

**For Immediate Release
August 12, 2010**

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DECKER LAW FIRM WINS \$1.9-MILLION SETTLEMENT

Contractor Charged With DUI After Colliding With Virginia Beach Motorcyclist

Settlement Equals 15th Largest In Virginia For 2009

Martin A. Thomas of the Decker Law Firm in Norfolk, Va. has won a \$1.9-million settlement for a Virginia Beach businessman whose motorcycle was struck by a concrete contractor's truck. The victim suffered a broken neck and several other serious injuries, and required months of recuperation in a hospital.

The collision occurred on Atlantic Avenue along the Virginia Beach oceanfront in the early morning hours of March 15, 2007. Police charged the truck driver, who was operating the company vehicle on personal business, with driving under the influence (DUI). A court had convicted the driver of DUI in October, 2004 and had restricted his driving privileges.

Thomas won a ruling from the Second Judicial Circuit Court in Virginia Beach that two \$1-million dollar liability insurance policies owned by the truck driver's employer were in effect at the time of the collision and covered the truck driver. The insurance company and employer had contended that the employee was not permitted to drive the truck for personal tasks and therefore was not insured under the policies. Immediately afterward, the insurer settled the case in favor of Thomas' client in the amount of \$1.9-million.

"This victim suffered life-altering injuries due to the gross negligence of an employee whose employer should not have allowed him to drive a company truck for personal use," said Thomas. "I have devoted most of my legal career to helping folks like this and I'm gratified that we were so successful in this case."

The Virginia Lawyers Weekly published its first summary of the state's largest personal injury settlements (for calendar 2009) in February, 2010. This \$1.9-million settlement would have ranked #15 for that year.

Martin A. Thomas is the managing attorney for Decker, Cardon, Thomas, Weintraub & Neskis, P.C. He has a general practice of law, but concentrates in the areas of Personal Injury, Criminal Law and Traffic Law. His personal injury practice includes motor vehicle accidents, products liability, medical malpractice and premises liability. Thomas also has an active practice in various areas of Administrative Law, including alcoholic beverage control law (ABC licensing for restaurant and bar owners with the ABC Board) and representation of various health care professionals before the Department of Health Professions (Board of Medicine, Board of Nursing, Board of Pharmacy) for disciplinary matters. He also represents many small corporations and other businesses.

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Thomas was born in Norfolk and grew up in Virginia Beach. He received his B.A. from the University of Virginia in 1975 and his J.D. in 1979 from the University of Virginia School of Law. He was admitted to the Bar of the Commonwealth of Virginia in 1979. He is also admitted to the Bar of the U. S. District Courts for the Eastern District of Virginia and the Eastern District of Michigan, as well as the Bar of the U. S. Court of Appeals, Fourth Circuit. He is a member and former Chairman of the Judicial Inquiry and Review Commission for the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Thomas is very active in the Hampton Roads Community. He served as Chairman of the Board of Catholic High School in Virginia Beach for six years, and formerly served on the boards of Catholic Charities of Hampton Roads and The Catholic Charities of Hampton Roads Foundation. He is a past president of the School Board of St. Gregory the Great Catholic School in Virginia Beach, and now serves on the School Board of Bishop Sullivan Catholic High School. Martin Thomas is of Lebanese heritage and serves on the Board of Directors of the Sons and Daughters of Lebanon.

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Martin Thomas, Esq.