



# services

## EDITOR'S CHOICE best guy to have on your side if you've been injured »

**Kenneth J. Allen  
& Associates**  
[www.kenallenlaw.com](http://www.kenallenlaw.com)



Kenneth J. Allen & Associates isn't just the best personal injury law practice in Northwest Indiana—it's one of the best in the nation. The firm routinely tops lists of judgments won for its clients—\$135 million and counting since 2000—and has won million-dollar verdicts every year since '03. Accolades such as being named among the 500 leading lawyers in America by national legal publications hang on the walls of founder Ken Allen's office.

"During my trial, there were a lot of out-of-town lawyers who I found out later came to watch him work," recalls Brian Gulley, a former Kenneth J. Allen & Associates client who engaged the firm after suffering a severe head injury on the job. (Allen's specialty is trial presentation.) "I didn't realize just how good he was until then."

Gulley describes Allen as "a blue-collar guy in a white-collar job," an apt description as Allen grew up working in the steels mills and on the railroads of the region.

"I liked the work, I liked the people I worked with, and there was a great seduction to stay there," Allen recalls, but his father, also a steelworker, made him promise to keep up with his education and escape the factory grind.

Allen kept his promise, but never forgot his roots, which helps to explain his continuing passion for helping people who have been hurt by corporate negligence. For Allen, it's about not only justice for the client, but also protecting future workers.

He recalls one case involving a young man who had been crushed in a piece of machinery at work. "We

hired engineers who showed how, for a few hundred more dollars, the machine could have been designed so that it would have been impossible for the accident to have happened," he says. After successfully arguing the case, the company turned around and asked for all those materials. "Now," Allen says, "no one will ever get hurt that way again."

"A lot of lawyers lose sight of that," he adds. "The whole point of this area of law is injury prevention. If those who do wrong are held accountable, they won't do it again." The big judgments for which personal injury lawsuits are often criticized are key to this, Allen holds, pointing back to the previous example. "If it becomes more expensive to do wrong, people will do it right from the beginning," he says.

If that should ever come to pass, Allen acknowledges he'd need to find a new line of work. "But that's the kind of problem you'd like to have," he says.

Kenneth J. Allen & Associates only takes about one out of every ten cases that come through the door. "Our first priority is the client, and then, how can we align that with the best interests of others," Allen explains. Those cases which are accepted get attention across the firm. "We have 7 a.m. meetings where we put one case on the table, and you have seven or eight smart people looking at one problem, so you will get a smart answer," he says. "I've never seen an insurance company put eight lawyers on one matter. We do that every week."

All the firm's lawyers are specialists in personal injury law, and often specialists in a particular branch of that law. "There's not one lawyer here who could write a will," Allen says. "But my partner knows more about trucking than anyone -- his dad was a trucker, he drove a truck -- we have another partner who is interested specifically in medical negligence and so on. It gives us a much higher level of knowledge than our opponents."

But perhaps the real secret to Allen's success is simply that he loves what he does. "You hear people say all the time, 'oh, I hate my job,'" he says. "There's not a part of this job I don't love. It's not work at all."

