



CLIFFORD LAW OFFICES

AVIATION LITIGATION

Clifford Law Offices has represented victims of aircraft disasters around the world. The firm has represented passengers and crew against virtually every major airline carrier, manufacturer and assembler, earning the firm a distinguished reputation for managing complex litigation arising from commercial and private air disasters.

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The Client First

*Every member of the firm upholds the
highest principles of the legal profession in placing the individual client first.*

The firm is often said to set the standard in professional excellence.



Robert A. Clifford founded a personal injury law firm in his name in 1984. For decades, the firm has worked to establish a national reputation, having been named by the *National Law Journal* as one of the top 20 "Plaintiffs' Hot List" in 2003, and 2004 as one of the 25 "Go-To" plaintiffs' law firms in the country. Robert Clifford was named one of the Illinois Super Lawyers in 2005 by Law and Politics, a national organization that conducted independent research among his peers across the state. In the initial announcement of the top five percent of the state's lawyers, Mr. Clifford was selected to appear on the cover of the inaugural issue. The *Chicago Lawyer* named Clifford Law Offices the city's top firm in its Annual Settlement Survey in 2005 and in 2002, leading with \$86.7 million and \$136.85 million respectively in numerous settlements for the year. Robert Clifford was singled out as the leading individual attorney with the highest total dollar figure in settlements at \$77.32 million that year. Mr. Clifford was chosen to be part of a select group of aviation experts to advise the RAND Institute for Civil Justice, a California-based research think-tank. Its mission: to study the investigative process of the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), the government arm that oversees investigations of major transportation accidents in the air, on the rails or at sea. Mr. Clifford was most interested in seeing that the families of those who lost loved ones in a crash be allowed to get involved in the investigatory process. Currently, families are not now permitted by statute to participate in the NTSB fact-finding process. He and partner Kevin Durkin also were appointed to the Aviation Law Institute at DePaul University College of Law, an Advisory Board on aviation matters composed of lawyers and experts from around the world.

The lawyers at Clifford Law Offices represent years of practice in the area of personal injury law, particularly aviation and transportation litigation. Every member of the firm upholds the highest principle of the legal profession in placing the individual client first. The firm often is said to set the standard in professional excellence. Moreover, it is important to note that as a result of the litigation handled by the firm, many defective products and dangerous practices have been changed or abandoned altogether. In the area of aviation litigation, the tireless efforts and numerous depositions of transportation executives and experts have brought to light faulty equipment and parts on aircraft that were still in use.

The very nature of Clifford Law Offices involves a willingness to accept the challenges and responsibilities inherent in complex litigation. This thinking and talent has led victims' families from around the world or their personal attorneys to refer cases, especially plane crash cases involving mass tort disasters, to the firm. Those who find themselves the victims of such a tragedy turn to Clifford Law Offices because they know it is a firm that is committed to investing the time and resources required to

fully represent every case through the successive stages of investigation, preparation and trial in attempting to achieve what is just and reasonable for each client. Time and again, Clifford Law Offices has demonstrated how it stands out in helping victims of aviation disasters find out what happened to their loved ones while seeking just compensation for injuries or needless deaths.

The clients of Clifford Law Offices come from every walk of life. The firm has represented victims of personal injury from state supreme court judges to business and professional leaders across the country, from construction workers to teachers. All of these people are important and are treated with dignity and respect during their time of great need.

To assist in trial preparation, Clifford Law Offices has pioneered many of the modern courtroom techniques now considered standard practice in the presentation of tort cases. Responding to the increased complexities of civil tort practice, the firm has won significant cases using the latest state-of-the-art computer animation, accident reconstruction techniques, three-dimensional modeling, computerized deposition recall, flow charts and document enlargements for the jury to better understand the events that occurred. Clifford Law Offices was among the first personal injury firms in the state to use day-in-the-life videos, presenting a chronology of a personal injury or wrongful death victim's life following an accident, so that a jury can get to know those we represent and the impact the tragedy had on the lives of the injured or wrongfully killed as well as their loved ones. The attorneys at Clifford Law Offices have the experience to aggressively pursue a case, assimilating, if necessary, breakthrough technological and informational resources into its practice – a philosophy the firm embraces in the service of commitment to the individual needs of each client.

The firm's ability to respond respectfully and intelligently to mass disaster litigation reflects the human, financial and professional resources the firm applies to such litigation. In mass disaster accidents, the firm's experience in aviation technology and litigation, combined with the experience of its attorneys and legal staff, ensure thorough development and successful handling of these cases. In lawsuits against aircraft and parts' manufacturers, assemblers, the government or the airlines, Clifford Law Offices maintains a commitment to excellence.

The philosophy of Clifford Law Offices is based upon a dedication to protecting and preserving the dignity and the rights of all individuals. Without clogging the courts, without revenge, retaliation or retribution, those still grieving can channel these feelings in a more positive way in an attempt to change negligent or reckless behavior in an aircraft disaster. Experience has proven that the power of a single lawsuit can eliminate the dangers caused by unsafe products and practices. Clifford Law Offices is committed to pursuing this philosophy on behalf of its clients.

Robert A. Clifford, Principal Partner

“Our cases aren’t about revenge, retaliation or retribution – they’re about fairness and justice for the innocent victims and their families.”



Robert A. Clifford was selected in 2004 as one of the “five most respected and feared plaintiffs’ attorneys” in the country by *Corporate Legal Times*, calling him “the best of the bad.” He also was selected as the 2009 Chicago Personal Injury Litigator of the Year by Best Lawyers, one of the oldest and most respected peer-review organizations in the country. He has been consistently voted by his peers as a Best Lawyer since its inception 25 years ago. He was featured on the cover of the inaugural 2005 issue of the *Illinois Super Lawyers* where they called him “Chicago’s Most Likeable Tough Guy.” The feature story headlined him as “Chicago’s Most-Feared Attorney – Bob Clifford is a lamb who turns into a lion when he’s confronted by injustice.” He remains on that list which represents the top 5 percent of the state’s lawyers. He was named one of the Top Ten Litigators in Illinois in 1999 as well as one of the nation’s Top Ten Litigators of 1993 by the prestigious *National Law Journal*. *American Lawyer Media* recognized Mr. Clifford as one of the Top Ten Most Influential Lawyers in Illinois in 2000. *Chicago Magazine* named Robert Clifford one of Chicago’s “30 Toughest Lawyers” in 2002 for his work on many high-profile cases including the death of Bob Collins, the city’s most popular disc jockey on WGN morning radio.

Robert Clifford consistently garners multi-million dollar settlements and verdicts in aviation litigation. He has represented those injured or killed in every major commercial airline crash in the United States in the last three decades. He also is involved in many private or corporate jet crashes as well as helicopter crash cases around the globe.

Recognized as a leader among his peers, Bob Clifford has been inducted into the most prestigious legal organizations. In 2005, he was inducted into the International Society of Barristers, an honor society of outstanding trial lawyers chosen by their peers on the basis of excellence and integrity in advocacy. The Inner Circle of Advocates also invited him to join its prestigious group which is comprised of outstanding trial attorneys from across the country who share their expertise and ideas. He was elected to the American Law Institute, a group of 3,000 prominent judges, lawyers and academics from around the world who are selected on the basis of professional achievements in the law. Justices Benjamin Cardozo and Learned Hand were among its early leaders.

Mr. Clifford was elected Illinois State Delegate to the American Bar Association (ABA) House of Delegates in 2005. He is serving a second term in that post. He also was elected Chair of the Section of Litigation from 2001-2002 where he led the largest section, numbering some 70,000 lawyers. During his tenure, he hosted a Town Hall Meeting in historic Faneuil Hall in Boston on the legal ramifications following the tragic events of September 11 and a second panel that discussed the public’s perception of lawyers in this country. He also was appointed by the President of the ABA to serve as Chair of the Task Force on Terrorism and the Law where he served in an advisory role to congressional, executive, state and local leaders on the legal ramifications in the wake of the September 11 terrorist attack on America.

He is Past President of the Illinois Trial Lawyers’ Association and a Past President of the Chicago Inn of Court which upholds the highest principles of the profession. He will be President of the Chicago Bar Association in 2011-12. He has been inducted into the prestigious American College of Trial Lawyers and the exclusive International Academy of Trial Lawyers where he has been selected to be a member of the National Judicial College, a select assembly of legal and corporate leaders from across the country dedicated to furthering the education and training of judges. Robert Clifford also was invited to participate in a select group of aviation experts who advised the RAND Institute for Civil Justice, a California-based think-tank, on the investigation process of the National Transportation Safety Board. The NTSB carries the congressional mandate to investigate the causes of all airplane crashes. “I’m most interested in seeing to it that families of those who lose loved ones in a crash be allowed to get involved in the investigatory process,” Mr. Clifford said. Currently, families are not permitted by statute to participate in the NTSB’s fact-finding process. Mr. Clifford also has been asked to sit on the RAND Institute’s Board of Overseers. He was appointed a member of the Illinois Supreme Court Committee on Civility which was established to promote civility among Illinois lawyers.

As an attorney representing many high-profile clients, Mr. Clifford is asked to speak on television programs on a wide variety of legal issues. He has appeared on *Oprah*, *Good Morning America*, the *Today Show*, CNN, MSNBS, CNBC “Power Lunch,” *Wall Street Week* and *Chicago Tonight*. He has authored articles for national newspapers including *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Washington Post*, *The Chicago Tribune*, *The Chicago Sun-Times* and *The National Law Journal*, to name a few. He writes a monthly column for the *Chicago Lawyer*, a respected publication disseminated to thousands of lawyers. Through his generous support of WTTW, Chicago’s public television station, closed captioning was undertaken in 2005, making local programming available for the hearing impaired. He sits on the WTTW Board of Directors.

Mr. Clifford endowed the first Chair on Tort Law and Social Policy to his alma mater, De Paul University College of Law. This generous gift provides for an annual symposium where academicians, lawyers and judges from across the country gather to speak on a timely topic of interest dealing with the relationship between tort law, popular culture and societal needs. Founded in 1994, the symposium, which is free to the public, has hosted academicians from Stanford Law School to Harvard, from United States Senator John McCain to television commentator/attorney Bill Kurtis. Mr. Clifford shares his knowledge as a frequent lecturer for various bar associations and legal groups throughout the country.

Robert A. Clifford is the senior partner of Clifford Law Offices, a nationally recognized personal injury and wrongful death firm in Chicago concentrating in aviation, transportation, personal injury, medical negligence and product liability law.

Kevin P. Durkin, Partner

The philosophy of Clifford Law Offices is dedication to protecting and preserving the rights of all individuals.



As a partner at Clifford Law Offices, Kevin P. Durkin has obtained numerous large jury verdicts and settlements in state and federal courts. He concentrates in aviation and complex litigation and has taken literally hundreds of depositions of aviation experts and airline corporate executives in a search for the truth in aircraft disasters.

Mr. Durkin served as lead plaintiff's co-counsel in federal district court where a \$110 million settlement was negotiated for a number of families in the American Airlines Flight 4184 crash in Roselawn, Indiana. He also served as one of three members of the Management Committee leading the complex litigation in the tragedy of Alaska Air Flight 261 that crashed in the Pacific Ocean in 2000 en route to Seattle from Puerto Vallarta, Mexico. Mr. Durkin took dozens of depositions including those of the top engineers in the case against the airline and Boeing, despite the NTSB giving the corporate giant a virtual pass. Mr. Durkin obtained more than \$40 million in settlements on behalf of seven families who lost loved ones, including two of the largest of the 90 settled in that mass disaster litigation. Mr. Durkin also was very active on behalf of several families of the passengers of American Airlines Flight 587 that crashed in Queens, New York on Nov. 12, 2002, as well as on the Steering Committee of the crash of Singapore Air Flight 006.

Mr. Durkin has represented a number of individuals who have been injured and the families of those who have died in aviation accidents involving several different kinds of general aviation aircraft and helicopters. He also serves as Vice Chair of the American Bar Association's TIPS Aviation Section which works to inform aviation attorneys around the country of the latest in aviation law.

Kevin Durkin is successful in the area of transportation litigation, having served as Co-Lead Counsel in the litigation involving the crash of an Amtrak train in Bourbonnais, Illinois, and other railroad accidents. He also obtained a \$38.3 million verdict in 2004 on behalf of a west suburban family who was involved in a trucking accident. That verdict was profiled in the *National Law Journal* in 2005 and was recognized as the largest in the country involving a motor vehicle accident that year.

Mr. Durkin served as Co-Chair of the Aviation Committee of the American Bar Association (ABA) Section of Litigation for four years where he presented programs and seminars for aviation attorneys and experts from across the country. He brought together the best and the brightest in a nationally recognized seminar in New York. He was President of the 22,000-member Chicago Bar Association in 2006-07 and served as Co-Chair of the ABA's Mass Torts Litigation Committee. He also was appointed to the Aviation Law Institute at DePaul University College of Law, a newly created Advisory Board of aviation lawyers and experts from around the world.

Clifford Law Offices is proud of Kevin Durkin's distinguished career and of his exemplar accomplishments both inside and out of the courtroom.

Timothy S. Tomasik, Partner

Aviation litigation is complex and the attorneys at Clifford Law Offices are dedicated to finding answers and reaching the right results for the right reasons.



Timothy S. Tomasik has demonstrated great skill in taking on complex aviation law issues. He is well versed in the area of federal regulations regarding the de-icing of commercial aircraft as well as aviation security. Tim successfully briefed and defeated the defendants' motion in the 9/11 litigation to have the 9/11 Commission Report admitted in its entirety at trial. He was appointed to the American Bar Association (ABA) Task Force on Preemption and the Task Force on Sensitive Security Information. He is working on developing uniform standards to be adopted by the judiciary for the uniform handling of Sensitive Security Information which involves the secretive procedures pertaining to in-air and on-ground security utilized by air carriers, the Federal Aviation Administration and the Transportation Security Administration of the U.S. Department of Transportation.

He has spoken to many lawyers in various organizations, sharing his knowledge in an effort to improve the profession. He spoke at the 12th Annual Aviation Law and Insurance Symposium sponsored by the Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University in Orlando, Florida, which is attended by some of the country's top aviation lawyers, insurance professionals, consultants and representatives from the airline industry and airline manufacturers. He also serves as a faculty member at the University of Virginia Law School's National Trial Advocacy College. He spoke to the Aviation Law Section of the ABA on Air Traffic Control Liability. Tim also spoke of his work on the property damage claims involving the tragic destruction of the World Trade Center twin towers on September 11, 2001. These highly complex claims involve numerous plaintiffs and defendants in sorting out the liability for the billions of dollars in losses on that tragic day.

Mr. Tomasik also worked on the case involving the crash of a private jet involving the family of NBC Sports Chairman Dick Ebersol. A chartered Challenger jet crashed moments after takeoff in November, 2004, tragically killing Ebersol's younger son. The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) found the probable cause of the crash to be improper and inadequate de-icing of the aircraft's wings. Tim also represents the family of a pilot who was flying under the direction of a certified flight instructor when it crashed during a maneuver outside of Chicago.

Tim was recognized for his professionalism in 2009 when he was given the William J. White Award of Excellence from the Chicago Bar Association for his work as Chair of the Judicial Evaluation Committee, a commitment of many hours and good judgment in evaluating judges running for office in Chicago's Cook County area.

Tim Tomasik is an intelligent lawyer. He's thoughtful in the decisions he makes and he's deliberative in weighing all of the options and all of the possible answers. He pays attention to detail. He's kindhearted and understanding. He's passionate in all that he does. Clifford Law Offices appreciates all of the invaluable hard work of Timothy Tomasik.

Richard F. Burke, Jr., and Michael S. Krzak, Partners

Integrity. Professionalism. Trust.

Words embraced by the attorneys at Clifford Law Offices.




Richard F. Burke, Jr., has worked on numerous small plane crash cases on behalf of families both in the Chicago area and around the country. For example, he represented a co-pilot and passenger involved in a plane that crashed during take-off at a suburban airport, Palwaukee. Following years of depositions and exploration, Mr. Burke tried the case of the co-pilot against the corporation that owned the plane. Following a trial that resulted in a hung jury, he tried the case again for another four weeks and received a \$10.45 million verdict, the jury finding the airport 90 percent at fault for failing to provide a safe terrain alongside the runway. Involving that same crash, he earlier obtained a \$13.5 million settlement on behalf of a passenger killed in that Gulfstream IV plane. In May, 2002, Mr. Burke obtained a \$6.8 million verdict as a result of the crash of a Piper aircraft in northwest suburban Schaumburg that was recognized as the Verdict of the Week in the *National Law Journal*. He also obtained a settlement of \$4.2 million for the family of a business executive killed when a chartered plane crashed during a fishing expedition in a remote area of Canada.

Richard Burke concentrates much of his practice on product liability cases which include aircraft crashes, sport utility vehicle rollovers and truck collisions. It is meticulous, intensive work. Mr. Burke learned his craft as an Assistant State's Attorney in Cook County for 12 years. He rose up the ranks among his peers to supervise felony trials. Clifford Law Offices is proud of Richard Burke and his dedication to the profession and to his clients.

Michael S. Krzak is part of the Clifford Law Offices' team that tackles the highly complex area of aviation law. By its very nature, aviation law involves multi-state, multi-national, multi-jurisdictional questions, placing together a number of people together from all walks of life and from a variety of places. Even the component parts of an aircraft can be produced in many different states and countries.





Mr. Krzak's sense of zeroing in on the issues and his attention to detail is indispensable to the intense preparation of these cases. He has been involved in every commercial aviation crash case the firm has handled since he came to the firm, including the crash of American Eagle Flight 4184, Alaska Air Flight 261, American Airlines Flight 587, TWA Flight 800, Swiss Air Flight 111, USAir Flight 427, American Airlines Flight 585 and the Southwest Airlines crash at Midway Airport in December, 2005. He also has worked on numerous cases involving the crashes of small aircraft and helicopters. Most recently, he was responsible for handling the highly publicized air crash cases involving Comair Flight 5191 in Lexington, Kentucky. Clifford Law Offices represented five families who lost loved ones in that crash. Mr. Krzak was part of the Plaintiffs' Steering Committee relating to that crash and also was a designated member of the trial team for those cases.

He has served as the Chair and Vice Chair of the Chicago Bar Association Aviation Law Committee in 2006-07. He has spoken to numerous legal organizations, including the American Bar Association, about this area of law. Michael Krzak is a key member of the Clifford Law Offices' legal team.

A dramatic, low-angle aerial photograph of several tall skyscrapers reaching towards a bright, clear sky. The buildings are rendered in shades of blue and white, with strong geometric lines and shadows that create a sense of depth and scale. The perspective is from a high vantage point, looking down and across the tops of the buildings.

In 2004, approximately 688.5 million people flew on U.S. commercial air carriers, according to the Federal Aviation Administration. By 2015, it predicts the number of passengers to top one billion.

The work at Clifford Law Offices

Continental Connection Flight 3407	<p>Crashed on February 12, 2009, into a house in Clarence Center near Buffalo, New York</p> <p>What should have been a routine Newark-to-Buffalo flight ended in tragedy as the Bombardier Dash 8-Q400 crashed into a house, killing all 49 people on board and a man on the ground. Initial National Transportation Safety Board hearings revealed numerous mistakes made by inexperienced, fatigued pilots and an aircraft that should have been better equipped. Clifford Law Offices represents a number of families who lost loved ones.</p>	
Comair Flight 5191	<p>Crashed on August 27, 2006, as it attempted to take off at Lexington, Kentucky's Blue Grass Airport</p> <p>A crew on an early morning flight violated the sterile cockpit rule when they weren't paying close attention and used a runway that was unlit and too short. Air traffic control violations in the tower also could have prevented this tragedy that led to the deaths of 47 passengers and two crew members. Clifford Law Offices represented five families including a Canadian passenger on board</p>	
Southwest Airlines Flight 1248	<p>Crashed into family car on December 8, 2005, at Midway Airport on Chicago's South Side</p> <p>It was snowing that day and investigators found that the pilots of the aircraft took too long to slow the plane down. It crashed through a fence barrier and wound up in the middle of traffic. The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) in its investigation also found the airlines' system of measuring slick runways was inadequate. The following year the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) announced a \$15 million grant to Midway Airport to improve runway safety. For little Joshua Woods and his family, it was too late, but the runways are said to be more safe now because of him.</p>	
Helios Airways Flight HCY 522	<p>Crashed on August 14, 2005, into a hill near Athens, Greece</p> <p>Robert Clifford was appointed liaison counsel in the lawsuits involving the Cypriot jet that crashed in Greece killing 121 people aboard, several of them Americans. The Boeing 737-300 crashed into a hill near Athens after pilots apparently fell unconscious following a drop in the cabin's pressure. Chicago-based Boeing has since revised its training manuals to correct design defects regarding pressurization.</p>	
Turkish Airlines Flight 634	<p>Crashed on January 8, 2003, near Diyarbakir Airport in Turkey</p> <p>In bad weather, the pilots insisted on landing in thick fog in southeastern Turkey. 75 passengers and crew members were aboard when the airliner crashed as it approached Diyarbakir Airport. Clifford Law Offices represented the wife of a Chicago architect who was traveling to Turkey on business, the only American citizen on board..</p>	
American Airlines Flight 587	<p>Crashed in a residential neighborhood of New York November 12, 2002</p> <p>Taking off from John F. Kennedy International Airport, Flight 587 was headed to Santo Domingo in the Dominican Republic. On that flight were Ilya and Marra Filanovsky, an elderly couple – a lawyer and a doctor from Russia who settled in Flushing, New York. Also on that flight was Reynida Delgado who was going to visit her father to celebrate her birthday. Minutes after leaving, the plane's vertical stabilizer and rudder separated in flight and were found in the bay. Subsequently, the airplane's engines separated in flight and were found several blocks from the main wreckage site. All 260 people aboard were killed along with five people on the ground. The NTSB determined that the probable cause of the crash was the first officer's actions during take-off, and contributing to the crash was the faulty design of the aircraft.</p>	
American Airlines Flight 11 and United Airlines Flight 175	<p>Crashed on September 11, 2001, into the World Trade Towers in New York City</p> <p>Robert Clifford and Timothy Tomasik are serving as liaison counsel for all of the interests that lost property after al Qaeda terrorists hijacked and piloted the two Boeing 767 aircraft that slammed into the 110-story steel structures on 9/11. Numerous lawsuits were filed against American Airlines, and United Airlines for their multiple failures in properly screening the terrorists that eventually boarded these flights. These complex suits are brought on behalf of insurance companies and business interests from around the globe who suffered billions of dollars in losses after the twin towers collapsed that fateful morning, permanently wiping them from the New York skyline and forever changing the world.</p>	
Singapore Air Flight 006	<p>Crashed October 31, 2000, after takeoff at Taipei, Taiwan airport</p> <p>A Boeing 747 airplane entered the incorrect runway at Chiang-KaiShek Airport in Taiwan. In heavy rain and strong winds, the airplane rolled during the take-off and collided with runway construction equipment, bursting into flames. 83 people died, including four crew members. 44 others were injured. Clifford Law Offices represented the family of Jeffrey W. Platz, 36, of Utah, who died in the crash while traveling on business.</p>	
Alaska Air Flight 261	<p>Crashed on January 31, 2000, in the Pacific Ocean</p> <p>There is an answer to the question of what caused an airline disaster. It takes painstaking research and investigation to uncover the truth. In the crash of AlaskaAir Flight 261, following Clifford Law Offices taking nearly 100 depositions, it all came down to this jackscrew.</p> <p>Clifford Law Offices represented seven families who lost loved ones and obtained more than \$40 million in settlements. Following three years of depositions led by Kevin Durkin who served as a member of the Administrative/Management Committee and the Plaintiffs' Steering Committee for the litigation, Boeing agreed to a judgment of liability despite the corporate giant getting a virtual pass from the National Transportation Safety Board in its determination of the cause of the crash.</p>	
EgyptAir Flight 990	<p>Crashed October 31, 1999, near Nantucket, Massachusetts</p> <p>Clifford Law Offices represented 80-year-old Eugenia Rhodes who died with the other 216 people aboard. The aircraft crashed into the Atlantic Ocean about 60 miles south of Nantucket after taking off from John F. Kennedy Airport in New York and headed for Cairo, Egypt. The NTSB determined that the probable cause of the crash was an error on the part of the first officer. Eugenia left a husband who is legally blind and relied on his wife for her help.</p>	

American Airlines Flight 1420	<p>Crashed in Little Rock, Arkansas, on June 1, 1999</p> <p>The Simmons brothers were students at Ouachita Baptist University in Arkadelphia, Arkansas. Jim, Jr., 22, a youth minister, and Mark, 25, were seated next to one another in Row 22 E and F on the fateful flight as the McDonnell Douglas DC-9 took off from Dallas, Texas, heading to Little Rock National Airport in severe thunderstorms. The flight crew was unable to control the aircraft in the inclement weather and overran the end of Runway 4R. The plane traveled 411 feet beyond the runway and crashed through a chain link security fence and over a rock embankment to a flood plain, colliding with a structure supporting Runway 22L's approach lighting system. The captain and 10 passengers were killed. The aircraft was destroyed in the ensuing fire. The first officer, the four flight attendants and 105 passengers were injured, including the Simmons brothers; 24 passengers miraculously were not injured.</p>
SwissAir Flight 111	<p>Crashed September 2, 1998, off the coast of Halifax, Nova Scotia</p> <p>En route to Geneva, Switzerland, SwissAir Flight 111 crashed 16 minutes after takeoff following the pilots reporting smoke in the cockpit. Mr. Clifford was on the Plaintiffs' Committee. The lawsuits, which were consolidated for trial before a federal judge in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, also were against Delta Airlines, with whom SwissAir conducted a joint venture, and the Dupont Corporation, the manufacturer of metal mylar used in the aircraft's insulation blankets. An interim report issued by the Canadian Transportation Safety Board which investigated the crash concluded that this material was the cause of the rapid spread of fire and that its history of problems made it an unacceptable risk. That finding prompted U.S. air safety officials to recommend that airlines inspect all MD-11 jetliners for electrical wiring problems.</p>
TWA Flight 800	<p>Crashed off the coast of New York July 17, 1996</p> <p>This crash has been the subject of much controversy after it plunged about eight nautical miles off the southern coast of Long Island. All 230 persons aboard were killed. Robert Clifford, on behalf of the family member he represented, brought suit against Trans World Airlines, Boeing Corporation and Hydro-Aire, Inc., manufacturer of the fuel pump on board, as the parties responsible for the explosion in the plane's center fuel tank. A bitterly fought battle ensued over whether the Death on the High Seas Act applied. Plaintiffs were successful in convincing the federal judge in New York in the consolidated lawsuit that this federal law – which would have barred recovery of non-pecuniary damages including claims for pre-death pain and suffering and the survivors' grief, loss of society as well as punitive damages – did not apply. The probable cause of the crash was determined to be an explosion in the center wing fuel tank of the flammable fuel/air mixture in the tank. The NTSB found that the probable cause of the flammable mixture igniting was a short circuit that traveled through the plane's electrical wiring.</p>
Tarom Airlines Flight 371	<p>Crashed in Bucharest, Romania, on March 31, 1995</p> <p>Tarom Airlines Flight 371 crashed in Bucharest, Romania, while en route to Brussels, Belgium, killing all 60 people aboard. Dan Chung, a 57-year-old business consultant, was killed. The Romanian Transport Ministry found that the cause of the Airbus crash, and French and Belgian experts agreed, was that the pilot became affected by health problems shortly after takeoff causing the aircraft to go into a spin when the throttle fell idle. The co-pilot was able to switch on the autopilot, but this function refused to carry out the procedure because the necessary parameters were not met, according to the chief inspector of the Romanian Civil Aviation Authority. Richard Burke flew to France to take the depositions of airline employees, then settled the matter for \$4.7 million.</p>
American Eagle Flight 3379	<p>Crashed in Morrisville, North Carolina, December 13, 1994</p> <p>15 of the 20 passengers aboard were killed when American Eagle Flight 3379 crashed. The cockpit voice recorder captured the last discussion between the pilot and co-pilot in the Jetstream Super 31 turboprop where they spoke of a failure in one of the plane's two engines and possibly aborting the flight from Greensboro to Raleigh. The National Transportation Safety Board concluded that error of the 29-year-old pilot caused the plane to fall from an altitude of 1,400 feet. He didn't follow proper procedures following engine failure and he did not take the necessary steps to land the plane safely on one engine, pointing perhaps to a lack of training.</p>
American Eagle Flight 4184	<p>Crashed in Roselawn, Indiana, on Halloween night, 1994</p> <p>Clifford Law Offices represented 16 individuals who were killed and took 110 depositions. Robert Clifford and Kevin Durkin led the Plaintiffs' Discovery Committee. The firm obtained a \$110 million settlement on the eve of trial in federal court for 28 families. Besides an inattentive pilot in an ice storm, the cause of the crash was determined to be an inadequately sized de-icing boot on the wing.</p>
USAir Flight 427	<p>Crashed while maneuvering to land at Pittsburgh International Airport Pennsylvania, September 8, 1994</p> <p>USAir Flight 427 crashed while maneuvering to land, killing all 132 aboard. Robert Clifford, along with the families whom he represented who lost loved ones aboard that ill-fated flight, waited five years for the NTSB to reach the conclusion that the probable cause of the aircraft spiraling into a ravine in suburban Pittsburgh was the result of the movement of a rudder which most likely deflected in a direction opposite to that commanded by the pilots. With that finding, the Federal Aviation Administration ordered three modifications to that aircraft:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the plane's rudder control unit be redesigned to prevent a reversal of the rudder direction • crews have to be newly trained to handle aircraft upsets • a reduction in the amount of rudder a pilot can apply in high-risk situations. <p>With that finding, the cases proceeded against USAir and Boeing, the manufacturer of the rudder.</p>
American Airlines Flight 585	<p>Crashed near Colorado Springs, Colorado, March 3, 1991</p> <p>Representing five families who lost loved ones in that tragic crash, Clifford Law Offices reached settlements with American Airlines and Boeing Corporation, manufacturers of the plane. This case was the first to point out rudder problems with the 737 aircraft.</p>
United Airlines Flight 232	<p>Crashed in Sioux City, Iowa, on July 19, 1989</p> <p>Mr. Clifford obtained a \$28.2 million verdict for a 70-year-old woman severely injured when the plane cartwheeled down the runway upon landing and burst into flames. He also obtained a \$15 million settlement on behalf of a Chicago area man who lost his wife and daughter in the crash. Mr. Clifford also negotiated with the defendants to contribute to a bereavement center that was set up at Children's Memorial Hospital in Chicago in the wife's and child's names. The American Bar Association Journal said of his efforts, "Robert Clifford was more successful than lawyers in other recent Chicago cases."</p>



Continental Connection Flight 3407/Colgan Air

Crashed: February 12, 2009, in Clarence Center near Buffalo, New York

The pilot had flown from Florida to Newark to captain the flight. The co-pilot had jumpseated on an overnight flight from her home in Seattle, Washington, flying across the country with, as National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) officials speculated, little to no sleep. Colgan Air facilities in Newark, New Jersey, do not provide sleeping accommodations, and staying overnight at a hotel was just too costly for the 24-year-old co-pilot who made about \$20,000 a year.

The NTSB hearings also revealed that the pilot had 110.7 hours of experience in the Dash 8 aircraft. Once in flight on that fateful evening on February 12, 2009, the inexperience of the co-pilot on the Newark-to-Buffalo flight also was revealed, despite the weather being typical for the Northeast at that time of year. The cockpit voice recorder that was recovered revealed some of her last words, "I've never seen icing conditions. I've never de-iced. I've never seen any. I've never experienced any of that."

They, along with 47 others on the aircraft and one person on the ground, were killed when the Bombardier Dash 8-Q400 pitched up, rolled rapidly from one side to the other, then entered a steep descending turn and crashed into a house, killing a dad in the house as well.

Three months later, the NTSB held three days of public hearings on the worst aviation crash in the history of western New York. Twenty witnesses testified at the NTSB headquarters in Washington, D.C. Excruciating facts emerged for the families who lost loved ones in the crash as a nation mourned their deaths. The mistakes, oversights, careless, and poorly-designed and poorly-implemented systems were recounted about the crash at Clarence Center, New York.

As family members sat in the audience, the hearings revealed the story of a tragedy that could have been avoided: inexperienced, poorly trained and fatigued pilots; startling low pay and lack of company sleeping quarters that contributed to crew members habitually jump-seating on overnight cross-country commutes to get to their bases in time; lack of monitoring by the airlines to enforce duty time and rest regulations; failure to install previously-recommended low airspeed alerter systems that would give pilots greater aural and visual warning; failure to implement NTSB recommendations to disconnect the autopilot when flying in icing conditions on a de-ice-boot equipped airplane; erroneous tailplane stall recovery information in the flight manual; violations of the sterile cockpit rule when undivided attention was required during an approach to land in icing conditions; lack of enforcing industry-standard safety programs. The list goes on and on.

Although Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) officials had studied many of these issues over the past several years, they did not act. The airlines did not act. The "one level of safety" that the FAA claims to have established between regional and major air carriers clearly is not true. Colgan Air, its management, its airplanes and its pilots are a low-budget, entry-level operation compared to Continental Airlines, the major airline whose livery is deceptively painted on the side of the Colgan plane.

At the end of the hearings, the families who had attended packed up and returned home in tears, vowing to find out what really happened on that plane so that the necessary changes are made to make flying safer. Although knowing that it couldn't help their loved ones, they did so in the spirit of helping others and so that the loss of their family member's treasured life would not be in vain.

The Senate Aviation Subcommittee held hearings in June, 2009, as did a House Transportation Subcommittee. It will take many people to make things right.

Comair Flight 5191

Crashed on Runway: Lexington, Kentucky on August 27, 2006

The sun hadn't come up yet in Lexington as Comair Flight 5191 started heading down the runway at Kentucky's Blue Grass Airport. The pilots chatted about various things, a clear violation of the sterile cockpit rule, that was required to be followed during this important time.

Had they been paying closer attention, they would have noticed that the runway they lined up on and were about to take off from was unlit and was too short. It was the wrong runway. They were supposed to take Runway 22, a longer runway which provided enough distance for the Bombardier Canadair Regional Jet CRJ-100ER to safely get off the ground. Instead, by the time the pilots had realized their error, it was too late. The plane crashed through a fence as it tried to take off at the end of Runway 26. All 47 passengers and two crew members, the 35-year-old captain and the 27-year-old flight attendant, were killed. The first officer survived.

Family members attended a tearful memorial service for all of the victims just days after the crash, but some thought they could do more. Three adult children lost their mother. They wanted to know what happened. They wanted this to never happen again and to try to make flying safer for other travelers. They called their lawyer in Lexington. That firm knew of the national reputation Clifford Law Offices has in aviation law. They called Robert Clifford.

Immediately, Bob Clifford flew to Lexington and met the lawyers and the family. Faced with Kentucky law and the possibility that the airport (which was under construction) would be altered, our firm filed a lawsuit within days of the crash as well as a motion seeking a restraining order and/or temporary injunction in state court. The firm was asking that the taxiways and runways be kept in their current condition so that the firm's experts and attorneys for the family could be allowed to examine the surfaces as well as their configuration. Something obviously had gone terribly wrong and lawyers at Clifford Law Offices promised the grieving family members that they would get to the bottom of it.

Robert Clifford and Michael Krzak would also make numerous trips to Lexington in the ensuing months on behalf of the five families who had hired the firm for answers. It would later be discovered that a number of things had gone wrong that morning. Careful analysis of the cockpit voice recorder indicated that the captain acknowledged that he would be taking off from Runway 22 that was 7,500 feet long but taxied instead onto an unlit Runway 26 that was just 3,500 feet long. He then turned the controls over to the first officer for takeoff. The lone air traffic controller in the tower did not maintain visual contact with the aircraft and turned away to perform administrative duties so he did not see the tragic mistake that was being made. It would later be revealed that the tower was understaffed, violating an internal policy.

Calculations would demonstrate that with the load the plane was carrying, a runway with a minimum of 3,744 feet was necessary for a safe takeoff. Even though the pilots remarked about the dark runway, they did nothing to check if what they were doing was right. They were wrong.

Before they could achieve lift off, the plane struck a berm, became airborne momentarily, clipped the airport fencing with its landing gear, collided with trees, and then crashed into a hill, separating the fuselage and cockpit from the tail. The plane loaded with jet fuel burst into flames.

Most of the 47 passengers who died were from Lexington. Many of them knew each other in this small, friendly town in the middle of the country that would never be the same.





Alaska Air Flight 261

Crashed: January 31, 2000, in the Pacific Ocean

Most of those aboard had just enjoyed several sunny days in beautiful Puerto Vallarta, Mexico. Alaska Air Flight 261 was heading to San Francisco and then continuing on to Seattle for many passengers on that fateful day in 2000. Suddenly, as it flew along the Pacific coast, the aircraft was experiencing problems. Unable to land, it crashed into the ocean, killing everyone aboard.

News started filtering of a plane crash in the Pacific Ocean as families hoped against hope that their loved ones were not on the plane. As the passenger and crew lists were confirmed, families were devastated and helpless. Seven turned to Clifford Law Offices to help sort through a family's worst nightmare. Traveling to the west coast seemed futile, yet the families wanted answers. The airline was not forthcoming in details.

Robert Clifford recommended filing a lawsuit as soon as possible. Two weeks after crash, he did so. That would not only send a message to all of the parties involved that the families meant business, it also meant that they had a chance to participate in getting answers from the beginning. They did not want to wait. They wanted to be informed and stay informed. The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) immediately sends out a team of investigators to examine the crash in order to determine the cause, but family members generally are not allowed to be part of that investigatory process. Bob Clifford wanted this time to be different, if at all possible.

After determining it was an MD-83 aircraft built in 1992, Clifford Law Offices determined that the manufacturer of the plane was McDonnell Douglas which became a part of Boeing. Within hours, the law firm had hired expert consultants in the field of aviation law. While teams of NTSB investigators boarded Coast Guard ships, Navy vessels and private boats to comb for debris in a four-mile-wide search for clues and remains. Clifford Law Offices hired experts to look into the design of the aircraft, previous problems with that particular model and the various parts that could have been defective. Clifford Law Offices took more than 100 depositions of engineers and design people from McDonnell Douglas, the designers of the aircraft, and Boeing, the airplane's manufacturer. After three years of questioning it was determined that the horizontal stabilizer had jammed, causing the plane to go into a dive. Mounted on the tail of the plane, the stabilizer controls the pitch of the nose and keeps it from heading downward. A jackscrew, relatively small compared to the size of this large aircraft, had caused an enormous and avoidable loss of life. Although the aircraft had clearance to make an emergency landing in Los Angeles, the final audio transmission from the cockpit made it unclear why the crew did not do so. Flight 261 plunged 20,000 feet into the Pacific Ocean about 20 miles north of Los Angeles International Airport near Point Mugu. Depositions led by Kevin Durkin of airline executives and aviation experts resulted in Boeing stipulating to a liability judgment against them despite the NTSB giving the corporate giant a virtual pass in its final report. On behalf of the seven families who lost loved ones aboard that airliner, Clifford Law Offices obtained \$40 million for its clients.

A year after the crash, families gathered near the Pacific Ocean and watched 88 doves released – one for each passenger killed – knowing that their loved ones would never be forgotten.

American Eagle Flight 4184

Crashed: October 31, 1994, in Roselawn, Indiana.

Robert A. Clifford wore a dark blue suit. He entered the wood paneled federal courtroom in Chicago with his leather briefcase, prepared to make his opening statement to the jury which had been selected over the previous two days. A screen was set up for the jurors to view elaborate Powerpoint presentations that would explain the case. It also was for purposes of showing previous testimony of the dozens of witnesses whose earlier depositions had been videotaped in preparation for trial. If anyone contradicted their statements on the witness stand or tried to change their story at this late date, Mr. Clifford was ready to impeach them. The jurors also were to view day-in-the-life videos that Mr. Clifford had produced on each of the 16 passengers who had lost their lives. Mr. Clifford had hired a professional videographer to capture through family photos and videos as well as interviews the lives of each one of the victims he represented who were killed in the tragedy.

Flight 4184 crashed on a cold, rainy Halloween night in 1994, in Roselawn, Indiana. Winds were blowing 30 miles per hour. American Eagle Flight 4184 from Indianapolis was circling 9,000 feet above northwest Indiana waiting to land at Chicago's O'Hare International Airport. Twice the pilots had warned air traffic controllers that freezing drizzle was coating the wings with ice. While the 30-year-old co-pilot was struggling with the ice build-up, the 29-year-old pilot was out of the cockpit.

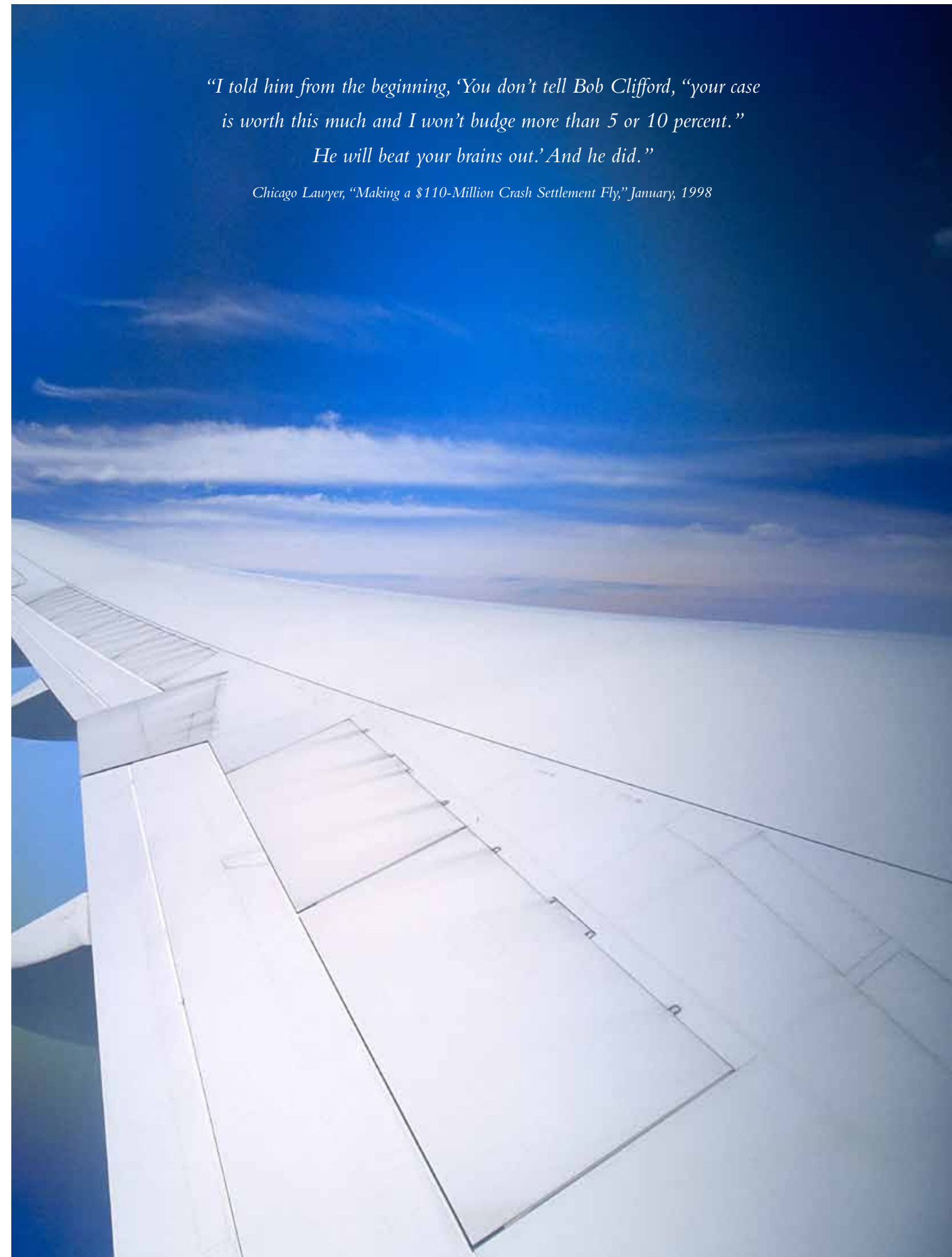
“Aw, [expletive],” were the last words of the co-pilot before a crunch sound ended the cockpit voice recording. All 68 passengers and crew members perished when the plane rolled and plunged into a cornfield at 450 miles per hour, an impact so great that the coroner could find no more than a pound of remains for any victim.

As the trial in Chicago's federal court was about to get underway, the defendants agreed to settle 28 cases for \$110 million and an apology in open court from defense attorneys. They assured those in the courtroom that as much as possible had been done to correct the problems that they believed caused the crash. The families distributed the money in confidential settlements. For a week, settlement talks had continued, even into the weekend, while jurors were told various other reasons for the delay in the trial proceedings – if the settlement had collapsed, the jury is not allowed to have that information for fear it could prejudice their objective decision. Instead, in the end, they were thanked for their patience and were dismissed. Mr. Clifford, as lead counsel for the plaintiffs, was allowed to make a mini-opening statement to the families before a packed courtroom. The lawyer for American Airlines told the families, “We are terribly sorry that this happened.”

The crash led the National Transportation Safety Board in 1996 to urge tighter regulations on flights by commuter aircraft in icing conditions. The NTSB report also concluded that the makers of the French-built ATR-72 turboprop had failed to adequately report previous problems encountered by its planes in icy conditions. Its report also faulted the French Directorate General for Civil Aviation for failing to oversee the manufacturer and for failure to inform the Federal Aviation Administration about the airworthiness of the ATR planes in icy conditions but also cited the FAA's lack of exerting proper authority over the aircraft's maker as well. Robert Clifford and Kevin Durkin led the Plaintiffs' Discovery Committee unearthing these critical facts.

“I told him from the beginning, ‘You don’t tell Bob Clifford, “your case is worth this much and I won’t budge more than 5 or 10 percent.” He will beat your brains out.’ And he did.”

Chicago Lawyer, “Making a \$110-Million Crash Settlement Fly,” January, 1998





*In a December, 1994 article, the American Bar Association Journal said of his efforts,
“Clifford was more successful than lawyers in other recent Chicago cases.”*

United Airlines Flight 232

Crashed: July 19, 1989, in Sioux City, Iowa.

A nation watched in horror as a home video fixed on Runway 2L at Sioux City, Iowa’s airport captured the horror. Over and over again, television stations aired the video of a huge jetliner, United Airlines Flight 232, cartwheeling in flames before crash-landing in a soybean field. Passengers were thrown from the plane, killing 112. Another 184 miraculously survived, crawling to safety. There were many heroes that day.

Mr. Clifford received a \$28.3 million verdict on behalf of a 70-year-old woman who suffered permanent injuries and her husband who was killed. Doris Levenberg had a wonderful life before taking that ill-fated flight. She was returning from Denver where she and her husband of less than a year, 71-year-old Allan, were surveying retirement nests. She was active and happy and loved. But in 44 minutes while the plane swirled in circles in the sky before crash landing, their lives were totally different. Allan was killed. Doris was permanently disabled, left to a life of constant painful rehabilitation after suffering nerve damage that impaired the use of her limbs, as well as a broken neck, left arm, right ankle and left leg. Using state-of-the-art visual exhibits and trial presentation techniques, Mr. Clifford tried the case for two weeks before jurors who ranged in age from 22 to 76. It took the jury less than three hours to determine that verdict, a record amount then for a personal injury case in Illinois. The foreman was later quoted to say that it was clear from the trial testimony that Doris was a “fighter who wanted as much out of life as possible despite her injuries.” Mr. Clifford also represented a Chicago-area businessman whose family was wiped out in the crash. Mr. Clifford received a \$15 million settlement on behalf of Terry Brown who lost his wife Janice and 11-year-old daughter Kimberly. The two were returning from a visit to grandma’s and last minute their seats had been reassigned on the plane. The two people in their previous seats survived the crash. Terry wanted to hold someone culpable in order to make airplane manufacturers more aware of safety concerns. On his behalf, Mr. Clifford obtained an unprecedented admission of responsibility for the crash from the most culpable defendant, General Electric Corporation which manufactured the plane’s engine. Although GE maintained that United Airlines and McDonnell Douglas, builders of the jet, also were responsible, GE admitted that it failed to detect a crack in the engine during routine inspections. Following the settlement, Mr. Brown said that although his wife and daughter paid the ultimate price, he felt he had done everything he could and everything they would have wanted him to do.

Mr. Clifford also was able to extract an additional \$250,000 from the defendants, which included McDonnell Douglas Corporation, manufacturer of the aircraft, to be donated to Chicago Children’s Hospital. The additional funds allowed for a bereavement center to be set up in the names of Janice and Kimberly Brown.

Turboprops/Private Planes/Corporate Jets/Helicopter Crashes

Clifford Law Offices represents many individuals hurt or the surviving family members of those killed in private or corporate jets and helicopter crashes throughout the world.

A Cessna Citation S550 collided with terrain during a circling instrument approach in Dillon, Montana, on May 3, 2007. The pilot was killed along with his passenger, a 30-year-old married man. They were on their way to a fishing trip in Montana. Clifford Law Offices represents the passenger's widow from Chicago.

On January 30, 2006, a Cessna 421B was destroyed when it crashed in Wheeling, Illinois. A passenger, a 40-year-old financial advisor from Chicago's North Shore and father of two small children, was killed when the pilot attempted to land the twin-engine plane at Palwaukee Municipal Airport.

A 63-year-old man was seated as a passenger in the seat of a Vans RV-6 small plane when a larger Grumman TBM-3 Avenger operated by the Tri-State Warbird Museum backed into his plane as it was preparing to take off at Wittman Regional Airport in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, on July 30, 2006. The man, a Canadian citizen, suffered fatal injuries, and his widow and family turned to Clifford Law Offices.

On June 18, 2006, a 55-year-old man from Wisconsin was piloting a RV-6A small airplane that was destroyed during a mid-air collision at the Illinois Valley Regional Airport in Peru, Illinois. His plane crashed to the ground and he was killed. Clifford Law Offices represents his family. The husband and father was killed while flying as part of a four-man team performing a formation maneuver during the air show.

A Chalk seaplane taking off from Miami, Florida, crashed on takeoff on its way to Bimini in the Bahamas, bursting into flames and plunging into the water on December 20, 2005. Horrified beachgoers witnessed the tragedy. Clifford Law Offices represented the family of a prominent Floridian who was on the plane. The case settled for a confidential amount.

Dick Ebersol, NBC Sports Chairman, was traveling with his sons on November 28, 2004, in a chartered Challenger jet. Just after take-off from Montrose Regional Airport in Colorado, it crashed, killing his 14-year-old son, Teddy. Charlie, his 21-year-old son, dragged his father out of the fiery plane. The NTSB investigation indicated the plane's wings were not de-iced in the freezing weather.

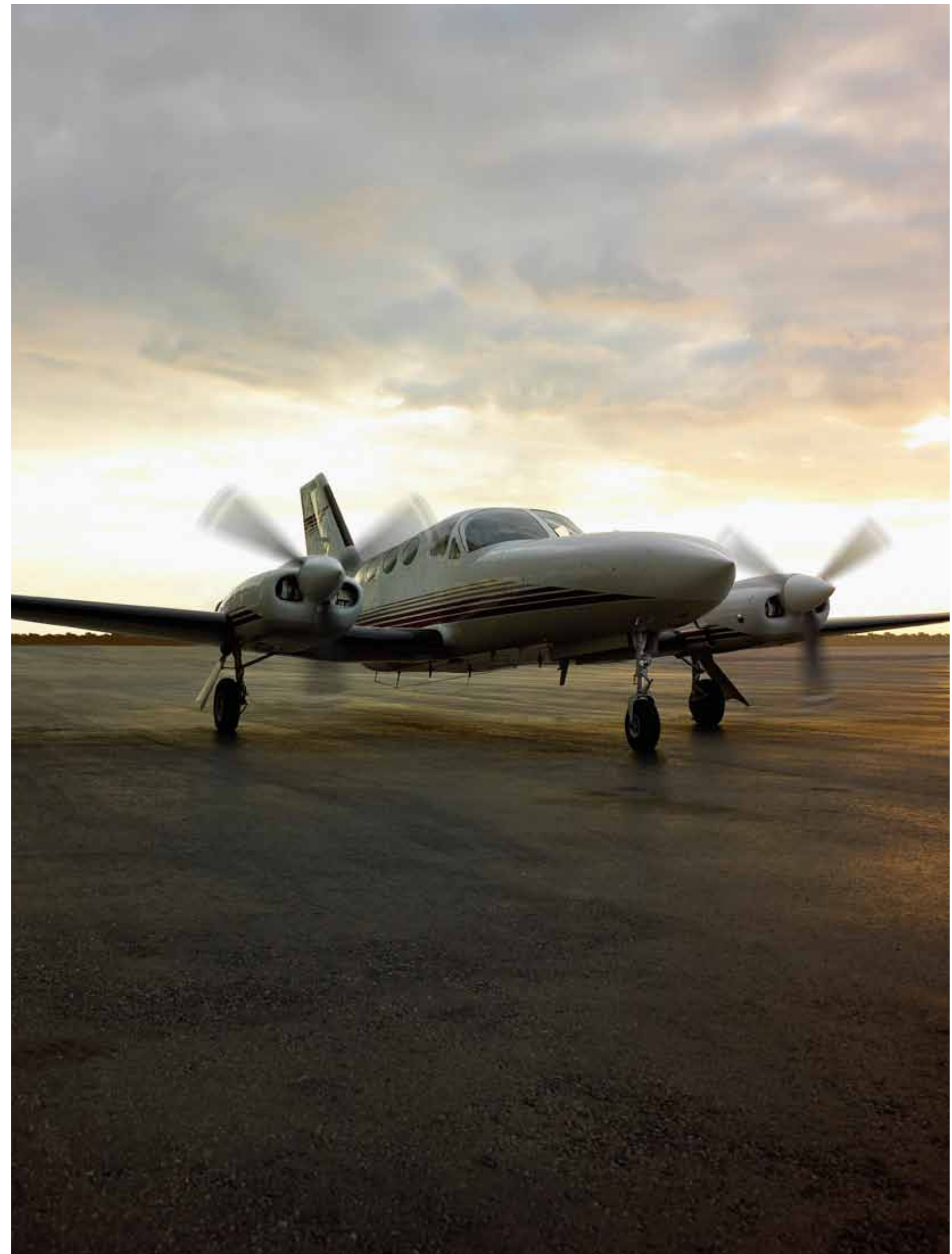
A private-rated pilot and three passengers were killed when their plane went down on November 14, 2004, in a cotton field in Dubbs, Mississippi. The plane, a Piper aircraft, burst into flames and was destroyed. The group set out about noon from the Louisiana Regional Airport in Gonzales, Louisiana, and was heading north. Clifford Law Offices represented a child who was killed.

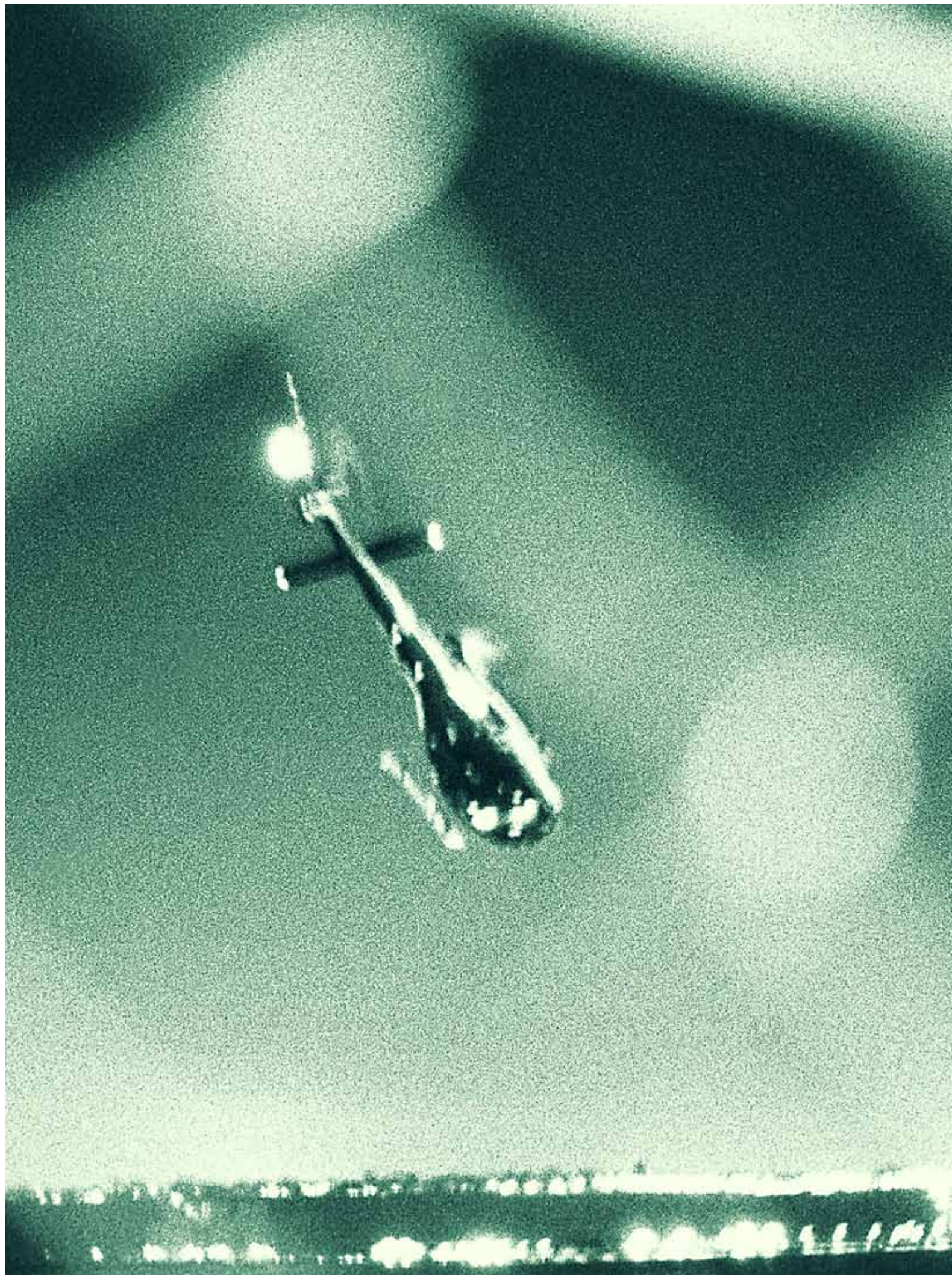
On July 28, 2004, a small plane carrying a private pilot and a flight instructor was destroyed on impact near Fox Lake, Illinois. The plane burst into flames, killing both aboard. A law enforcement officer responding to the accident scene also was seriously injured in the rescue efforts. The flight had taken off from suburban Palwaukee Municipal Airport. Clifford Law Offices represents the pilot.

On May 25, 2003, a small plane crashed in Woodruff, Wisconsin killing the mother of six children and her physician husband of nearly forty years. The case was settled for \$750,000.

A small turboprop airplane, an Air Tractor AT-503A, crashed on May 5, 2003, in central Pontiac, Illinois, when the pilot failed to maintain adequate airspeed which resulted in an inadvertent stall during a training flight. Clifford Law Offices represents one of the two certified instructors who was killed while aboard the flight.

A small charter fishing plane crashed in a remote area of Canada carrying four friends on August 24, 2002. A 41-year-old business executive from Geneva, Illinois, was killed. Clifford Law Offices represented his family and obtained a \$4.2 million settlement.





Turboprops/Private Planes/Corporate Jets/Helicopter Crashes

January 31, 2000, started as any other day for popular WGN radio personality Bob Collins. He was on the air that morning broadcasting his talk show until he signed off at 10 am. He then called his wife to tell her he was going to fly his Zlin aircraft, taking off from Waukegan Airport. It was a clear day, but that did not help him when, upon his descent and unbeknownst to him, the air traffic controller had also cleared a student pilot for landing. She crashed into his plane and it careened into a nearby hospital. His wife often accompanied him on his flights but on that day she had decided not to. His last words to her were, "I love you." Clifford Law Offices is representing his widow in the high-profile case. Following a trial in federal court, Bob Collins was found not to be at fault.

On a Memorial Day weekend in 2001, two friends were returning from a getaway vacation near Lake of the Ozarks State Park. The Piper Comanche aircraft crashed just after take-off in Kaiser, Missouri. Clifford Law Offices represented the mother of a four-year-old daughter who was killed. It was determined that improper maintenance of the plane resulted in contamination of the fuel lines and a loss of power in the engine.

On August 5, 1999, John Robinson, 56, was in a small plane with his 27-year-old daughter when the aircraft crashed in north suburban Grayslake, Illinois, killing both of them. The NTSB found that the probable cause of the crash was the pilot's not maintaining altitude and clearances and his lack of experience in flying at night.

Clifford Law Offices represented a co-pilot of a **corporate jet** against the owners of a municipal airport outside Chicago as well as the corporation that owned the plane. Following a trial that resulted in a hung jury, Richard Burke and John Karnezis tried the case again for another four weeks and received a \$10.45 million verdict, the jury finding the airport 90 percent at fault for failing to provide a safe landing terrain. Involving that same crash, Mr. Burke earlier obtained a \$13.5 million settlement on behalf of a passenger killed in that Gulfstream IV plane on October 30, 1996.

In May, 2002, Mr. Burke obtained a \$6.8 million verdict as a result of the crash of a **Piper aircraft** that ran out of gas in northwest suburban Schaumburg that was recognized as the Verdict of the Week in the National Law Journal. The jury deliberated just three hours following a two-and-a-half week trial before delivering a verdict against the pilot and Northwest Flyers on behalf of a Plainfield woman who suffered severe injuries as a passenger on the aircraft on August 18, 1996.

Helicopter Crashes

A **student pilot** sustained serious injuries when he was on a training flight with his instructor at Goshen Municipal Airport in Goshen, Indiana. The instructor and a rear-seat passenger, all represented by Clifford Law Offices, also sustained injury from the August 5, 2005 crash.

Clifford Law Offices represented a 43-year-old mother of two teenagers killed in June, 1999, who was a passenger in a helicopter crash in a mountainous area of Alaska. The firm hired experts to help in the investigation and legal discovery of the accident on behalf of the Blanford family living in Florida. It was found that the pilot became disoriented and crashed the helicopter into a mountain. It resulted in a \$900,000 settlement.

Robert Clifford and Kevin Durkin represented the family of a photographer killed in a May 1, 1998 helicopter crash in Arlington Heights, a Chicago suburb. Clifford Law Offices obtained a \$4.1 million settlement against the helicopter transport company that operated the flight from a regional airport. Clifford Law Offices also represents the couple whose suburban home was destroyed by the crash.

On October 30, 1997, a helicopter crashed in suburban Frankfort, Illinois. Clifford Law Offices represented the pilot of the craft. The probable cause of the crash was determined to be a misjudgment of the clearance while maneuvering the approach to a runway on a dark night.

Robert Clifford was successful in settling a case for \$10 million on behalf of the 61-year-old patriarch of one of the leading families in Brazil. The helicopter crashed in a short flight from New York to New Jersey in 1994. His wife and the pilot also were killed.

The Practice of Clifford Law Offices

Aviation Liability

Private/Small plane crashes
Helicopter crashes
Mass air disasters

Air crashworthiness
FAA negligence
Mid-air collisions
Owner/pilot negligence

Air charter operations
Inadequate instructions
Aviation product defects

Transportation Liability

Automobile crashes
Railroad disasters
Intersection collisions
Boating accidents
Motorcycle crashes

Pedestrian/vehicle accidents
Negligent entrustment
Intoxication cases
Police chase crashes
Bicycle collisions

Tractor-truck accidents
Unsafe road design
Recreational vehicle accidents
Highway construction accidents

Medical Negligence

Hospital liability
Physician liability
Nursing liability
HMO liability
Brain damage
Surgical procedures
Cardiac care
Excess and self-insurance liability
Pharmacist and pharmacy liability
Nursing home liability
Hospital liability for the acts of a private physician
Failure to diagnose
Delay in diagnosis
Negligent ambulance service
Emergency treatment

Refusal to treat
Negligent discharge, transfer and referral of a patient
Wrongful death of a fetus
Informed consent for disclosed and undisclosed complications
Pregnancy-related actions
Foreign object left in patient's body after surgery
Anesthesia liability
Radiology liability
Doctor's limited experience
"Right to die"/Living wills/
Power of Attorney
Content and retention of medical records/Recordkeeping

Confidentiality/Waiver of confidentiality
Patient release/instruction upon release
Applicability of negligence, warranty and strict liability regarding defective medical equipment
Hospital accreditation/standards
Hospital environmental standards violation/medical waste
Premises liability/unsafe conditions
Deceptive trade practices of a hospital

Product Liability

Drugs/pharmaceutical products
Medical appliances
Occupational exposure/chemicals
Pesticides

Toxic torts
Automobiles
Brake systems
Bicycle design
Dangerous toys/playpens

Unsafe household products
Construction equipment
Agricultural equipment
Helmet design
Tools

Premises Liability

Amusement park negligence
Neglected/unlit parking lots
Hotel safety
Swimming pools
Shopping malls
Building collapses

Apartment buildings
Explosions
Electrocutions
Failure to provide security
Stairs and railings
Elevators and escalators

Landlord-tenant
Sports/recreational injuries
Fire injuries and deaths
Burn injuries
Catastrophic property losses
Scaffolding accidents

Construction Liability

Substandard wiring
Crane accidents

Negligent trenching
Construction zones

Building collapses
Improper barricades

Web Site

Clifford Law Offices' highly sophisticated, interactive web site, the first of its kind in Chicago developed by a personal injury firm, can be found at www.CliffordLaw.com.

Offices

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