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EMPLOYMENT DISCRIMINATION

Jones v. Walgreen Co. Represented a nationwide class of women retail store management employees in a Title VII class action lawsuit against the nation's largest drugstore chain. The settlement provided for monetary relief of \$17 million, as well as an injunction requiring both objective criteria for pay and promotions decisions involving female managerial employees and outside review of gender equity compliance efforts.

Lewis v. City of Chicago. In this ongoing class action, HSPRD represents more than 6,000 African Americans who took and passed a hiring exam for entry-level firefighter positions in the Chicago Fire Department and then were wrongfully denied the opportunity to be considered for employment by the City. The trial court ruled that the City's method of hiring bore no demonstrable relationship to the relative skills or abilities of candidates for the position and that it disproportionately excluded African Americans, making it more than 5 times more likely that a white candidate rather than an African American would be hired. The City's practice was, as the trial court called it, "a manifest violation of Title VII," our nation's core federal guarantee of equal employment opportunity. We have prevailed not only at trial but also in the federal Court of Appeals and before the US Supreme Court, which issued a unanimous opinion in favor of our clients. In May 2011, the Court of Appeals directed the trial court to enter a remedial order, which will result in the hiring of 111 class members as Chicago Firefighters and payment of \$78.5 million in back pay and pension contributions.

- [Lewis Trial Court opinion](#)
- [Lewis Supreme Court opinion](#)
- [Lewis Court of Appeals opinion](#)

Obtained a 1.3 million dollar jury verdict on behalf of an individual whose Fourteenth Amendment rights to equal protection and due process were violated when he sought to provide housing to minorities.

Represented a school district employee fired after exercising his First Amendment right to support the candidate of his choice in local school board elections. The verdict in this case was one of the highest ever in a single plaintiff civil rights action in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois.

A successful trial defense of Chicago's first African-American Police Superintendent, charged with "reverse race discrimination" in his promotion of minorities to executive positions in the Department.

FAIR CREDIT REPORTING ACT

Joshaway v. First Student and *Hunter v. First Transit*. National class actions against the two subsidiaries of the largest public transportation provider in the United States, challenging the use of criminal background checks on employees and applicants in violation of the Fair Credit Reporting Act. At that time, the \$5.9 million settlement was the largest FCRA settlement resolving employment-related claims in U.S. history.

FIRST AMENDMENT

Personal PAC v. McGuffage. In a First Amendment challenge filed on behalf of Personal PAC and two of its supporters, HSPRD obtained a permanent injunction, barring the enforcement of portions of Illinois's campaign finance law.

Lynch v. Huberman. Obtained a preliminary injunction order on behalf of several Chicago Public Schools teachers after a district court judge held that the Chicago Board of Education had violated their First Amendment rights to political speech. Read case details.

ACLU v. City of Chicago. A class action challenge to political surveillance and harassment by local and national law enforcement agencies. The lawsuit resulted in a consent decree with the broadest restrictions in the country on government interference with the First Amendment activities of non-governmental, community, and public interest organizations.

HOUSING DISCRIMINATION

Hispanics United v. Village of Addison. A class action lawsuit brought under the Fair Housing Act on behalf of the owners and residents of two predominantly

Mexican communities in Addison, Illinois. The settlement, on the eve of trial, prevented the planned destruction of those communities by the Village in the guise of “urban renewal.” The result was the largest Fair Housing law settlement in the nation’s history, and one that effectively changed the use of tax increment financing projects to prevent their abuse as redevelopment pretexts for the displacement and destruction of immigrant communities.

PROTECTION OF OTHER WORKER RIGHTS

Ramirez-Cruz v. United States. This was a class action filed by HSPRD against the Mexican government and three Mexican national banks on behalf of thousands of Mexican workers (braceros), who worked in the U.S. as contract laborers during World War II, pursuant to diplomatic agreements between the U.S. and Mexico. HSPRD led a team of lawyers from law firms in 5 cities seeking to recover unpaid wages withheld between 1942-1946. The historic settlement not only provided compensation to our clients, but was also the catalyst for reparations programs that made additional compensation available to many more thousands of braceros who worked in the program between 1947-1962. The presiding federal judge commended HSPRD for their persistence and accomplishment, stating: “I want to tell you I’ve never seen such litigation in 11 years on the bench that was more difficult than this one. It was enormously challenging...I actually expected, to tell you the truth, at some point that the plaintiffs would just give up because it was so hard, but they never did....And, in fact, they achieved a settlement of the case, which I find remarkable under all of these circumstances.”

SCHOOL DESEGREGATION

People Who Care v. Rockford Board of Education. Trial and liability determination of a class action school desegregation case. The court’s ruling included the most detailed findings in the history of school desegregation litigation. The remedial order entered following the determination of liability provided for the effective integration of African American and Latino students in the second largest public school district in Illinois, as well as tens of millions of dollars of new school construction in minority neighborhoods.

Represented in litigation several predominately African-American school districts challenging the decision made by eleven predominately white high school districts to secede from and form a new, predominantly white high school interscholastic conference. The separation of the conferences would have effectively ended regular season competition between majority-white and majority-African-American high schools in this area. This case, one of the first to use the “effects test” provisions of the Illinois Civil Rights Act of 2003, settled on terms that assured integrated conferences and continued regular season competition and meetings between majority-white and majority-African-American high schools.

VOTING RIGHTS

del Valle v. Illinois Legislative Redistricting Commission. Represented Latino elected officials and community leaders in a case in which HSPRD challenged the gerrymandered boundaries of legislative districts as violations of the Voting Rights Act and the First Amendment to the United States Constitution. The resulting settlement provided for district boundaries which maximized the electoral power of Illinois' Latino communities and facilitated the rapidly growing Latino political power in Illinois.

COMMERCIAL LITIGATION

Representing a trustee in bankruptcy and seeking to recover approximately \$500 million in losses incurred by a debtor corporation, through claims against the corporation's former officers and directors for breach of fiduciary duties and the terms of a shareholder agreement.

CONSUMER PROTECTION

In re Mexico Money Transfer Litigation. This was consolidated litigation in which nationwide classes, represented by HSPRD, brought claims against the three largest money transfer companies in the United States. The suits alleged fraud by each company through their concealment of the spread between the currency-conversion fees they charged customers and their much lower actual transaction costs. The cases settled on terms that mandated transparency and facilitated price competition in exchange rates used by the money transfer industry and provided benefits worth more than \$400 million to the classes of most Mexican immigrant workers, as well as \$4.5 million in grants to non-governmental organizations all over the United States to serve the needs of the Mexican migrant community.

OTHER MATTERS

In re Federal Bank and Trust Company. A class action challenge to international securities fraud perpetrated by organized crime entities in Canada, the United States and the Bahamas. The lawsuit resulted in a record RICO recovery. A wrongful death action on behalf of a worker in the rendering industry, which resulted in the largest gross negligence recovery in the State of Iowa, and the largest verdict of any case in the history of Crawford County Iowa.

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