



Gary Arsenault Fights for Social Security Benefits for Disabled Client

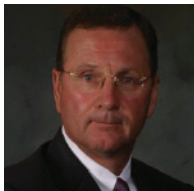
Jamie was in his mid-fifties and was happily employed as a truck driver. Jamie was proud of his job, and loved being on the road. However, Jamie developed a progressive disease, which began to affect his eyesight.

Jamie had eye surgery to try to improve his vision, but it was not successful. His doctor told him that he would never get his sight back, and that he would no longer be able to drive a truck. Jamie was devastated, and didn't know how he'd support his family. Being a truck driver was all he knew. At his doctor's suggestion, Jamie applied for social security disability benefits.



Even though Jamie had paid into the system his whole life, the government denied his social security disability benefits. That's when he called Neblett, Beard & Arsenault and spoke to **Gary Arsenault**. Gary worked hard for Jamie and his family, and took Jamie's case to court. Gary was able to prove to the judge that Jamie was disabled, and got Jamie the disability benefits he deserved. We are proud of this accomplishment and happy to share it with you, but please remember that past success does not guarantee a similar outcome in all cases.

Legal *Brief*



Richard J. Arsenault Joins LSU Faculty

Richard Arsenault has been invited to join the faculty at LSU's Law School. Arsenault, an alumni of LSU Law, will begin teaching Advanced Litigation to students this fall.

Richard is a long-time instructor at the LSU Law Trial Advocacy program, an intensive three day trial skills program, and is excited about the opportunity to join LSU's esteemed faculty.

"I feel extremely honored to join the outstanding faculty at LSU," said Arsenault. "When I was a student there, my professors imparted a solid education and passion for the law, which I hope to instill in this next generation of legal minds."

The firm is proud of this important achievement by our senior partner.

NB&A to Sponsor Freedom 5k



NB&A is proud to be the Platinum Sponsor of Alexandria's Freedom 5K/ 1 Mile Fun Run to support the Alexandria VA and the Wounded Warriors program. Wounded Warriors provides aid and support to injured service members as they recover and transition back to civilian life.

As a main sponsor of the event, NB&A will be lending our support to the race/walk and will host a community booth at the event. The

Freedom 5K will take place on March 29 at Alexandria's England Air Park, and will be held in conjunction with "Welcome Home," an annual celebration of our combat Veterans and their families.

Our firm is proud to support our troops! In fact, our firm offers legal services like wills, power of attorney, notary, and other services to our troops, veterans and their families at no charge. It is our way of saying "thank you" for all the sacrifices our brave men and women make in the defense of our freedom. If you know someone who could benefit from this program, call NB&A today!

⊕ *Health Alert*

The FDA is warning women about a possible link between silicone and saline breast implants and a rare type of cancer. Anaplastic large cell lymphoma (ALCL) is a rare, non-Hodgkin's lymphoma that involves the cells of the immune system. Data reviewed by the FDA suggests that a small, but significant risk of developing ALCL exists in the scar tissue near the breast implant. For more information, contact our lawyers today.

Welcome *Aboard!*

NB&A is proud to announce the addition of Mary Nell Bennett as an Associate Attorney with our Firm!

Mary Nell attended Ole Miss as a student athlete and lettered for four years in Volleyball. She graduated with Bachelor's Degrees in both Marketing and Banking & Finance, and earned her law degree at Loyola University College of Law in New Orleans. While in law school, Mary Nell received several honors and awards for legal scholarship and excellence, including three Law In Excellence awards, and completed several judicial internships and externships. She built a solid reputation working in complex, multidistrict litigation and gained notice as a skilled legal researcher and writer. Mary Nell is now active in the firm's complex litigation practice, and is currently representing NB&A clients across the country.



Mary Nell Bennett

Congratulations, Mary Nell, and welcome aboard!



NB&A Practice Areas

Offshore Injuries • Vehicle Accidents
18 Wheeler Accidents • Motorcycle Accidents • *Dangerous Products*
Nursing Home Negligence • *Workplace Accidents* • *Environmental Exposure*
Class Action Litigation

Firm *News*

Mike Koch was recently awarded with an "AV" rating for legal ethics and ability by Martindale-Hubbell, the nation's oldest lawyer rating service. "AV" is the highest rating achievable, and shows that a lawyer has reached the height of professional excellence. Congratulations, Mike, on your notable achievement!

Gary Arsenault moderated the Louisiana Association for Justice's Continuing Legal Education a la Carte Conference in New Orleans. The event attracted nearly 200 attorneys from across Louisiana. Gary oversaw the conference, which featured presentations on a variety of legal topics including trial techniques, law office management, technology and trends in litigation.

Paul Tellarico, David Walker and Jennifer Hoekstra spoke at the Louisiana State Bar Association's Small and Solo Firm Conference in New Orleans this February. The team presented a "Class Action Overview" at the seminar, which is one of the Bar Association's largest annual conferences.

Richard Arsenault was appointed to the Plaintiff Steering Committee for the DePuy Hip Litigation. In this leadership position, Richard will help oversee the consolidated lawsuits for thousands of victims implanted with faulty hip replacements. Richard also recently chaired the Darvon/Darvocet Recall Litigation Conference in New Orleans, and has been featured in the Times Picayune and Wall Street Journal for his involvement in the BP Gulf Coast Oil Spill lawsuits.



This past December, NB&A hosted our **Third Annual Breakfast with Santa to benefit Toys for Tots**. This was our biggest year yet! Volunteers from NB&A, Menard High School Key Club and Bolton High School's ROTC came together at Ryan's Grill & Buffet in Alexandria to raise toys and funds for the Marine's Toys for Tots organization. Each child under 12 who brought a toy donation entered the buffet for free and got to visit with Santa, have their photo taken & enjoyed Christmas-themed activities. We are proud to support the local community and the Marine's Toys for Tots.

Social Security Disability: What You Need to Know

While most of us don't like to think about needing Social Security Disability, the truth is that millions of Americans have to apply for these benefits each year. In fact, according to the Social Security Administration (SSA), a 20-year-old worker has a 3 in 10 chance of becoming disabled before they reach retirement age. 16% of the population has some kind of disability. 26% of these are severe enough to be found totally disabled. The highest numbers of approved claims are for spinal injuries and mental disorders.

Here are some questions many of our clients have asked about Social Security Disability:

"I was in a car accident. Am I eligible for Social Security Disability?" - Charles, Alexandria

Social security disability provides monetary benefits to individuals whose illnesses or injuries prevent them from working. A person can be considered disabled for a wide range of mental or physical limitations. However, disability benefits are only given to people whose medical conditions are expected to last for least 12 months or will result in death.

In order to obtain disability benefits, you must have worked for a certain amount of time based on your age. If you haven't paid in social security long enough, you may be entitled to limited benefits, which are called Supplemental Security Income benefits.

"How can I prove that I am disabled?" - Rudolph, Lafayette

When you apply for disability benefits, you will need to provide:

- Your Social Security number;
- Your birth or baptismal certificate;
- Names, addresses and phone numbers of the doctors, caseworkers, hospitals and clinics that you visited and dates of your visits;
- Names and dosage of all your medicine;
- Medical records from your doctors, therapists, hospitals, clinics and caseworkers that you already have in your possession;
- Laboratory and test results;
- A summary of where you worked and the kind of work you did; and
- A copy of your most recent W-2 Form or, if you are self-employed, your federal tax return for the past year.

Additionally, you will need complete an application form, a form that collects information about your medical condition and how it affects your ability to work, and you will have to submit a form that gives the SSA the right to talk to your doctor about your medical condition.

"When should I apply for my Social Security Disability?" - Michael, Pineville

Since the social security disability application and review process can take a very long time, it is important to apply for benefits as soon as you believe you have become disabled. In fact, if your application is initially denied and you enter into the appeals process, approval can take up to three years.



"What if my application is denied?" - Marcus, Baton Rouge

If the SSA denies your application, you have the right to appeal their decision. However, you must make a written request within 60 days of receiving your denial letter. During this process, you have the right to be represented by a lawyer. There are four levels to the appeals process:

1. **Reconsideration:** This is the process where someone who was not involved with the first decision will review all the evidence you initially submitted, as well as any new evidence.
2. **Hearing:** If the reconsideration still denies your benefits, you have the right to request a hearing. The hearing will be conducted by an administrative law judge, and he or she will question you and any witnesses you bring. Although not required, it is strongly recommended that you have an attorney represent you at the hearing.
3. **Appeals Council:** If the judge rules against you in the hearing, you may request a review by the Appeals Council. If they decide to hear your request, they will either review your information or return your case back to an administrative judge for further review.
4. **Federal Court:** If you disagree with the Appeals Council's decision, you may choose to file a lawsuit in federal district court.

"How much will my benefits be?" - Jerry, Mansfield

The monthly amount you receive for social security disability will depend on your average lifetime earnings. Certain members of your family may also qualify for benefits under certain circumstances.

"What if I want to go back to work?" - Michelle, Rosepine

After you start receiving benefits, you may want to try to go back to work. There are federal incentives that exist that can help disabled people re-enter the work force, while still receiving certain benefits.

We've worked hard for thousands of clients who've become disabled because of mental and physical illnesses and injuries. If you or a loved one finds themselves in need of disability benefits, contact the Social Security Disability attorneys at Neblett, Beard & Arsenault.



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C. Michael Bollinger



David O. Walker



Paul J. Tellarico



William S. Neblett



Michael S. Koch



Wesley J. Gralapp



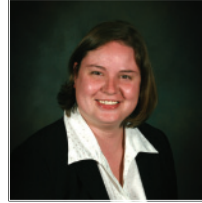
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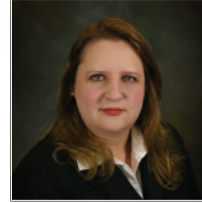
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