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## ALUMNI NEWS

### Rookie attorney shines in landmark Fen-Phen case

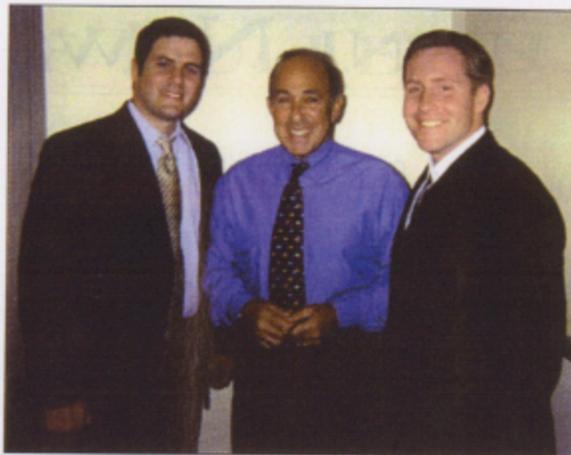
*Brother and partner win record settlement with first lawsuit*

With victory comes success. With success comes experience. With experience comes respect and with respect comes wisdom. If this is true, then at age 30, Mark Blane (Delta Iota '92-Texas-Arlington) is well on his way to becoming a wise man.

Most attorneys work their entire lives to accomplish what Blane did in under a year. Just three months after his graduation from Thomas Jefferson School of Law in California, Blane was one of two attorneys from his firm, Hiden, Rott & Oertle, to lead the Fen-Phen diet drug settlement in California. His partner was a fellow recent graduate, Chad McGuire.

"We really became involved in the case after we graduated because we learned Chad's aunt developed a heart problem as a result of taking Fen-Pen for about two years," said Blane in *The Shreveport Times*. "The fact that Chad's aunt was affected by the drug fueled our passion to provide the best representation we could."

In December 1998, Blane, a native of Shreveport, Louisiana, graduated from law school and, the following year, passed the California Bar



**Winning team:** Mark Blane (left), retired San Francisco Superior Court Judge Daniel Weinstein, who presided over the negotiations (middle), and Mark's partner, Chad McGuire.

on his first attempt. Blane filed suit against Fen-Phen manufacturers American Home Products, just three months after he passed the Bar. It was the first lawsuit he had ever filed and was part of one of the largest pharmaceutical court settlements in US trial history. The amount of the settlement remains confidential because of the pending litigation nationwide.

David Hiden, of Hiden, Rott & Oertle, said of Blane in *The Shreveport Times*, "Mark demonstrated phenomenal litigation skills off the bat. Normally, a case of this size wouldn't be turned over to an associate. But Mark and Chad both showed litigation skills of someone with at least 10 years of experience."

With one Fen-Phen case settled, Blane, who now heads the Pharmaceutical Drug Litigation team at Hiden, Rott & Oertle, still has 75 other Fen-Phen cases to finish. In the midst of these and other large cases, Blane is also pursuing a master's degree in business at San Diego State University. "It is quite a symbol of our judicial system that recent admittees to the Bar can go toe-to-toe in litigation with the sixth largest drug manufacturer in the world, and come away with a satisfactory result," said Blane. "The experience will be unforgettable. However, more importantly, our client views this settlement as a moral victory for what this corporation did." ❧