

LOS ANGELES

Daily Journal

WEDNESDAY,
JULY 15, 2009
VOL. 122 NO. 133
\$ 3.00

California's Top 10 Plaintiff Labor and Employment Lawyers of 2009

Employment Plaintiff

These 10 lawyers kept employers honest and, in some cases, helped push reforms.

V. James "Jim" DeSimone

Schonbrun DeSimone Seplow Harris & Hoffman
Venice

Year in Review: V. James DeSimone was the lead appellate lawyer in *Johnson v. United Cerebral Palsy*, a precedent-setting case involving the admissibility of evidence of discriminatory acts against employees. The California 2nd District Court of Appeal decided the case in April by reversing the trial court's grant of summary judgment in a pregnancy discrimination and wrongful termination case. The appeals court instructed the trial court to admit evidence of other employees who were fired after they told their employer they were pregnant. Testimony that the employer made false accusations about pregnant employees to justify firing them was ruled admissible. The case advanced employment protections to California employees by providing instruction to trial courts as to what evidence is admissible at trial.



Next Challenge: DeSimone will represent employees of AT&T, Radio Shack, Raytheon Co. and Los Angeles County in class action cases involving overtime wages. He will also represent a female air traffic controller in a sexual harassment case that looks into whether the Fair Employment Housing Act (FEHA) protects California citizens when they work overseas.

Most People Don't Know: In 1995, DeSimone was pronounced "dead" in UCLA Law Alumni magazine. It turns out there was another, much older UCLA Law alum named Vincent James DeSimone who had passed away. A classmate knocked on his door to lend condolences to his wife, who responded, puzzled, "He's in the backyard with the dog."