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R. Lewis Van Blois
Product Liability Litigation - Plaintiffs
Oakland, CA

BUYING A VEHICLE is one of the largest purchases an individual will make, usually with the expectation that it is an investment in rider safety. But what about when car failure leads to more serious consequences? R. Lewis Van Blois, the 2021 "Lawyer of the Year" for Product Liability Litigation - Plaintiffs in Oakland along with his long-time partner at Van Blois Law, Thomas C. Knowles, have won many legal battles against auto manufacturers including Ford, General Motors, Chrysler, BMW, Toyota, Hyundai, and others for product failures.

"Product liability litigation for plaintiffs is extremely challenging but is also extremely rewarding," Van Blois said. "It is David vs. Goliath, the underdog taking on mega corporations. When an uncaring corporation sells a product for profit that is unfit, unsafe, and doesn't perform the way it is supposed to perform, it takes an experienced lawyer who is persistent and has the determination to keep going in the face of strong odds against winning."

Van Blois finds his practice area rewarding because of the satisfaction that comes from successfully achieving a result that helps a severely injured person put their lives back together in the best way possible. But as rewarding as that feeling is, there are challenges to this type of litigation.

"Auto manufacturers and large corporate defendants vigorously defend their products, and many are not above [using] dirty tricks to overwhelm plaintiff lawyers with an army of their lawyers," he said.

Although it may be intimidating to face a large corporation, Van Blois believes it is worth it to make the product—and the road—safer for all motorists and passengers.

"[An] example of successfully pursuing a case to achieve a benefit for the public was in Tracy, California, where a dangerous intersection—which caused three catastrophic accidents, resulting in five deaths and a severe brain injury—was made safe by an installation of traffic signals with left-turn lanes, allowing big rigs to safely drive through the intersection," he explained.

Van Blois's advice for those pursuing a career in plaintiff's product liability law is to continue to educate yourself.

"Successful lawyers share information with each other to learn what is successful and what is unsuccessful," he said. "Successful product liability lawyers use all the informational resources [available to them]—including governmental sites and engineering sites—and attend seminars taught by the best lawyers." **B**

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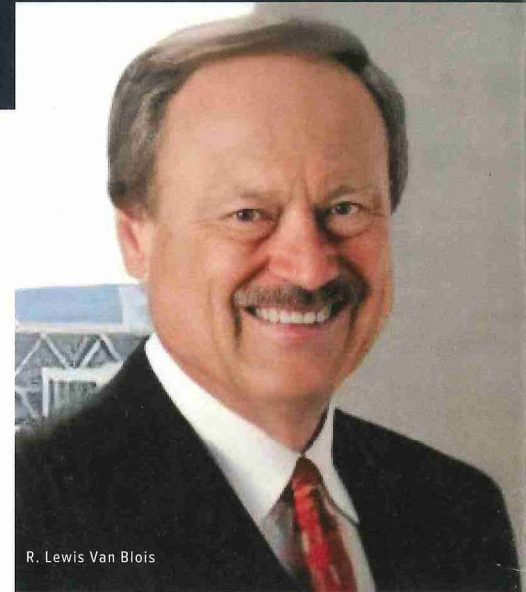
Specialists in Catastrophic Personal Injury

FOR MORE THAN 45 YEARS, The Van Blois Law Firm has served as a powerful advocate in Northern California for persons who have been seriously injured, disabled, or killed as a result of someone else's wrongdoing. With offices in Oakland, Walnut Creek, Stockton, and Modesto, the firm effectively represents persons throughout Northern & Central California as well as the San Francisco Bay Area.

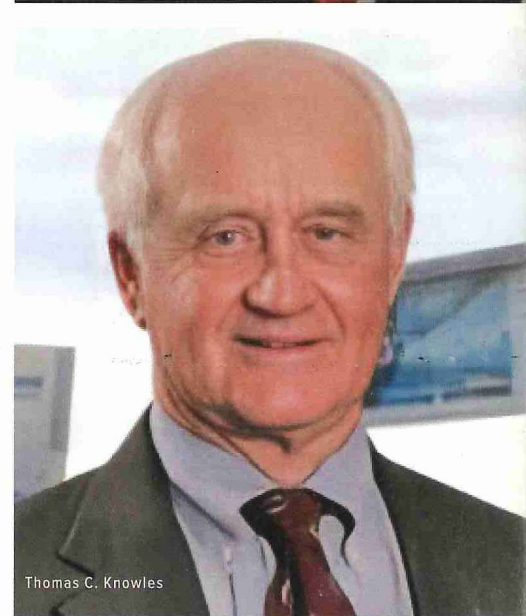
The firm's experienced legal team is led by R. Lewis Van Blois, whose more than 150 jury trials in California have earned him a reputation as one of the state's most knowledgeable and revered injury attorneys. Certified as a civil trial specialist by the National Board of Trial Advocacy for more than 35 years, Mr. Van Blois has achieved millions of dollars in awards and settlements on behalf of clients in various areas of personal injury and wrongful death. He has been selected by Best Lawyers® as the Product Liability Litigation - Plaintiffs "Lawyer of the Year" in Oakland, California for 2018 and 2021 and as Personal Injury Litigation - Plaintiffs "Lawyer of the Year" in Oakland, California for 2020.

Thomas C. Knowles, recognized and featured in *The Best Lawyers in America*® 2021 edition for his high caliber of work in the practice areas of Personal Injury Litigation - Plaintiffs and Product Liability Litigation - Plaintiffs, has been practicing in California for more than 45 years and is rated AV Preeminent by Martindale-Hubbell, specializing in product liability, construction site accident, and trucking accident cases. His experience as a former defense lawyer representing an auto manufacturer has provided the knowledge to effectively represent injured persons against manufacturers in product liability cases.

The team of Van Blois and Knowles has achieved many multimillion jury awards and settlements. Working with leading appellate lawyers and specialists in medical treatment of catastrophically injured persons, the firm continues to help those persons in need of experienced legal representation. The firm's seasoned attorneys have several decades of injury law experience and know how to effectively settle as well as fight and win in court.



R. Lewis Van Blois



Thomas C. Knowles



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