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NEWS

3 Tips for Trial Lawyers From an Expert on Valuing Monetary Damages

Dr. Michael Shahnasarian is a trial consultant and expert witness.

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4 minute read

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A book published by the American Bar Association is getting the attention of attorneys who deal with personal injuries.

“The Valuation of Monetary Damages in Injury Cases“ author Dr. Michael Shahnasarian is a Tampa trial consultant and expert witness bringing his four decades of experience to print to explain his methodology.

Shahnasarian said if attorneys are looking to maximize monetary awards for their clients, they need to understand key issues.

“The better you understand the process the better you can represent your case, and the better you can dispel any erroneous assertions rendered by opposing counsel," he said.

The expert witness in more than 5,000 cases talks about how to calculate damages in injury trials and shares his insight in pursuit of successful outcomes.

He says getting the best possible outcome for the client is a three-pronged approach.

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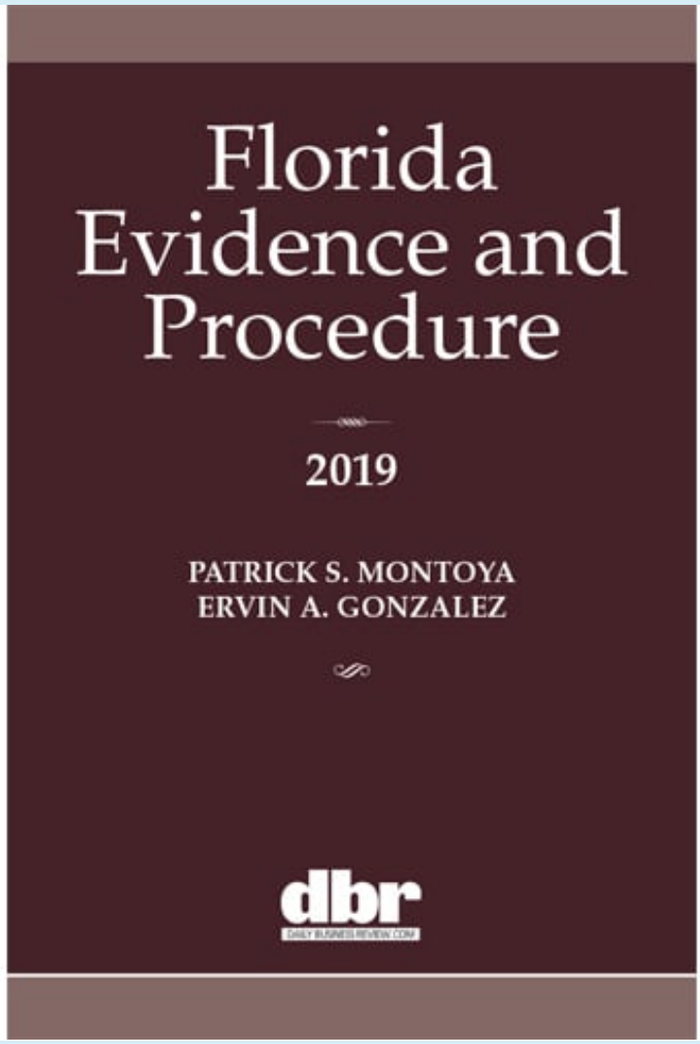

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The first area is lost earnings. Second is the future intervention necessitated by the neglect, and the third area is pain and suffering damages.

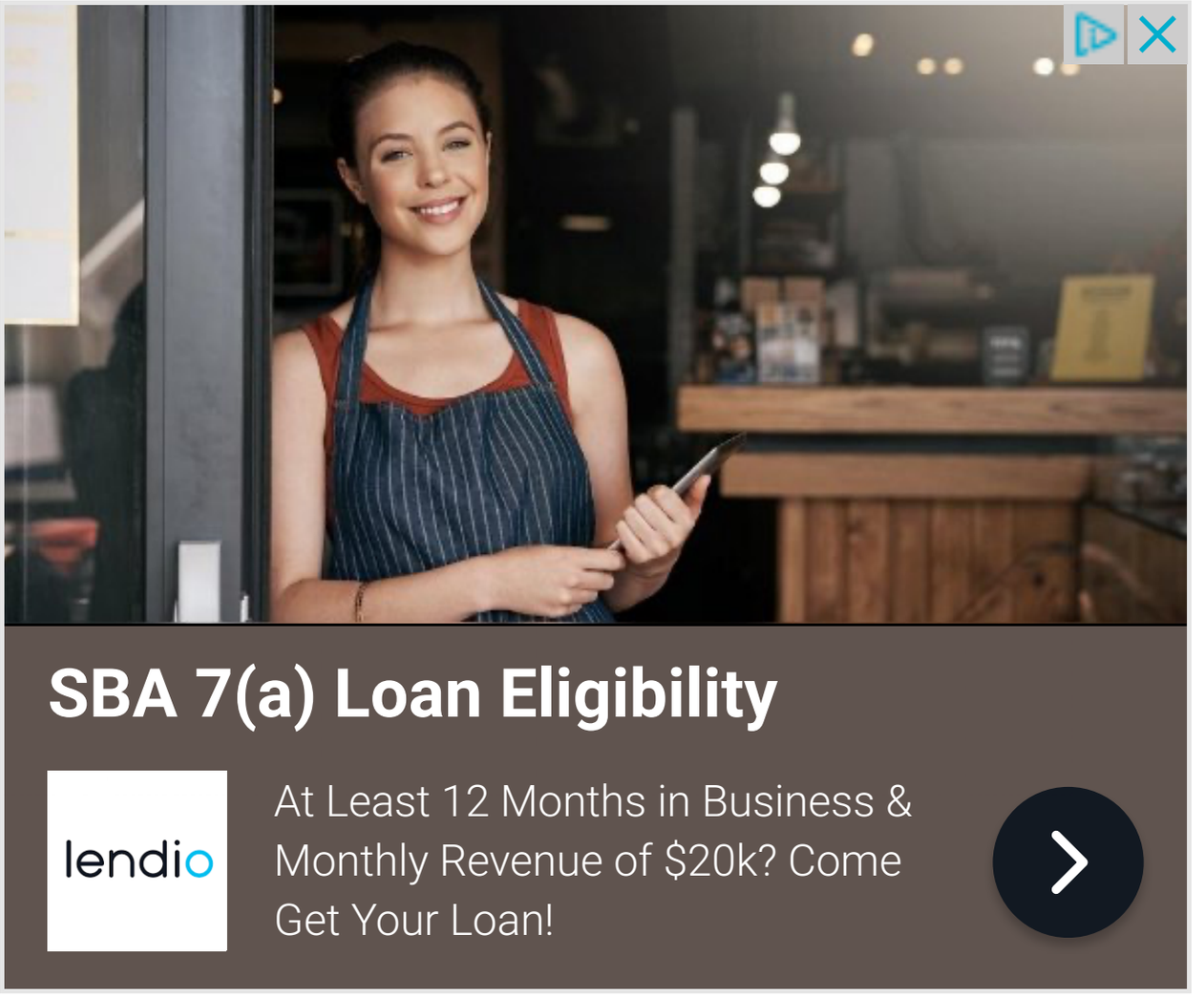
“Assuming liability can be established, then counsel has the duty to dig deep to assess all these monetary and non-monetary damages areas,” Shahnasarian said.

Some of the topics discussed to help trial attorneys dig deep; finding out what is a fair and reasonable amount to

Dr. Michael Shahnasarian, author of “The Valuation of Monetary Damages in Injury Cases.” Courtesy photo

compensate clients for pain, suffering, mental anguish, and inconvenience after injuries sustained in a crash.

Some of the information he divulges in the book is his formula that can be used by attorneys to calculate past pain and suffering as well as future pain and suffering.



Choosing the right expert is vitally important he says. “Defense lawyers, most apt to employ experts in consultant roles, do so to facilitate their understanding of damages while not being obligated to disclose to opposing counsel assessments and related evidence potentially disadvantageous to defending their case," Shahnasarian writes.

The information could be invaluable to trial attorneys seeking to "facilitate and safeguard expert and lawyer efforts to gather, assemble, and preserve information necessary to perform competent analyses during adversarial proceedings," according to the American Bar Association.

Also discussed are the author's opinions on life care plans and assessments with examples of cost analysis that could be helpful at trial. The publication also includes samples of a plethora of evaluation and intake forms relating to injury cases.

Comments From Readers

C. Steve Yerrid is a Tampa trial attorney with The Yerrid Law Firm who read the book.

“Dr. Shahnasarian has spent

Cover of the book “The Valuation of Monetary Damages in Injury Cases” by Dr. Michael Shahnasarian. Courtesy of the American Bar Association

decades in the highly specialized field of evaluating monetary damages in catastrophic injury cases,” Yerrid said. “His book reflects invaluable expertise and provides a very understandable guide to this critical area of litigation.”

Dr. Timothy F. Field, rehabilitation consultant with Elliott & Fitzpatrick Inc., also lauded the publication.

“This book is literally a compendium of sound advice and useful resources,”

Field said. “Sound presentation of expert analysis Dr. Shahnasarian’s book will become a significant contribution to the literature on evaluating and presenting damages in injury cases.”

Attorney Michael A. Schlanger, retired partner at Covington & Burlington, said, “The author has unrivaled expertise, insight and wisdom in these areas from many disciplines, including psychology, vocational rehabilitation, life care planning and economics.”

Meanwhile the American Bar Association is saying: “The Valuation of Monetary Damages in Injury Cases includes many examples and work

CHAPTER 1

The Fundamentals of Injury Damages Assessments

samples presented derive from actual cases, and accompanying discussions intend to provide on-point, insightful, and instructive analyses to promote the discernment and presentation of injury damages. Additionally, this book offers many practical, tested resources—information-gathering forms, sample retention letters and agreements, affidavits, and administrative documents, etc.—to facilitate and safeguard expert and lawyer efforts to gather, assemble, and preserve information necessary to perform competent analyses during adversarial proceedings."

Shahnasarian founded Career Consultants of America Inc. in Tampa 1986. The practice provides business consulting, rehabilitation and vocational expert witness services throughout North America and elsewhere. His doctorate is in psychology.

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