

Colorful L.A. Neutral Loves Being Where It's Happening

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ator.

"All clients at some level feel wronged, and they've hired lawyers to be their champions. ... But somebody has to tell the client that they are not going to hit the litigation lottery," he said.

"I can take the bullet for the lawyer. I can deliver bad news that the lawyer may not be able to deliver," Williams said.

Though Williams has been mediating since the early 1990s, he's been doing it full time since January 1998.

Attorneys who have used his services are often repeat customers.

Garrard has used Williams on a dozen cases.

"His most effective trait is that he is able to get negotiations under way and moving quickly and efficiently and doesn't waste time," Garrard said. "You're talking dollars and cents pretty quick when you're mediating in front of Ralph."

James R. Robie of Robie & Matthai in Los Angeles also has called on Williams to settle a dozen cases.

"He gets to the point quicker," Robie said. "He manages to sort of focus the attention of both sides onto what really are the issues in order to get the gap closed pretty efficiently."

After graduating from UCLA with a bachelor's degree in history, Williams joined the U.S. Navy, working as a secretary at the naval armory on Stadium Way.

He attended Glendale University College of Law at night, he said, "basically for something to do."

But soon he found himself with a wife, the first of his two daughters and a mortgage. He became an insurance claims adjuster to pay the bills.

His legal career began in 1972 at Wyman, Bautzer, Rothman & Kuchel. In 1975, he co-founded King & Williams,

Ralph O. Williams III

Mediator, arbitrator

Age: 60

Affiliation: ADR Services

Location: Los Angeles

Specialties: insurance policies and coverage, bad faith, personal injury, attorney, accountant, real estate broker and insurance agent malpractice, employment, real estate, construction and contracts

Rate: \$400 an hour

where he practiced law until he went full time as a mediator.

Here are some of the lawyers who have used Williams' services:

Michael Bidart, Shernoff Bidart & Darras; Joseph C. Campo, Lewis Brisbois Bisgaard & Smith; Jonathan B. Cole, Nemecek & Cole; Frank N. Darras, Shernoff Bidart & Darras; Peter E. Garrell, Liner Yankelevitz-Sunshine & Regenstreif; Steven D. Huff, Anderson McPharlin & Connors; Glenn R. Kantor, Kantor & Kantor; Patrick M. Kelly, Wilson Elser Moskowitz Edelman & Dicker; James T. LaChance, Kirtland & Packard; Linda Lawson, Meserve Mumper & Hughes; Robert K. Scott, Law offices of Robert K. Scott; Robert D. Shoecraft, Shoecraft Burton; Joy Young Stephenson, Stephenson Acquistio & Colman; Andrew J. Waxler, Waxler Carner, Weinrob & Brodsky; and Ralph B. Wegis, Law Office of Ralph B. Wegis.