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Matthew Piers is a shareholder and the president of Hughes Socol Piers Resnick & Dym, Ltd., as well as a member of the firm's Management Committee. He is an internationally recognized trial and appellate attorney, with a practice concentrated on complex litigation matters. He has over 40 years of experience in complex and class action litigation in a broad array of federal and state courts around the country. For plaintiffs, he has obtained hundreds of millions of dollars in verdicts and settlements including single case amounts exceeding \$200 million. He has also successfully defended litigation involving claims for hundreds of millions of dollars.

After three years of college at Cornell University, Mr. Piers enrolled in the University of Chicago Law School, where he graduated in 1974. He worked for a year as a staff attorney at the Legal Assistance Foundation of Chicago, and then established a private litigation practice. From 1984 to 1989, Mr. Piers served as Deputy Corporation Counsel of the City of Chicago, supervising all litigation for the City under the administration of Mayor Harold Washington. He joined HSPRD in 1989.

Mr. Piers practice focuses on complex litigation cases involving mass tort, commercial, constitutional, civil liberties, consumer protection, and employment and housing discrimination claims. He also has extensive experience representing whistleblowers in false claims (*qui tam*) cases.

From 2010 to 2015, Mr. Piers was the lead attorney for the PROTEJE Program of the Secretaria de Relaciones Exteriores of the United Mexican States (the foreign ministry of the government of Mexico), providing legal representation in impact cases brought on behalf of Mexican nationals throughout the United States.

EDUCATION

- University of Chicago Law School (J.D. 1974)
- Cornell University

ADMISSIONS

- Illinois (1974)
- U.S. Supreme Court
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit
- U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois – General & Trial Bar
- U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Illinois
- U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Indiana
- U.S. District Court for the Western District of Texas
- U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Wisconsin

PROFESSIONAL RECOGNITION

- Legal Legend Award, American Constitution Society, Chicago Chapter (2015)
- Top Rated Lawyers of Chicago, The National Law Journal (2013)
- Pro Bono Award, Chicago Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law (2013)
- William R. Ming, Jr. Award, Cook County Bar Association (2012)
- Pursuit of Justice Award, American Muslims for Palestine (2012)
- AV® Preeminent™ Rating by Martindale-Hubbell® (annually)
- Selected by Law Dragon as one of the 400 best litigators in the nation (2007)
- National Association of Distinguished Counsel, Nation's Top 1% (2015)
- Ranked as one of America's Top 100 High Stakes Litigators® in Illinois (2019)
- Superb rated by AVVO (annually)
- Included on the *Illinois Super Lawyers*® list (2005-2019)
- Illinois Leading Lawyer in Civil Appellate Law, Civil Rights/ Constitutional Law, Commercial Litigation, and Governmental, Municipal, Lobbying & Administrative Law (2010-2021). Ranked as one of Illinois Leading Lawyers: Top 5 Class Action and Mass Tort Plaintiff's Lawyers; Top 5 Civil Rights Lawyers; Top 100 Consumer Lawyers (2019)
- Lawyer of the Year Award, The Hispanic Council (1999)
- Finalist for Trial Lawyer of the Year Award, Trial Lawyers for Public Justice (1998)
- Legal Services Award, MALDEF (1998)
- Legal Eagle Award, Independent Voters of Illinois, IPO (1981 and 1985)

MEMBERSHIPS / ASSOCIATIONS

LEGAL

- Fellow, American College of Trial Lawyers
- Member, Illinois State Bar Association
- Member, Chicago Bar Association
- Member, Chicago Council of Lawyers
- Member, American Association for Justice
- Member, Illinois Trial Lawyers Association
- Member, Taxpayers Against Fraud
- Litigation Advisory Committee, American Immigration Council
- Board of Advisors, American Constitution Society, Chicago Chapter

RECENT SPEECHES AND PRESENTATIONS

- *Lewis v. City of Chicago: Challenging Standardized Employment Tests Under Title VII* (Apr. 23, 2015).
- *The False Claims Act: Combating Fraud on the Government*, presentation in collaboration with the American Constitution Society (Nov. 11, 2014).

REPRESENTATIVE MATTERS

EMPLOYMENT RIGHTS

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. Represented a class of more than 6,000 African Americans who 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. Mr. Piers and his legal team prevailed not only at trial but also before the US Supreme Court. The remedial order resulted in the hiring of 106 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](#)

Trombetta v. Proviso Township. 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 employment discrimination action in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois.

Maloney v. Rice. 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. The \$5.9 million settlement was a record setting FCRA settlement resolving employment-related claims.

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.

ACLU v. City of Chicago. A class action challenge to political surveillance and harassment by local and national law enforcement and intelligence 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 the only 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.

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.

PROTECTION OF OTHER WORKER RIGHTS

Ramirez-Cruz v. United States. This class action was filed 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.

South Inter-Conference Association Litigation. HSPRD represented several predominately African-American school districts in litigation 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 challenging 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

Emerald Casino Litigation. A lawsuit claiming damages for the loss of a license to operate what was projected to be the most profitable casino in the country, resulting in a verdict awarding \$272 million.

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.

CONSUMER PROTECTION

In re Mexico Money Transfer Litigation. Consolidated litigation of nationwide classes, bringing claims against the three largest money transfer companies in the United States. The suits alleged fraud by concealment of the spread between the currency-conversion fees charged to customers and 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.

TORTS

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.

FALSE CLAIMS

United States ex rel. Cretny-Tsosie v. Creekside Hospice II LLC. Represented plaintiff/relator in a False Claims Act action against a Nevada hospice provider for submitting false claims to Medicare for hospice services for patients who were ineligible for reimbursement and for inappropriate physician charges. HSPRD successfully resolved the case as part of a \$54 million global settlement of multiple cases, obtaining \$10.8 million for our client's case.

OTHER MATTERS

Representation of Mexican nationals in the U.S. Mr. Piers and HSPRD, at the request of the Mexican Foreign Ministry, successfully represented Mexican nationals all over the United States in class actions and other impact cases in areas including employment rights and law enforcement misconduct.