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..... *14th Annual*

MOST EFFECTIVE LAWYERS 2018

The 14th annual Most Effective Lawyers special report recognizes the extraordinary work performed by South Florida attorneys in the past year.

Honorees were selected from more than 110 nominations. Attorneys were asked to show proof of positive results obtained for their clients, illustrating obstacles overcome and their impact on public policy and business interests.

This year the Daily Business Review recognizes about 50 attorneys in 20 categories. Two awards were given in two highly competitive areas — government relations/regulatory and products liability.

Legal professionals distinguished themselves with their work in the fast-changing field of cybersecurity, a copyright fight over telenovelas, a change in Florida statutory at the U.S. Capitol and litigation with wide-ranging social impact.

The annual recognition is based on one overriding benchmark — tangible results and impact. Congratulations to everyone who participated.

— Catherine Wilson
Managing Editor

Podhurst Orseck Coordinates Work Generating \$1.5 Billion in Takata Air Bag Settlements

Peter Prieto, Matthew Weinshall, John Gravante and Alissa Del Riego
Firm: Podhurst Orseck

Podhurst Orseck partner Peter Prieto serves as chair lead counsel for plaintiffs in the Takata air bags multidistrict litigation, one of the largest in the nation involving the largest automotive recall in U.S. history.

After more than two years of litigation, the legal team's work on behalf of over 40 million plaintiffs paid off. In October 2017 and February 2018, groundbreaking class action settlements were approved by U.S. District Judge Federico Moreno in Miami with six automakers for a total of \$1.2 billion.

In July, Ford agreed to settle for an additional \$299 million. Final approval is pending.

The settlements with Toyota, Mazda, Subaru, BMW, Nissan and Honda came three years after the litigation began. Prieto with the assistance of Podhurst lawyers Matthew Weinshall, John Gravante and Alissa Del Riego, helped secure the large-scale payouts.

The newest defendants include General Motors, Fiat



Peter Prieto

Matthew Weinshall



John Gravante

Alissa Del Riego

Chrysler, Volkswagen and Mercedes-Benz, which also installed Takata inflators in their vehicles.

The MDL is a result of air bags supplied by Takata that have been recalled worldwide because of a defect that makes its inflators prone to explode. The lawsuit claims the defect is linked to the

use of inexpensive and volatile ammonium nitrate, which sometimes spews shrapnel at occupants. At least 20 deaths and hundreds of injuries have been blamed on defective air bags.

Motorists have alleged a decadelong scheme by Takata and automakers to conceal the defect from regulators and class members.

To prosecute the claims against Takata and the automakers, the Podhurst Orseck team oversaw and coordinated the work of more than two dozen law firms with over 200 lawyers and paralegals. The MDL lawyers defeated motions to dismiss, reviewed over 10 million pages of documents and took or defended more than 150 depositions.

The settlements provide compensation for economic losses resulting from the recall including reimbursement for reasonable out-of-pocket expenses, a residual distribution payment of up to \$500, rental cars for the most at-risk class members while they wait for remedies and a customer-support program for repairs and adjustments on replacement inflators, including an extended warranty.