

25 YEARS AT CRAIG P. KENNY & ASSOCIATES

By Lawrence E. Mittin, Esq.

On September 15, 2022, I celebrated 25 years of working as an attorney at Craig P. Kenny & Associates. That is almost half my life and I am so fortunate to work with great people at a firm which is not only good at what it does in securing recoveries for accident victims, but also practices with honor and integrity such that we are the attorneys for life for so many of our clients. Over these past 25 years, I have seen the number of personal injury attorneys in Las Vegas grow exponentially. With that growth has come an advertising blitz by these attorneys promising “endless winning” for clients, as the attorneys jump into their luxury cars or private jets, as after all winners have to travel in style.

Having seen 25 years of accidents and injuries, getting clients compensation for pain and suffering can never be considered like winning a jackpot at a local casino with a big novelty check. Nobody wants an accident, whether a fender bender or a life-changing incident. As for insurance companies, their position is always the same: to pay as little money as possible. In reflecting on the past 25 years, while the majority of cases involve clients recovering from their injuries, unfortunately, there have been many tragedies for which our legal system’s only solution is financial compensation. For these catastrophic claims, often the legal system can be unfair, as injury claimants cannot pick who hits them in a car accident, let alone the injuries inflicted. In these situations, all we can do is try to make an unfair world a little more fair.

In that regard when I think back on the thousands of claims I have been involved in over the last 25 years, I still recall a case where I never met my client, only speaking to his wife over the phone. The client was ill with cancer and his legal issue involved a private health insurance policy he bought where the company canceled his contract and had sent him a refund check for his premiums. Before just cashing the check which is what the insurance company wanted as that would have made the original policy null and void, his wife started calling attorneys to see if what the company had done was legal. The insurance company canceled the policy because it claimed the client lied about having high blood sugar. The client was not treating for diabetes let alone dying from it, but he was dying from cancer. When the insurance company was unable to uncover any history of a prior cancer diagnosis which the company could have then used to deny the client’s cancer treatment as a pre-existing condition, the company found a medical record stating that the client was told he had high blood sugar. Since the client did not disclose this high blood sugar diagnosis on his application, the insurance company was canceling the policy based on this alleged misrepresentation. This unrelated high blood sugar diagnosis was used by the company as a reason to cancel the policy, allowing the company to stop making payments for the client’s cancer treatment.

My father died at 53 having never gotten the chance to see me become an attorney. So when the client’s wife called me about her husband’s tragic situation where the insurance company was using deception to get out of paying for cancer treatment, I wanted to right a wrong. I returned the premium refund check to the insurance company and informed the company that it had acted in bad faith in trying to deprive the client of valid insurance coverage

for his cancer treatment. Knowing that it had been caught in a lie, the insurance company changed its position and reinstated the insurance policy although it wanted the client to know that if he ever got diabetes, the insurance company would not cover that disease since it was pre-existing. The client was able to resume his treatment for cancer with such treatment covered by the policy he had bought to protect himself years before.

In terms of payment for my work on the case, the client's wife who was from Hawaii sent me Macadamia nuts and a thoughtful thank you note. This case happened about 18 years ago. Yet it is this case where I never met the client and my fee was a heartfelt thank you, that resonates with me as I celebrate 25 years at the firm. The motto of our firm is we are a "law firm committed to the client" and Craig asks his attorneys and staff to always be "honest and sincere" with clients. Advertising attorneys have difficulty with being both honest and sincere. The lawyers who advertise "no fee unless we win," are not unique nor special, as all personal injury lawyers take accident cases on a contingency fee basis where a fee is only received if a recovery is made. As for those attorneys who want to brag about millions won, if the winning came with no one having to suffer, then smiles and celebrations like hitting a jackpot would be appropriate. However, the nature of our legal system is to compensate those who have truly suffered. A lawyer with a heart is commendable compared to a lawyer whose biggest decision each day is to decide between taking the Lamborghini or the Rolls Royce to the office. The greatest thing about working for this firm is that I can be proud of how we practice law and knowing that our clients hire us because we are very good at what we do and we also treat them with the compassion they deserve as being accident victims. With that said, I am beyond grateful to have worked for this firm and our clients for the last 25 years.

