

# LETTER OF THE LAW

NOVEMBER 2005

## ***En Español: More and More Hispanics are Turning to Williams Bailey***

If you spin the dial of Houston radio these days, you're likely to land on a station that's running an endorsement for WB. But these commercials don't start off with the traditional, "Have you been injured in an accident?" Instead, you'll hear, "¡PRESTE MUCHA ATENCION A ESTE ANUNCIO IMPORTANTE!" ("Listen closely to this important announcement!")

That's because WB recently began to increase its exposure in Houston's Hispanic community. In addition to radio ads, giant billboards (in Spanish) can be seen throughout the city.

The firm also has brochures available in Spanish, and the website can be viewed entirely in Spanish with just one click.

"Williams Bailey has shown its commitment to helping citizens of the Hispanic community for many years," said Jim Soto, WB attorney and second-generation Hispanic American. "I'm excited we're finally receiving more attention for our efforts."

The recent tragedy at the BP plant in Texas City is a prime example. WB is representing well over 100 employees who suffered injuries as a result of the explosion in March. More than half of those are Hispanic – many of whom speak little or no English.



*WB client Luis DeLaFuente meets with staff members Patricia Herrera and Jael Hamilton*

"I sympathize with them," noted Jael Hamilton, case manager of the BP team, who is fluent in Spanish. "They have been injured – in some cases, very seriously – and they know they need a good attorney. But many are intimidated by the trappings of a large Anglo firm."

WB counts among its employees over a dozen bilingual attorneys, legal assistants, support staff and receptionists.

"We absolutely would not have been able to provide the representation that we have over the years to the thousands of Spanish-speaking citizens were it not for our bilingual staff," proclaimed John Eddie Williams, managing partner. "They do a remarkable job."

## ***In this issue...***

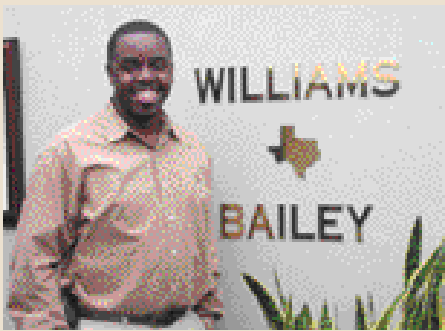
- ***En Español: More and More Hispanics are Turning to WB***  
page 1
- ***Staff Spotlight: Joe Hill***  
page 2
- ***WB Launches Commercial and Consumer Litigation Section***  
page 2
- ***Attorney Profiles: Christopher Dean, Collyn Peddie, and Julia Brophy***  
page 3
- ***IUOE Local 564 website***  
page 3
- ***Vioxx Cases***  
page 4

## Staff Spotlight

### Joe Hill

Few WB employees display as much enthusiasm for their jobs or the firm as Joe Hill. “It’s like being a part of a family where everyone works together as a team,” says Joe, now in his 10th year as Office Services Assistant Supervisor. Based in the firm’s sixth floor mailroom, Joe is one of the people responsible for making sure the firm’s day-to-day operations are running smoothly.

Some days are spent managing the process when personnel move into new office space. Other tasks include keeping supplies fully stocked for the firm’s 140+ employees and coordinating transportation needs for local clients, co-counsel and visiting dignitaries. “It was wonderful having the opportunity to meet former President Bill Clinton,” says Joe fondly.



When Joe joined the firm in 1996, WB was less than half its current size. In those days, Joe focused mainly on supporting attorneys through copying, faxing and mailouts. At the time, Joe had an associate’s degree and aspirations of completing his undergraduate education. WB made that possible.

“Thanks to John Eddie and Sheena, the firm financed the last two years of college so that I was able to earn a bachelors in business management from LeTourneau University,” Joe recalls. In addition to working

## WB Launches Commercial and Consumer Litigation Section

While WB is best known for its extensive experience with personal injury litigation, it recently expanded its focus to include commercial and consumer claims. If people have contract disputes, or companies believe they’ve been wronged or attorneys wish to pursue a class action lawsuit, WB is ready to help.



“We have experienced trial lawyers and full-time support staff dedicated to this particular area of the law,” said Armi Easterby, WB attorney and head of the new section. “We are focused on helping Texas small businesses and entrepreneurs in their fights against corporate defendants.”

The firm’s first case involves a class action lawsuit that has been filed against Sprint on behalf of thousands of landowners in Texas. Easement laws permit electricity providers, such as Reliant, to build transmission towers on private property exclusively for the transmission of



full-time at WB, Joe was required to maintain a ‘B’ average – which he proudly states that he did.

At the end of most workdays, Joe can often be seen leaving the office with basketball shoes in hand as he heads to the gym. In addition, Joe is an avid golfer, softball and flag-football player. Recently, Joe has been honing his culinary skills in his brand new house.

electrical power. Without the consent of the property owners, Sprint has used these existing towers to erect their own cellular phone antennae.

“The law is very clear: the easement extends only to the transmission and distribution of electricity,” said Armi. “Sprint signed a deal with Texas energy companies without permission from landowners. We plan to vindicate the property rights of all affected Texans in this matter.”

The suit was filed in federal district court in Kansas, worldwide headquarters for Sprint. Armi noted that while WB is inter-

ested in tackling more complex commercial litigation such as the Sprint case, the firm also wants to help individuals and small businesses that have been the victims of corporate fraud and abuse. “We often see how large companies try to take advantage of family businesses, and WB’s goal is to help level the playing field.”

If you believe you have a consumer claim, please call Armi at (713) 230-2308.

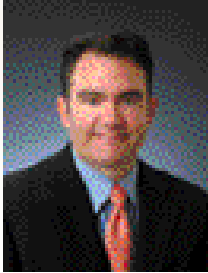
As much praise as Joe gives WB for the success he’s been able to enjoy, he is quick to point out that much credit goes to his parents. “My dad worked two jobs for more than 20 years to care for his family,” Joe points out. Joe has two brothers and one sister, and remains close to his family – all of whom live in the Houston area.

Thanks for all your contributions, Joe!

## Three Attorneys Join WB

Since our last newsletter in August, WB has hired three new attorneys – Christopher Dean, Collyn Peddie, and Julia Brophy. Christopher and Collyn have both served as partners at highly respected law firms, while Julia is a newly licensed attorney who comes to us from Baylor University.

A native Texan, **Christopher Dean** has worked as a trial lawyer in Houston and Amarillo for ten years. One of his many impressive victories, a \$42.5 million verdict against Diamond Shamrock, was featured as the cover story for *Texas Lawyer* on July 9, 2001. In October of 2005, Christopher was recognized as a “Super Lawyer” by *Law & Politics* and the publishers of *Texas Monthly*.



Christopher, who attends Friendswood Community Church and leads a weekly Bible study, says, “Getting justice for those injured or killed through greed or neglect comports with my Christian beliefs, and that makes an otherwise difficult job a pleasure and an honor.” Christopher is married to Holley and has two daughters.

Like Christopher, **Collyn Peddie** is a seasoned professional, with more than 20 years of legal experience at several Houston firms. She received her B.A. with honors from Rice University, and her law degree, again with honors, from George Washington University.



Collyn has several legal publications and scholarly presentations to her credit, as well as numerous honors and awards, including the “Women on the Move” award for 1999 from Texas Executive Women and the *Houston Chronicle*. She also manages to find time for an impressive amount of volunteer work.

“The most rewarding aspect of my career has been the ability to make a positive contribution to people’s lives,” Collyn says. “That’s why I became a lawyer in the first place and why I am back on the plaintiffs’ side.”

Our newest and youngest associate, **Julia Brophy**, comes to us fresh from Baylor University School of Law. She also received her B.B.A. from Baylor; she graduated *magna cum laude* with both degrees.

Julia is proudly following in the footsteps of her father, an attorney who also graduated from Baylor. “I saw how he used his strengths to help people and he really imparted that to me,” she says.



Julia has already gained invaluable experience through serving as a Summer Associate at two respected defense firms in Dallas. “I had a good experience working for the defense, but it affirmed that I would rather be on the plaintiffs’ side,” Julia says. “I am very excited about being here, because I believe this is where I’m most going to be able to help people.”

## IUOE Local 564 website

As part of WB’s marketing initiative to assist our union clients with their websites, we recently updated Local 564’s public site.

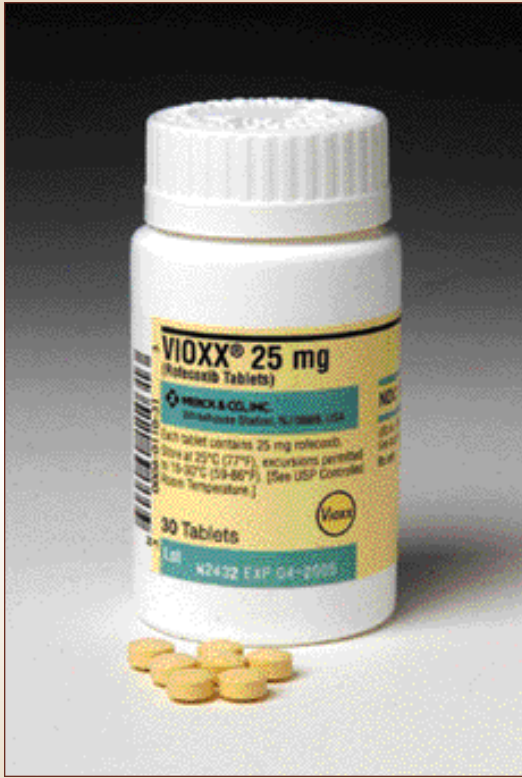
Local 564 is part of the International Union of Operating Engineers (IUOE), which was founded in 1896 and represents over 400,000 members in 170 local unions throughout the U.S. and Canada. Local 564 is currently contracted with Dow, as well as Conoco-Phillips and Chevron-Phillips in Sweeney, Brazosport Water Authority in Lake Jackson, and the Hilton Americas – the only hotel in Houston staffed entirely with union labor.

Local 564’s site was given a new home page, with some great photos of actual union members provided by the Local, and several new pages of information about the benefits of belonging to the union.



If your union works with WB, and you could use some help updating or building your website, just contact our webmaster, Hilary Gatherall. Her email address is hcatherall@williamsbailey.com.

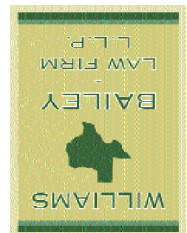
copyright © 2005 by Etopia Media News Networks



## Did you know that WB is still taking Vioxx cases?

If you or a loved one suffered a heart attack, stroke or even death, call us immediately: **1(800) 220-9341.**

8441 Gulf Freeway, Suite 600  
Houston, TX 77017



PRESORT-STANDARD  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
HOUSTON, TX  
PERMIT NO. 7338