

## Top 20 Personal Injury Awards of the Year

**H**ere are the largest personal injury verdicts reported by the Law Journal from July 10, 2006, through September 3, 2007, ranked in order of their value as of date of verdict or settlement.

**1 Tropicana Garage Collapse Case Settles for \$101M**  
*In re Tropicana Garage Collapse Litigation:* Litigation over a parking garage collapse at Atlantic City's Tropicana Casino Resort that killed four workers and injured 32 others settled for \$101 million, lawyers in the case announced April 11.

**M**ichael Maggiano and Christopher DiGirolamo, of the Fort Lee, NJ Law Firm of Maggiano DiGirolamo Lizzi & Roberts, Co-Lead Counsel for the Plaintiffs, said the settlement was a substantial achievement but that no amount of compensation could bring back the loved ones who did not return from work that day, or heal the permanently disabled men that will live with the haunting memories of the October 30, 2003 collapse.

In addition to their roles on the trial team, Maggiano and DiGirolamo represent three of the injured men who suffered disabling injuries that will prevent them from ever returning to jobs in the construction field. The three men, the families of the four workers killed when a parking garage under construction collapsed at the Tropicana Hotel and Casino in Atlantic City, will share a settlement package of \$ 101 million with 33 other claimants. The settlement was announced by New Jersey Superior Court Judge William E. Nugent and Judge Stephen P. Perskie. The settlement includes approximately \$ 82.5 million in cash, \$ 2 million in previously settled cases, approximately \$ 8.2 million of workers compensation payments to victims that will not have to be repaid, and more than \$ 8.3 million in future medical expense.



The payout is believed to be the largest settlement of a construction accident case in U.S. history.

Trial preparation by plaintiff attorneys included taking nearly 250 depositions, including those of leading structural engineering experts, obtaining and examining more than 1.5 million pages of documents, and more than 50,000 pages of depositions transcripts.

**D**iGirolamo explained the floors collapsed because, "the floors were not connected to the walls with the required reinforcing steel. Without the necessary reinforcing steel in place, the floors literally slid down the walls once the shoring and supports under the floor were removed".

Maggiano stated, "It is important to all the men and their families that the settlement forces the construction industry and the State Legislature to implement changes on work sites to ensure that such a tragedy does not ever happen again." The injured men want to ensure that their union brothers and sisters do not have to face the same dangers that resulted in the collapse and caused their permanent disabilities.