



RUSSELL & LAZARUS APC
PERSONAL INJURY ATTORNEYS

Exclusively handling serious and catastrophic personal injury claims as well as wrongful death claims due to the negligence of individuals or business entities.



The Right Help When You Need It Most

Winter 2016

- Auto Collisions
- Motorcycle Collisions
- Bicycle Collisions
- Trip/Slip & Fall Accidents
- Construction Site Accidents
- Elder Abuse Claims
- Brain Trauma Claims
- Wrongful Death Claims

••••• ANOTHER YEAR OF FIGHTING THE GOOD FIGHT BY CHRISTOPHER RUSSELL •••••

Trial Attorneys raise everyone's insurance rates by filing and collecting on bogus claims. That is the perception of many people. But as the old adage goes "A lie can travel halfway around the world while the truth is still putting on its shoes". The lies about Trial Attorneys are pedaled by those who want to pre-dispose jurors to thinking poorly of us and our clients since the courtroom is the only place where the playing field can truly be leveled...and they would like it to be "unleveled". Fighting insurance companies every day is truly hand to hand combat. They have the overwhelming resources. All we have is our hard and smart work and a passion to do right by our clients. The following are just a few of the legal battles that took place in 2015.

\$16,162,429.

2015 started out with Marc Lazarus returning a jury verdict up in Los Angeles for \$16,162,429 on behalf of our 37 year old, motorcycle-riding client, who suffered brain trauma when he landed face down on the pavement after being hit by a careless driver. The other side admitted fault but the most Travelers Insurance would offer was \$400,000 (the medical bills were \$500,000). Travelers argued that the helmet worn was illegal despite all of the doctors indicating that no protection could have prevented the brain trauma. After 6 weeks of trial and having to spend over \$500,000 in court costs, the \$16 million verdict was returned. In order to avoid 2 years of appeals, the claim was settled soon thereafter for an amount somewhat less than the verdict.

The Carrier Finally Pays Up.

In July of 2014, an Orange County jury awarded our 43 year old client (father of three), \$1.8 million for a back injury requiring surgery after he was rear ended at 60 mph. Anyone in the back seat would have been crushed to death per the police at the scene. The best offer coming from State Farm was \$160,000 despite the medical bills of \$150,000. State Farm dared us to try the case thinking that their anti-trial attorney propaganda would work on a conservative Orange County jury. State Farm then appealed the verdict but realized the futility of the appeal (after we failed to bite on a "new" \$500,000 offer) and in April of 2015 they agreed to an amount satisfying the judgment and the court costs as well.

Nary a Cent!

Although we returned other notable verdicts in 2015, our last jury award was obtained right before Christmas, when Marc Lazarus returned a \$425,000 verdict for our electrician client who was injured when the A/C contractor at a job site failed to properly attach a 160 lb A/C unit. The unit then fell on to our client's shoulder. He underwent two shoulder surgeries and a third has been recommended. Salmen Insurance denied their A/C contractor did anything wrong and never offered a penny. Because they rejected our last demand of \$380,000, we can request all \$75,000 of our court costs, plus attorney's fees. The case took four years to get to trial due to delays caused by the insurance company. This case is a classic example of how insurance companies leverage the billions they have to "break" a plaintiff and discourage litigation on legitimate claims.

RUSSELL & LAZARUS APC

Serving All of California

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We are Russell & Lazarus. We provide the highest level of service exclusively to those who have been injured in accidents. We work diligently each day, offering our clients uncompromising legal assistance and support. We continually strive to exceed the expectations of those we represent. We commit to being a positive force in their lives and the communities in which we serve.

MEET OUR TEAM



Rory Mills, Kat Van Buren, Lynne Powers, Sean Goedinghaus, Ashley Gregory, Gina Simms, Teri Penniston, Rosa Guerrero, Rhyzan Croomes, Alex Krywenko, Jennifer Schicktanz, Jennifer Escobar, Rosie Valencia, Kathleen Owat, and Kyle Rivetti

MEET OUR NEW TEAM MEMBERS



In 2015, Russell & Lazarus welcomed six very talented new team members.

Kyle Rivetti – Legal Assistant

Rhyzan Croomes – Legal Assistant

Kat Van Buren – Receptionist

Ashley Gregory – Legal Assistant

Kathleen Owat – Case Manager

Sean Goedinghaus – Case Manager

FENJA'S TERIYAKI SALMON WITH MANGO SALSA

This is a pretty quick, easy, and tasty meal to pull together. I have a very picky toddler and he liked it so I will call it a win. It is light, fresh, and super easy to make! I suggest making the salsa ahead of time. I serve it on a bed of brown rice and would also suggest some fresh avocado and broiled asparagus. Enjoy!



2 Pounds Boneless Salmon Fillet

Mango Salsa Recipe:

- 2 ripe mangos cubed into 1/4" chunks
- 1 small purple onion, chopped
- 1 pint cherry tomatoes, quartered (optional)
- 1 handful chopped cilantro (optional)
- 2-4 garlic cloves, chopped
- 1-2 jalapeno peppers seeded and chopped (optional)
- Juice squeezed from 2 limes
- Pinch of fresh cracked salt & pepper

Directions:

Mix the ingredients and try not to eat it all before anyone else gets some! Use more or less of any of the ingredients for your personal taste.



Marinade Recipe:

- 1 cup Kikkoman Teriyaki Marinade
- 1/4 cup fresh lemon, orange, or lime juice (use any citrus you like)
- 1 tsp ginger
- 3 garlic cloves, smashed
- 2 pounds boneless salmon fillet, pin bones removed

Directions:

1. Whisk the teriyaki marinade and citrus juice together in a large enough dish to fit the salmon. Stir in the ginger and garlic. Place the salmon, skin side up, in the sauce and marinate for at least 10 minutes or up to 30 minutes.
2. Preheat a broiler or prepare coals to very hot in a grill. Remove the salmon from the marinade, pat it dry with paper towels, and place it skin side down on an oiled pan or grill grate. While the salmon is cooking, brush it a couple of times with the marinade to use it all up. Immediately remove the skin while the fish is hot. Add Mango Salsa and Serve.

A LICENSE TO KILL? BY DANIEL TATICK, ESQ.



A guy walks into a bar slobbering drunk. The bartender serves him more drinks, and then hands the man the keys to his car. Does the bar have liability if that man then goes out and hurts or kills someone while driving his car? Here in California the answer is no. California is one of the very few states in the nation where a bar or a restaurant can serve alcohol to an obviously intoxicated customer

and not have any liability if that person then gets into a car and causes injury or death.

This law is called the Dram Shop Act. (“Dram Shop” is an old fashioned name for a bar.) The obvious question is why does California give a pass to irresponsible bar and restaurant owners when 30 other states hold those same establishments responsible for such irresponsible conduct? Not surprisingly, it comes down to money. In 2012 alone the hospitality industry gave Sacramento politicians \$20,600,00 (per OpenSecrets.org, a Watchdog organization) to do their bidding. The insurance industry also contributes funding to prevent the law from being changed for obvious reasons.

I am sharing this article to inform our readers about this unreasonable law. The law needs to change and I strongly urge all of our readers to write or call their local legislator to get California in line with the 30 other states on this important issue.

RUSSELL & LAZARUS NOTABLE ACHIEVEMENTS

- Voted 1 of only 50 national “Elite” law firms, in 2015, by the National Law Journal.
- Top 5 of “Winningest California Law Firms” in 2015 by Jurisearch, which tracks all California verdicts.
- Christopher Russell named “SuperLawyer” (top 5% California Attorneys).
- Christopher Russell named again as one of 12 “Top” Personal Injury Attorneys by O.C. Register.
- Marc Lazarus keynote speaker at “Law Day” sponsored by Bill Handel (KFI-AM 640).
- Daniel Tatick weds Natalie Rescan on May 24th in Chicago.



RUSSELL & LAZARUS GIVES BACK

- Donated a park bench in honor of clients’ deceased daughter.
- Primary Sponsor for Sarah DeMille 5k Memorial Run.
- Primary Sponsor for Safer 3 Water Safety Foundation’s Ocean Swim.
- Donated “State Championship” rings to the Saddleback College Men’s basketball team.
- Christopher Russell elected to Board of Governors again – L.A. Trial Attorneys Charities.
- Sponsored American Cancer Society “ Relay for Life”, Golf Tournament.



EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT GINA SIMMS – OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR

Office Administrator, Gina Simms, rarely sits still. She is continually busy making sure the firm runs seamlessly. Her quick wit and organizational skills are among just a few of the qualities everyone loves about Gina. She also holds the key to the candy drawer which makes Gina a firm favorite!

Gina has been married to her husband, Larry, for nearly 30 years and together they have raised four sons – Adam, Steven, Michael and Eric. Gina spends much of her extra time and energy enjoying her growing family which includes her 4 young grandsons. When time allows, she can be found with her family playing board games

or riding bikes at the beach. Family gatherings are often the highlight of her week. Big congratulations to Gina as she celebrates her 10 year anniversary with the firm this coming year.

“Gina is my right arm when it comes to managing the office. My work life would be horrible without her.”
-Chris Russell





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..... CASE RESULTS

MOTORCYCLE COLLISION

\$16,162,429 - Jury verdict on behalf of our 37 year old client who sustained brain trauma due to a motorcycle collision. At the time of the verdict, it was the largest verdict in the State of California in 2015 for a brain trauma claim.

AUTOMOBILE COLLISION

\$189,000 - A Long Beach jury returned a verdict on behalf of our 54 year old client who underwent minimally invasive back surgery due to a rear-end auto collision. State Farm's "last and best" offer before trial was \$50,000.

TRIP AND FALL INCIDENT

\$275,000 - Settlement on behalf of an 81 year old grandmother who tripped over a hidden and damaged tire stop in a parking lot where metal rebar was sticking out (Target Stores admitted to knowing it was damaged). She sustained a serious and disabling fracture to her shoulder and lesser injuries to her entire left side.

..... TESTIMONIALS

"Your entire staff has always been pleasant, professional and I have always gotten immediate attention. I will be very happy to refer this firm to others." -*Sandra A.*

"Knowing very little about injury cases, your firm has been 1st and foremost respectful and thoughtful about me as a client; I truly appreciate all of your efforts as a group and thank you all!" -*Sherm F.*

"Everyone at the firm was very supportive and always followed up in a timely manner. I would highly recommend this firm and I have already done so!" -*Steve M.*

"Mi esperiencia con los abogados fue muy buena. Satisfactoria con todo el personal secretarias, y abogados. La recepcionista en lo personal fue muy profesional, atenta y cordial el trato." -*Solidad D.*