

Hancock & Hancock Turns \$15,000 Offer into a \$500,000 Settlement

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"I just left everything in Michael and Claire's hands. They're very compassionate people, and they made me feel like part of their family." Theresa Shopmeyer adds, "and thanks to Michael and Claire's ability to obtain the settlement of \$500,000 for me, my future financial needs will be taken care of."



Michael Hancock discusses settlement with client Theresa Shopmeyer.

Michael Hancock To Lecture At Florida Bar-Approved CLE "Trying The Automobile Injury Case In Florida"



Michael Hancock will be lecturing at an upcoming Florida Bar-Approved Continuing Legal Education Seminar entitled **"Trying The Automobile Injury Case In Florida"**. Over fifty attorneys from across Central Florida are expected to attend this seminar in order to learn trial skills and tactics used in automobile injury cases from an attorney of Mr. Hancock's experience.

Mr. Hancock's topics will include: effective methods of picking juries, persuasive opening statements and closing arguments, the use of demonstrative evidence, how to effectively present the plaintiff's claim for damages and the art of cross examination of the defendant's expert witnesses.

Thank You For Your Referrals!

We want you to think of us as your law firm. If you or someone you know has a legal matter that needs attention, please call us!

The highest compliment our clients, colleagues and friends can give us is a referral of their friends and family. Thank you for your trust, and we welcome the opportunity to help.

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(Tampa)

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(Crystal River)

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An Interview With Hancock & Hancock

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PERSONAL INJURY LAW OFFICES

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Hancock & Hancock Turns \$15,000 Offer Into \$500,000 Settlement!



Michael Hancock and client Theresa Shopmeyer

Theresa Shopmeyer's life changed dramatically on May 29, 2001, when she was rear-ended by a semi-truck as she drove home from her job as a nurse at a local nursing home.

Despite the fact that her car suffered minimal obvious damage, and the semi-truck had no damage whatsoever, Theresa began to experience horrendous headaches, back pain and numbness in her hands.

After the adjuster for the semi-truck's insurance company took the position that such a

minor impact could not have caused such serious injuries, Theresa decided she needed an attorney and contacted Hancock & Hancock.

"Michael and Claire Hancock believed in me from day one."

"During our initial consultation, Michael talked to me at length for free, taking all the time necessary to explain my legal rights, the compensation I was entitled to and the process involved in bringing a personal injury claim. I can't tell you how reassuring it was to know that he and Claire believed in me from day one, while the insurance company clearly did not," explained Theresa. (Continued. Page 2)

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\$500,000 Settlement

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“Based upon his knowledge of the local medical community, Michael was able to recommend a nationally recognized neurosurgeon who quickly determined that I needed surgery to alleviate my headaches and stop the progression of the numbness in my hands.”

Case Settles At Mediation

Based upon the insurance company’s refusal to reasonably evaluate Theresa’s claim, Michael and Claire filed suit against the trucking company, and moved the case quickly towards trial. At a court-

ordered mediation conference, Michael utilized a Power Point presentation showing photographs of the scene of the accident, highlighting deposition testimony, medical records, detailing lost wages and loss of earning capacity and a video of the actual surgery in graphic detail – with full sound. Theresa summed up, “I know that Michael and Claire’s experience in handling personal injury claims and their hard work from the first day we met until the end of that ten hour mediation conference resulted in the \$500,000 settlement after the insurance company initially offered me only \$15,000.”

(Cont. on page 4)

def·i·ni·tions

Have you ever wondered... about the exact meaning of some commonly used legal terms? Then the “Definitions Column” included Inside Hancock & Hancock will be of interest!

What is “Mediation”?



Mediation is a term used to describe a formal settlement conference, usually court ordered, in which the parties to a lawsuit retain a neutral third person, referred to as a Mediator, to assist the parties in settling their claim.

At the mediation conference, which can last from a few hours to an entire day, the attorneys present a brief summary of what they expect the evidence to be at trial. The mediator does not decide who caused an accident or the value of the case, but the mediator does use his or her training in negotiations to help the parties reach a settlement.

One purpose of a mediation conference is to reach an agreeable settlement of a personal injury claim, early on in the process, thereby avoiding the unnecessary delays, expenses and uncertainties of trial.

Michael Hancock Certified as a Circuit Court Mediator

After extensive training in negotiations and alternative dispute resolution courses, Michael Hancock has earned certification by the Florida Supreme Court as a Circuit Court Mediator. This distinction allows him to act as a Mediator and thereby assist other attorneys and their clients in settling personal injury matters prior to trial.

An Interview With Hancock & Hancock

We sat around the Hancocks’ dining room table on a rainy Saturday afternoon, and we covered a multitude of topics: their personal work ethic, beliefs about the law, and how they manage to combine their thriving law practice with a close-knit family life. Of course, like many of their clients, we especially

wanted to know how they came to have such a successful partnership, and what it is like now to be “Inside Hancock & Hancock!” Editor



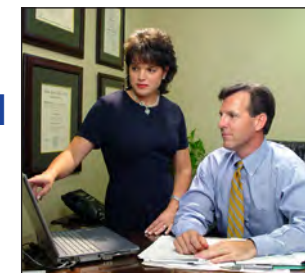
Michael and Claire Hancock

How did Hancock & Hancock get started?

Michael – “In 1996 I left a successful insurance defense law firm where I had practiced law for several years because I had wanted to represent individuals in personal injury cases. So in 1996 I formed my own law firm dedicated to representing individuals and families in personal injury and wrongful death claims. By 2001, my practice had grown so much that I needed the help of another attorney. My wife, Claire Hancock, who was at the time working for another prominent personal injury firm in Tampa, left her practice and we formed Hancock & Hancock, P.A.”

How do you organize your work together, especially as husband and wife?

Michael - One of the things that works so well between the two of us is that we each enjoy different aspects of practicing law. I would much rather be in the courtroom, at an adversarial hearing, taking depositions of defendants and expert witnesses or presenting our clients’ cases in mediations and trials. That’s where I am happiest.



Claire - I am happiest performing the “behind- the-scene” work – the legal research, drafting pleadings and motions to get Michael in front of the judges and in the courtroom. We work together on every case. Michael adds his forte to each case, and I add mine.

Did you know the division of work would workout like this?

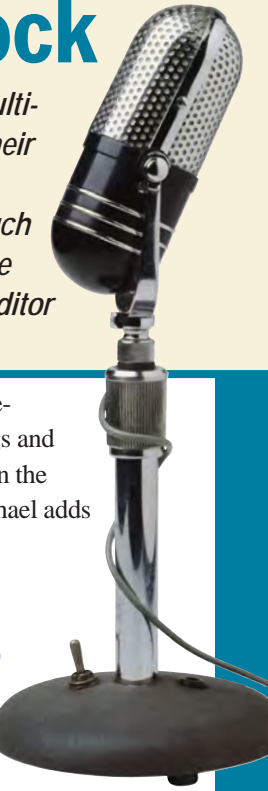
Claire – From the beginning, we had a clear plan how to best utilize each of our own areas of expertise, and by following through with that plan, revising it as necessary and staying flexible, we are able to best serve our clients.

How do you balance your professional and personal lives?

Michael: It is not always easy. Representing personal injury clients often involves working on cases, and talking with clients well past 5:00 pm. The law is a profession where it is easy to find yourself thinking and strategizing about your clients and their cases 24-hours-a-day, seven days a week. There are many times when I am at home with Claire and our two wonderful daughters that I might think, “I need to talk to Claire about an expert, or about a deposition, or an upcoming mediation or trial...”

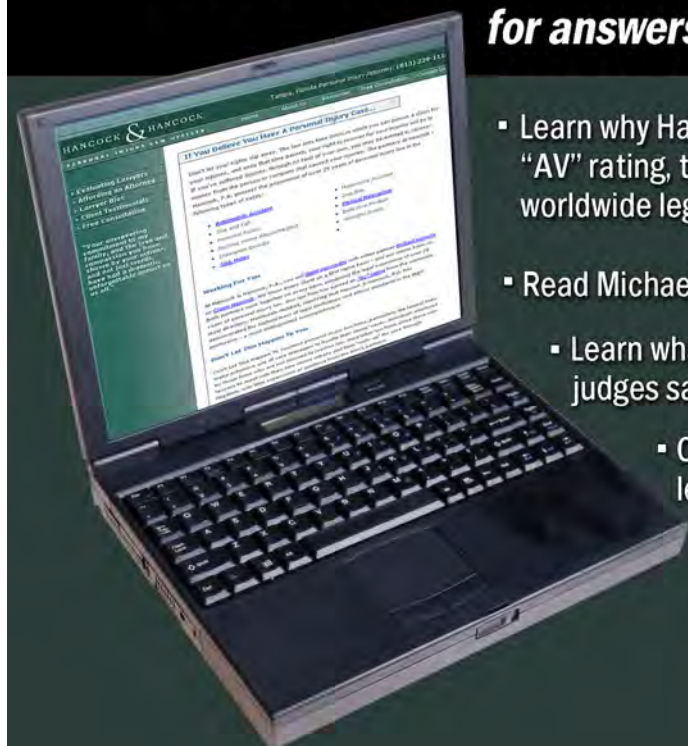
But you have to quickly decide whether you can wait until you return to the office the next morning to discuss the matter or whether it does need to be discussed at home. Over time I have learned to focus on family time so we can really be “mom and dad” while we are away from the office. However that does involve a constant and ongoing prioritization of work and family matters.

Claire: For those times when we are at home and it is necessary to put work before the family, for instance, when we are preparing for mediation or trial, our fully functional home office is networked into our office server, giving us access to all of our case information and the legal research necessary, and that gives us the ability to be at home as a family.



Visit our website at
www.lawhancock.com
...to learn more about the firm and
for answers to your legal questions

- Learn why Hancock & Hancock has earned an “AV” rating, the highest possible, from the worldwide legal directory Martindale Hubbell.
- Read Michael and Claire’s professional bios.
- Learn what our clients, other attorneys and judges say about Hancock & Hancock.
- Obtain answers to frequently asked legal questions.
- Obtain a free online consultation of your case.



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