

Daily Journal

JUNE 8, 2022

Top Plaintiff Lawyers 2022



Steven N. Williams

JOSEPH SAVERI LAW FIRM

SAN FRANCISCO

ANTITRUST CLASS ACTIONS
& CONSUMER PROTECTION
LITIGATION

For the last eight years, Williams and his firm have been litigating a sprawling class action alleging price-fixing in the multibillion-dollar capacitor industry. Thanks to some bad weather, the last remaining piece

of it settled just after Thanksgiving.

Williams and his colleagues had won well over \$400 million in settlements with 20 of the initial defendant companies. They were a day away from finishing the pandemic-delayed trial against the last two defendants when rain flooded one juror's basement.

With the trial postponed, the parties worked deep into the night and reached a \$165 million settlement, bringing the total recovered for the class of wholesalers and electronics manufacturers to \$604.55 million. *In Re Capacitors Antitrust Litigation*, 3:17-md-02801 (N.D. Cal., filed Dec 5, 2017).

"It is wrapped and done," Williams said about the long-running litigation.

Also done is his and co-counsel's unique class action against Facebook on behalf of about 14,000 content moderators who suffered PTSD and other trauma from days and days of blocking violent and hateful images from the site. That case settled last summer for \$52 million and significant workplace improvements.

Late last month, Williams settled

a very similar but smaller suit for content moderators at YouTube. *Doe v. YouTube*, 4:20-cv-07493 (N.D. Cal., filed Oct. 24, 2020).

He announced that settlement about the same day he filed a moderator class action against TikTok. *Young v. ByteDance Inc.*, 3:22-cv-01883 (N.D. Cal., filed March 24, 2022).

In addition to dancing teens, TikTok attracts posters who want to depict "all the same beheadings, sexual abuse ... [and] terrorism" that Facebook does, Williams said. Plus, there are challenges that may depict "self-asphyxiation and self-harm and things that aren't supposed to kill you but have," he said.

Williams also regularly accepts pro bono assignments from the federal court. He is particularly proud of settling a civil rights suit against Antioch police on behalf of a community leader and mother officers had assaulted and arrested. *Currie v. Moraga*, 3:19-cv-07540 (N.D. Cal., filed Nov. 15, 2019).

—DON DEBENEDICTIS