

Daily Journal

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TOP 100 LAWYERS IN CALIFORNIA

EDITORS' NOTE

Every year, the editors of the Daily Journal look at the work of hundreds of California lawyers. We receive nominations from law firms and nonprofits and universities – and from clients. We also examine our archive of stories and talk to each reporter about the matters they've been covering. The point is to honor the attorneys whose work is having the widest impact, and not just on their career or their firm's bottom line. We seek to honor work that is changing an industry or the law or the society as a whole. And every year, we reach the difficult but exciting truth: There are far more than 100 leading lawyers in California. Deciding who won't make the list is our most difficult task.

We don't pretend that this list is scientific or encompassing; it is a snapshot of a moment in time. It is a representative sample of the tremendous legal talent that California offers. As you read, we hope you'll agree.

— David Houston, Editor



CLIFFORD H. PEARSON

LITIGATION

PEARSON, SIMON & WARSHAW LLP
SHERMAN OAKS

SPECIALTIES: Antitrust, class actions

Pearson faced multiple players and challenges in an antitrust dispute that resulted in a total recovery of more than \$473 million for class members.

He served as one of the lead negotiators in the direct purchaser class action that alleged a decade-long conspiracy to raise and fix the prices of TFT-LCD panels and certain products containing those panels. *In Re TFT-LCD (Flat Panel) Antitrust Litigation*, M 07-1827 SI (N.D. Cal., April 20, 2007).

Known as thin-film transistor liquid crystal displays, they are used in flat-panel televisions, as well as computer monitors, laptop computers, mobile phones and other devices.

The defendants included LG Display Co. Ltd., Samsung Electronics Co. Ltd., Sharp Electronics Corp., Toshiba Corp., Hitachi Ltd. and Epson Corp., among others.

Pearson worked closely with his partner, Bruce L. Simon, and co-lead counsel Lief Cabraser Heimann & Bernstein LLP.

Simon handled the litigation end, while Pearson focused on running the case and getting it settled.

"We had to strategize," Pearson said. "We did an analysis and came up with a ballpark figure of what we thought we could get from each defendant."

He and class counsel engaged in a series of mediations that resulted in more than \$443 million in settlements with 11 defendants before trial.

In July 2012, a jury found that Toshiba participated in the price-fixing conspiracy. A post-verdict settlement was then negotiated, bringing the total recovery to more than \$473 million for the class members.

In another significant matter, Pearson served as lead negotiator in an antitrust case on behalf of a group of farmers and small business owners who alleged price fixing by Russian, Belarusian and North American producers of potash, a main ingredient used in fertilizer.

After defeating the defendants' motion to dismiss on appeal last year, Pearson led a series of complex negotiations, settling with the Russian and Belarusian defendants for \$10 million, and with the North Americans for \$80 million.

"What I want to accomplish for our clients is to resolve disputes, and not let them go on forever," Pearson said.

— Pat Broderick