADR process. He has also taught courses on the needs that insurance carrier representatives and counsel have in order to move a case toward its successful resolution.

A portrait of Joseph Tonetti, Esq., a middle-aged man with grey hair and a goatee, wearing a dark blue suit jacket, a light blue striped shirt, and a yellow patterned tie. He is smiling slightly and looking towards the camera. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with green foliage.

“Tonetti skillfully navigated through the presentations of both sides, posing thoughtful questions that demonstrated both a keen knowledge of the law but also a sensitivity to all, plaintiff counsel, my client and opposing defense counsel. I will recommend Tonetti to my associates.”

-Plaintiff Counsel

The Honorable Loren Baily-Schiffman

“In settling more cases than most during trial I have experienced the give and take required to bring parties together. Seeing so many jury perspectives beyond the parties’ expectations, I bring a unique perspective to the mediation process.”

The Honorable Loren Baily-Schiffman was elected to the Civil Court of Kings County New York in 1998 and re-elected in 2008 and 2018. In 2009, Baily-Schiffman was appointed to the Supreme Court, Civil Term as Acting Supreme Court Justice. Of her 23-years on the bench, she tried hundreds of personal injury cases, from simple auto to complex multi-party labor law cases. During this time, Judge Baily-Schiffman was highly regarded for her prowess in the art of mediation and successfully settling more than half of the trials between jury selection and verdict. Baily-Schiffman retired from the bench in 2021, bringing her deep experience and mediation skill set to SSAM ADR.

Hailing from New York Law School, Baily-Schiffman founded her private practice

in 1981, developing an early, respected reputation and specialization in housing and employment discrimination, civil rights and tenant representation cases in Brooklyn and mostly litigating in Federal Court. Baily-Schiffman is a member of the Brooklyn Bar Association, National Association of Women Judges, and the Brooklyn Women’s Bar Association.

“Having tried so many cases and having seen so many jury perspectives that were beyond the parties’ expectations, I bring a unique perspective and can be very helpful in providing a sober assessment of these adverse risks.” says Baily-Schiffman. “Settling more cases than most during trial, I have experienced the give and take required to bring parties together to arrive at a settlement.”

Michael Starr, Esq.

Michael Starr brings to SSAM ADR an impressive and comprehensive body of commercial litigation and mediation experience spanning across 4-decades.

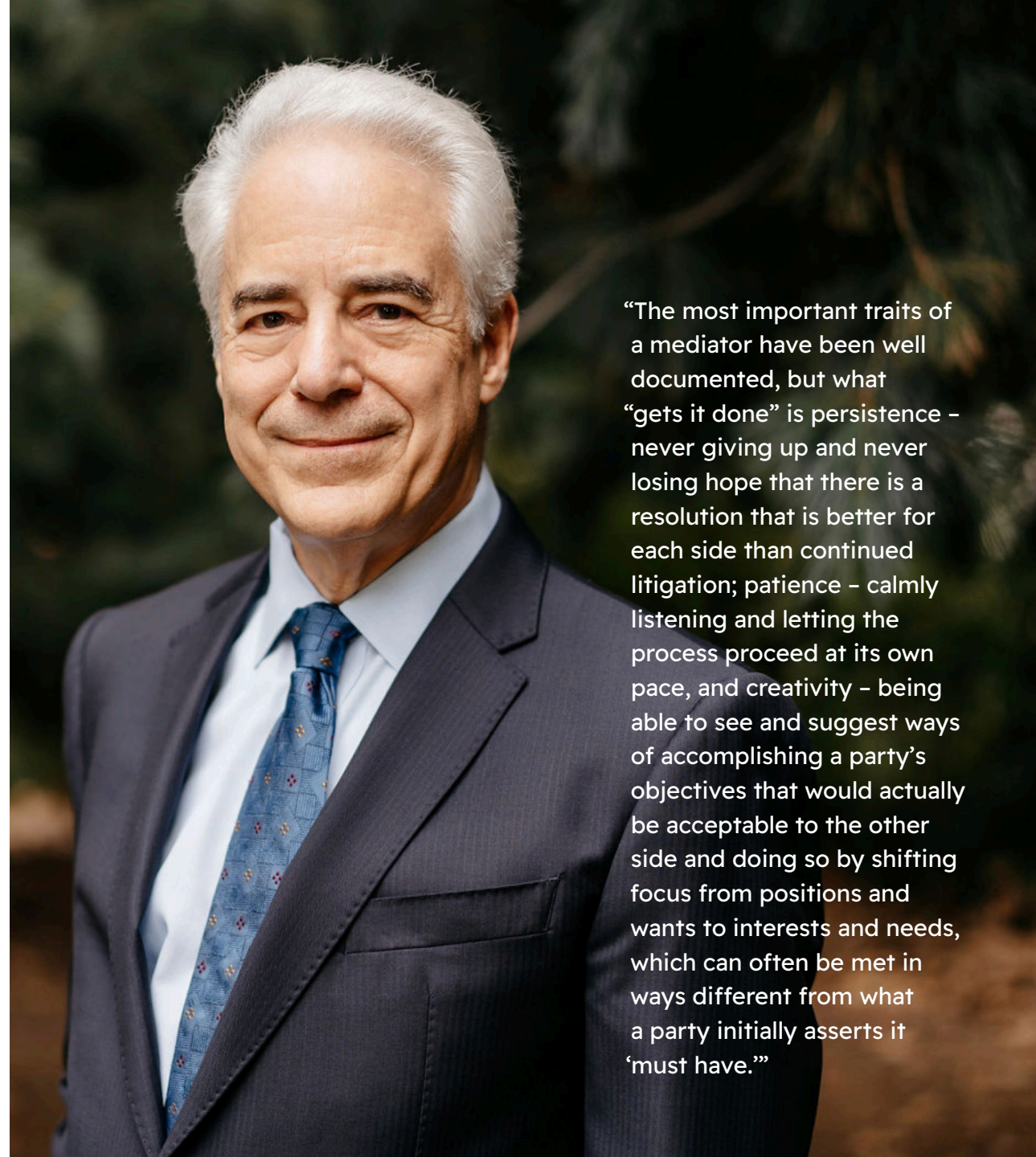
Reflecting a uniquely Modern Mindset to complex dispute resolution, Starr believes there is no such thing as a good or bad settlement—only better or worse than the alternative of continued litigation. “I seek to help parties see that they have needs and interests that are collateral to the litigation and far better served by agreement, than by winning a lawsuit.”

Over the course of his legal practice as Partner, Litigation at Holland & Knight and Partner, Litigation at Hogan Lovells, Starr litigated a wide range of commercial disputes involving shareholder agreements, corporate

acquisition and earn-outs, antitrust and unfair competition, and bankruptcy and reorganization. He brings to mediation his experience as both a trial and appellate advocate, having started his legal career as a law clerk for U.S. Circuit Judge Abner Mikva.

Starr has served as a court-appointed mediator and an early neutral evaluator for Federal and State courts in New York City for over 25 years. In 2019, Starr founded Michael Starr Mediation Services.

A graduate of Yale Law, Starr is a member of the roster of neutrals for the New York State Supreme Court Commercial Divisions, the US District Court for the Eastern and Southern Districts of New York and the US Bankruptcy Court for the SDNY.



“The most important traits of a mediator have been well documented, but what “gets it done” is persistence – never giving up and never losing hope that there is a resolution that is better for each side than continued litigation; patience – calmly listening and letting the process proceed at its own pace, and creativity – being able to see and suggest ways of accomplishing a party’s objectives that would actually be acceptable to the other side and doing so by shifting focus from positions and wants to interests and needs, which can often be met in ways different from what a party initially asserts it ‘must have.’”

Douglas Nadjari, Esq.

“Having spent the past 25-years studying clinical medicine and as an advocate, I approach each med mal mediation on equal footing with experienced medical malpractice lawyers.”

Douglas Nadjari is an accomplished trial lawyer widely recognized in many arenas for the creative and aggressive representation of physicians, healthcare professionals and their patients in matters of medical malpractice.

A partner at Ruskin Moscou Faltischek P.C., Doug is a member of the firm’s Health Law Regulatory Department and White-Collar Crime & Investigations Practice Group.

Doug is best known for representing clients before the Office of Professional Medical Conduct (OPMC), the Office of Professional Discipline (OPD), Office of the Inspector General (OIG) and the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), in hospital medical staff proceedings, audits, claw-

backs and demands for repayment made by Medicare, Medicaid and private health insurers as well as the defense of physicians and corporations in criminal, administrative and commercial disputes.

Doug serves as co-chair of the Professional Discipline Committee of NYSBA Health Care Section, is a member of the New York State Medical Defense Bar Association and the Tulane University School of Law Criminal Law and Procedure “Boot Camp” faculty. He also serves as a Chairman of the Board of Directors for the Island Harvest Food Bank and is a member of the Board of Advisors to the L.I. Energeia Partnership.

Omar Almanzar-Paramio, Esq.

“Having an active litigator as a mediator has advantages. I understand the pressures of having a client you have to report back to. I regularly litigate matters on Long Island, and I know what the people of Long Island are like. My client base is diverse, and with that diversity comes experience with dealing with different people’s needs. More than ever, being able to reach a broader group of people is an asset.”

Omar Almanzar-Paramio, Esq. is a career litigator and Long Island personal injury attorney with over 14 years of experience. His practice handles primarily personal injury and criminal defense matters, and he has handled over 1,000 cases with a top personal injury settlement of \$750K.

Omar graduated from Cornell University’s undergraduate program and earned his J.D. from Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law. After graduating from law school, he served a 5-year term as Assistant District Attorney with the Suffolk County District Attorney’s Office. Omar is the owner and Managing Partner of Almanzar-Paramio Law, LLC, and is fluent in both English and Spanish.

Omar’s pro bono activities include legal support for election protection initiatives, the screening of judicial candidates, and career days for local groups such as the Dominican Bar Association. He is a member of the Long Island Hispanic Bar Association and the NYS Bar Association.



“The core of my client base comes from word of mouth generated from within families and communities. Many of my clients are blue collar, family-oriented people that work hard to give their kids more than they had. My reputation among this community is based on years of work building up that trust.”

Anthony Mascolo, Esq.

“There are things only a person who grew up in Staten Island knows. There are places you go only if you grew up in Staten Island. Some say that those of us from Staten Island might have a chip on our shoulder because of the way NYC perceives us. SSAM ADR understands this. That is why they are giving Staten Islanders a dedicated mediator for its Richmond County cases. Combining deep legal and mediation experience with cultural connectivity is exactly what I bring to this role.”

Anthony (Tony) Mascolo has been the attorney of record in thousands of personal injury cases across a legal career that spans 4-decades. As a former partner in a successful New York law firm, the majority of Tony’s work was within the City of New York, especially Richmond County, where his Staten Island cases ranged from simple motor vehicle accidents and soft tissue injuries to construction accidents and wrongful death cases.

After working for Staten Island Law firm, Chelli and Bush, Tony co-founded Bosco, Bisignano & Mascolo in 1990 with friends from Monsignor Farrell High School. Tony has served as Director of the Richmond County

Bar Association, and the Staten Island Trial Lawyers Association and is a member of the Academy of Trial Lawyers.

Tony remains a proud member of the Staten Island legal community and enjoys meaningful relationships with both plaintiff and defense counselors alike. Tony understands the details of managing a law practice, the demands that clients place on their attorneys, and the challenges of managing an ever-growing case load. Tony embraces the notion that mediation acts as a tool of justice for clients and facilitates the efficient practice of law and case management.

The Honorable Marvin Segal

“Judge Segal has the best skill sets to serve as a mediator as anyone I’ve ever worked with... and I have been practicing for a long time. He works hard, treats everyone respectfully and is results-oriented in every positive sense of the phrase. He is simply the best.”

Hon. Marvin E. Segal has had over 50 years of intensive experience in the legal profession. His exemplary work extends from specializing in the Trial of Admiralty and Insurance cases in all the local, Federal and Appellate courts to being appointed a Judge of the New York State Supreme Court and Nassau County District Court.

For 10 years, he was an arbitrator for the American Arbitration Association, and served as a Master in Civil Court, New York County, presiding over tort and commercial litigation. Judge Segal’s boundless experience and knowledge has led to great successes in the world of law as well as an ADR neutral.

The Honorable Anthony Perri

Hon. Anthony D. Perri started his impressive legal career doing three decades of personal injury trial work, in house for Hartford, Crum & Forster and then USAA (as Executive Director Managing Attorney). He then parlayed that into a diverse body of work as a Neutral-Village Justice, Judicial Hearing Officer, Stock Exchange Arbitrator and Mediator/Arbitrator for SSAM. He firmly believes the key to his success as a neutral is based upon his respect for the parties and positions, his acute listening skills and his ability to fully focus on the respective positions.

Michael Iacono, Esq.

Michael A. Iacono, Esq. has been an active participant of Alternative Dispute Resolution for 34 years serving as a mediator and arbitrator for over 1,500 actions in New York State. Iacono was selected as a 2021 and 2022 Upstate New York Super Lawyer in the practice area of Alternative Dispute Resolution.

Iacono has performed and conducted multifaceted civil action practice for approximately 34 years in every phase regarding the representation of plaintiffs and defendants. This encompassed all aspects of the litigation process from the intake of the file through trial and the appellate level, if necessary.

Across his legal career, Iacono has completed 35 jury trials to verdict in New York Supreme Court and Pennsylvania District Court, including the prosecution and defense of all civil litigation matters. Additionally, Iacono has prepared briefs and argued 33 cases in the Appellate Division, Fourth Department. Iacono has lectured extensively and is published on the topic of biomechanics and accident reconstruction regarding automobile cases. He was selected as a member of the National Major Case Trial Unit with exposure in excess of 1 million dollars involving complex litigation including products liability, labor law, commercial litigation, premise liability and automobile matters.

The Honorable Gerard Asher

The Honorable W. Gerard Asher was elected to the Suffolk County District Court in November 2004 and has served as a District Court Trial Judge for four years and an acting County Court Judge for the last two years.

Asher earned a BA at Princeton University in 1963 and a J.D. at Cornell University in 1966. After law school, Judge Asher served for two years in the United States Army attaining the rank of Captain and is a lifetime member of V.F.W. Post 1469.

Judge Asher practiced at the law firm of John Toaz (a former President of the Suffolk County Bar Association) for five years and then became a sole practitioner for over thirty years with a general practice in real estate, surrogate matters and trial practice. He was a certified baseball agent for over twenty-six years and worked with Tony Attanasio. He represented several major league baseball players in arbitration cases heard in New York, Chicago and Los Angeles.

Judge Asher is married to the former Sylvia Gazetsky and they will be celebrating their forty-seventh wedding anniversary this June. The Asher’s have two grown daughters, Gigi and Lara.

Our CEO



Founder & CEO Bill Groner, Esq.

William H. Groner is Founder and Chief Executive Officer of SSAM. Prior, Bill had 35+ years of experience in personal injury and construction law representing personal injury clients as well as insurance and surety companies. During those years Bill participated in hundreds of negotiations involving over One Billion dollars in settlements, with an extensive number of mediations and trials.

Bill handled the 9/11 mass tort litigation representing over 10,000 ground zero responders who were exposed to toxins and contaminants post 9/11. He was a principal negotiator in the decade long litigation which resulted in settlements in excess of \$900,000,000.

During his career, Bill has lectured on

topics ranging from mediation to ethics to law firm management. Bill has recently been an Adjunct Faculty member at Boston University School of Law teaching a course for 3 years on the Ground Zero mass tort. He has made numerous radio and TV appearances including 20/20 ABC News, CNN (Worldwide), Good Day NY, Fox, and CBS.

Bill has been repeatedly selected as a New York Super Lawyer, characterized as a 'rating service of outstanding lawyers who have attained a high-degree of peer recognition and professional achievement.' Bill also enjoys the maximum rating available (AV-5.0) from Martindale-Hubbell, which denotes the "highest level of professional excellence."

Why SSAM ADR?

SSAM mediators have posted a **81% settlement success rate** across the past 36 months

Why wait? SSAM can schedule your mediations within a matter of days and weeks, rather than months

SSAM's carrier relationships go deep across a broad list of both popular and specialty insurers

SSAM case management is your connection to hard-to-reach claims professionals

This isn't speed dating, SSAM neutrals mediate **one case at a time...yours.**

SSAM bills in 15-minute increments after the first hour...**no rounding up to the next hour.**

97%: average 2022 score for SSAM efficiency & effectiveness across over 400-post mediation surveys

SSAM's Most Frequent ADR Carriers

AIG	Ironshore	Sedgwick Claims
AmTrust North America	Kingstone	Seneca
Berkshire Hathaway	Liberty Mutual	Sentry
Broadspire	Markel	Starr
Chubb	Maya	State Farm
Cincinnati Insurance	Merchants	Stillwater
CNA	National General	The Hartford
DB (Dongbu)	National Interstate	The Rawlings Group
ESIS	North American Risk	Travelers
Farm Family	Nuvance Health	USLI
Farmers	NYU Langone	Utica First
Gallagher Bassett	Philadelphia Insurance	Utica National
GEICO	PREMIA	Western Litigation Inc.
Hamlin & Burton	Progressive	Zurich
Homesite	RCS (ELCO & RIS)	

Our offices

Conventional Wisdom: The convenience of virtual ADR will dictate its continued dominance.

Perhaps, but SSAM has pursued neither convention nor convenience in becoming the fastest growing ADR service in New York.

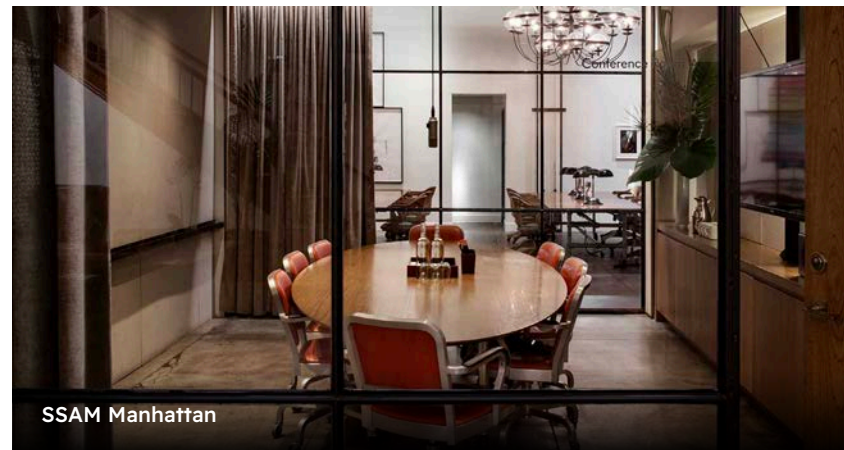
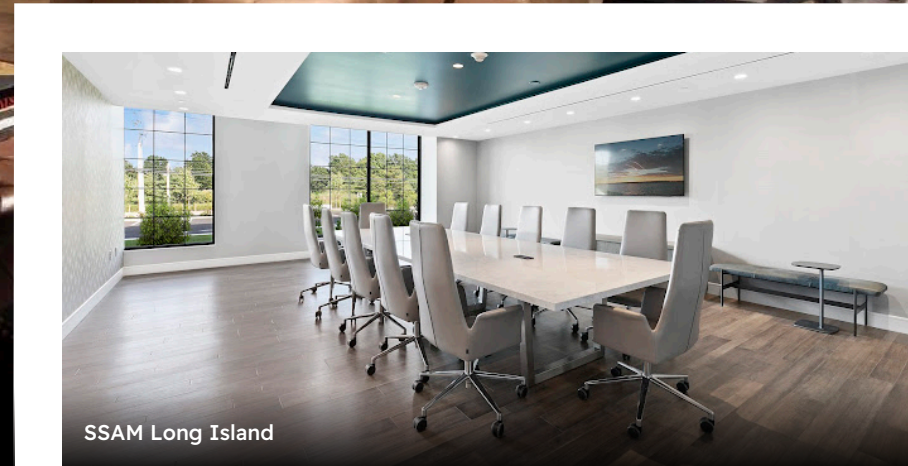
Relationships are best developed face-to-face, and they drive settlement success.

With offices and mediation space in both Manhattan and Westbury, Long Island, SSAM welcomes your return to in-person ADR sessions.

Of course, SSAM offers both hybrid and fully virtual ADR formats whenever requested.

Manhattan
Neuehouse
110 E 25th St.
New York, NY 10010

Long Island
The Selby
695 Merrick Ave., Suite 219
Westbury, NY 11590



Contact Us

SSAM

Alternative Dispute Resolution

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