

## Global Settlement of \$100 Million for Loop Office High-Rise Fire Victims

**April 2008**

A global settlement of over \$100 million was reached on April 28, 2008 on behalf of the 22 victims of the Chicago Loop office high-rise building fire in Chicago on October 17, 2003. Four victims were represented by attorney Daniel Kotin, partner at the law firm of Corboy & Demetrio.

One of the victims, Felice Lichaw, died in the stairwell of the building during the fire. Her family was the first to file a lawsuit just three days after the fire. Pursuant to the agreement, Ms. Lichaw's family will receive over \$4.7 million. According to Kotin, "Ms. Lichaw's brother and mother are pleased that their tragic loss has been acknowledged and recognized. Felice was the centerpiece of their family and while the money is a comfort, the pain of their loss remains."

Carol Melton, another victim of the fire, will receive over \$4.7 million in this settlement. Carol was overcome by smoke and passed out in the stairwell while holding hands with one of the decedents. She was the survivor who awoke 90 minutes later, pounded on the lock doors, and alerted the fire department. "She's to be commended for the many lives she helped that day," said Kotin.

In total, Corboy & Demetrio represented 4 plaintiffs and the total settlement for them was over \$17.3 million.

"This was a long, hard-fought battle. We spent 4 years exposing and proving the indefensible conduct that led to this tragedy. The last six months, essentially, involved the defendants fighting over their percentages of fault," said Kotin.

"What has been frustrating to these victims and to us as their attorneys is the fact that all the legal maneuvering overlooked the fact that these people were locked in a smoke filled stairwell and

### Attorneys

- Daniel M. Kotin

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forgotten. These defendants finally stepped up and accepted responsibility for an inexcusable event."

All of the Corboy & Demetrio clients are extremely pleased that the case settled. Carol Melton was preparing to be part of the first trial which was beginning this week. "Carol was prepared to testify about the horrible ordeal she endured, but the prospect of reliving the experience was quite painful for her," said Kotin. "This settlement should provide all our clients with a sense of closure, and an opportunity to move on in life."