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Trio of trial lawyers starts firm in Loop

Tomasik, Kotin,
Kasserman LLC
opens this week

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Two partners who left Corboy & Demetrio P.C. and another partner who departed Clifford Law Offices have started their own plaintiff personal-injury law firm.

The new firm consists of name partners Shawn S. Kasserman, Daniel M. Kotin and Timothy S. Tomasik. It will also include partner Robert F. Geimer and associate Patrick J. Giese.

The firm — known as Tomasik, Kotin, Kasserman LLC — is officially set to open its doors Tuesday at 10 S. LaSalle St.

Kasserman and Kotin left Corboy & Demetrio after working there as lawyers for nearly 23 years and 18 years, respectively.

Kotin, 47, is the nephew of Philip H. Corboy, founder of Corboy & Demetrio, who died in June. Kotin and Philip Harnett Corboy Jr. — known as “Flip” and a Corboy & Demetrio partner — are cousins.

Tomasik, 49, left Clifford Law Offices after 15 years. Robert A. Clifford is the founder of that firm.

“We are planning to continue the tradition that Phil Corboy started 60 years ago that this firm and Clifford Law Offices has thrived on forever,” Kotin said. “In that regard, we’re going to represent people and families injured and killed due to negligence.”

Corboy & Demetrio gave him more opportunity to succeed than he “could have ever imagined,” Kotin said.

“But now that I’m entering what I consider to be the second half of my career,” he said, “I concluded that the time was right



Shawn S. Kasserman

to make the transition and try to build something on my own.”

Kasserman, 47, said working at Corboy & Demetrio was a dream come true and a blessing for him.

“But the older I got, the more apparent it became to me that I also have the dream of having my own firm,” he said. “At this time, the opportunity to (practice with) this group of lawyers was very appealing to me.”

Kasserman said he “will take what Corboy & Demetrio has taught me and given me and build upon it.”

Thomas A. Demetrio, a Corboy & Demetrio partner, called Kotin and Kasserman terrific lawyers who left “with my encouragement.”

“They are my friends, but I understand and appreciate having your own law firm,” he said. “So I’m happy for them.”

Demetrio said he believes Corboy would be happy for Kotin in particular, and also for Kasserman.

“Phil understood that was the nature of the beast,” Demetrio said.

The elder Corboy practiced personal-injury trial law for at least 50 years. He trained so many trial lawyers that his proteges became known collectively as “Corboy College.” By his own account, at least 70 lawyers



Daniel M. Kotin

passed through his firm while he was there.

“What we are doing is really nothing more than a continuation of the legacy that Corboy started 60 years ago with the ‘Corboy College of Law,’” Kotin said.

Tomasik said “after spending 15 great years under the tutelage of one the great trial lawyers in America, I decided it was time to stand on my own two feet. By starting my own firm with talented partners, I’m doing exactly what (Clifford) has taught me to do.”

Kotin called Tomasik “an exceptional lawyer who is loved by his clients and the people who have worked with him think the world of him.

“He clearly leaves with my blessing and it’s under good circumstances. He’s got an entrepreneurial itch in him that he wants to scratch and he’s doing it.”

Tomasik said he got to know his fellow name partners while working together on several cases and through joint involvement in bar group matters.

Tomasik has handled several high-profile cases including a \$75.2 million global settlement resulting from a scaffolding accident at the John Hancock Center in 2002. Three women died and six other people were



Timothy S. Tomasik

injured in the accident.

Kotin won verdicts and settlements for clients in excess of \$190 million. Those matters include a case in which he and Demetrio obtained a \$29.6 million verdict for a woman who suffered brain injuries resulting from the derailment of a Metra train.

Kasserman garnered numerous multi-million-dollar verdicts and settlements for clients. Those include a record \$6 million jury verdict for the family of a mother who died due to an anesthesiologist’s negligence.

Both Demetrio and Clifford said their law firms will continue working with the new firm on some cases.

As for the firm’s name, Kotin said that occurred by picking names out of a hat.

“We’re going into this venture with probably a naive belief that we all can be true partners,” Kotin said. “With that in mind, we decided the only fair way to order the names on the letterhead would be by random selection.”

Tomasik said that from his perspective, the order of the names is irrelevant.

As for choosing the method of selection, “that’s because it was too cold to set up a golf match to determine the order of names,” he said.