

Long Island law Practices Embrace Specialization

By KEN SCHACHTER May, 2015



Daniel Flanzig, an attorney who specializes in bicycle accidents.

Photo Credit: Newsday / Audrey C. Tiernan

A select few Long Island lawyers have embraced specialization with gusto, turning their careers away from the broad practices pursued at most firms.

Big wheel in bicycle litigation

Daniel Flanzig's initial plan -- to become an FBI agent -- was foiled by a 1994 hiring freeze when he finished law school at City University of New York. That led the Melville native to follow in the path of his father, Sheldon Flanzig, and pursue personal injury law.

A longtime recreational bicyclist, Flanzig, 46, knew firsthand of the tension between riders and motorists in the New York City area. "I was living in Manhattan [in the early 2000s] and started having my own clients involved in crashes in the five boroughs," he said. "It was friends, acquaintances and people I rode with."

He is now a Sea Cliff resident and partner with his sister, Cathy, at Flanzig and Flanzig LLP in Mineola, where bicycle cases account for about 40 percent of the practice. They launched a dedicated website, newyorkbikelawyer.com, and created a bike-crash app to guide cyclists in collecting information when they are involved in an accident.

"Any personal injury lawyer will handle a bike crash," he said, but they may neglect to ask if the bicyclist was using a GoPro video recorder or the Strava app, which connects with GPS hardware to record detailed data about a ride. "Because I ride, I'm familiar with how crashes occur."

That has resulted in recent six-figure settlements, he said, for a bicyclist who was hurt by a driver who ran a stop sign in Suffolk County and a rider who was "doored" in Manhattan's West Village when a car door swung open in his path, cutting his bicep.

Flanzig said he still makes time to ride a bike despite work and a growing family. "I get to mix my pleasure and work."