

Big Shoulders

The state's top 10 litigators include heavy hitters for both plaintiffs and defendants

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Many of the nation's top civil litigators come from Illinois. Narrowing the list to 10 meant cutting out literally dozens of top-flight trial and appellate counsel. The final list includes the top two name partners at the nation's leading defense boutique, four of the country's most successful plaintiff's lawyers and one of the most successful female litigators ever.

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Fred H. Bartlit Jr.

Chicago's Bartlit Beck Herman Palenchar & Scott LLP

Fred H. Bartlit Jr. works on a national stage, as lead partner at the nation's hottest defense boutique. He is one of the most successful corporate defense litigators ever, with a long history of big wins in a wide variety of cases, including fraud, antitrust, products liability and intellectual property. Mr. Bartlit is often involved in bet-your-company litigation and has successfully averted numerous potentially devastating jury awards. In 1994, he won a patent infringement lawsuit against Miles Inc., in which the plaintiff was seeking more than \$100 million in damages. In 1996, he won an antitrust action against United Technologies Corp. That resulted in the jury assessing no damages against his client, even though the jurors found that it had engaged in monopolistic conduct.

About 75% of his caseload consists of representing corporations in massive litigation. Upcoming trials as a plaintiff's attorney include representing Bayer in a big patent case and FTD in a breach-of-fiduciary-duty action. His next trial is this November, defending Reebok in a breach-of-contract case in which the plaintiff is seeking \$100 million.

Philip S. Beck

Bartlit Beck

Philip S. Beck, another name partner at Bartlit Beck, specialized in handling complex litigation, primarily for the defense in civil cases. Mr. Beck has achieved some of the most significant defense wins of the past several years, for such clients as Houston Industries, Dresser Industries, United Technologies Corp. And FMC Corp. These victories include a 1994 defense win in a toxic torts class action for NL Industries in which the plaintiffs were seeking \$80 million in punitives, and a 1997 defense win for Alpha Therapeutic Corp., a maker of blood concentrates, which was being sued by two hemophiliac boys who contracted AIDS through the products. Both

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were listed among the National Law Journal's top defense verdicts for those years. Last year, Mr. Beck won another stunning victory in a retrial of the compensatory phase of a fraud case against his client Dresser Industries that initially brought a \$54 million verdict. The first trial brought \$4 million in compensatories; the plaintiffs were looking for \$40 million in compensatories in the retrial. The jury awarded \$1. The punitives were later reduced from \$50 million to \$650,000.

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