

Gulfport Office Responds to the Oil Spill



Following the spring time Oil Spill, a wave of layoffs swept the Coast. The gleam in his eye and his upbeat attitude ailed to shield Mr. Wayne Braun when his casino had to part with staff. “Seventy something” years young and the primary care giver for his live in mother, he had bounced back from major Katrina damage and a low-ball insurance settlement. For eight months, he diligently sought work, having on his own qualified for interim compensation with the GCCF. As he filed his summer 2011 claim, the coast GCCF office assured him that his status was unchanged. However, after 90 days of silence, the GCCF notified him that under new rules he was “assumed” to have been employed as of July 1, 2011 and retroactive to that date cut his compensation 90%.

On the brink financially and seeking answers, the local GCCF office referred him to our Gulfport office. MCLS’ attorney, Charles Allen, specializing in claims, explained the new rules used by GCCF was explored, Mr. Braun’s rights and options were analyzed. He was able to reach a final settlement of his claim.



For some clients, “Hard times come in threes”. After Hurricane Katrina visited Ms. Robertson’s family home, she rebounded by becoming a skilled member of the Union of Pipefitters. Hard times came again with a vehicular accident as she rode a

company bus to a job site. After surgery, in the spring of 2010, she sought work near home for family reasons. Like a thief in the night, the third hard knock began quietly when companies promised a year of work cleaning up the Oil Spill. MCLS office assisted her in filing a dual claim for lost wages and bodily injury when that promised “year of work” vanished along with other opportunities for employment after the spill. MCLS also assisted her in getting employment documents. She advised of a list of puzzling health symptoms: headaches, rashes, ear infections and problems with her stomach and eyes. The program researched how GCCF settles health claims.

Ms. Robertson was propelled to become a grass roots leader as other oil cleanup workers began to tell similar stories and presented similar symptoms. The truth is: she educated the local community and her lawyer on the health impacts of their exposure. Battling financial pressure, her medical claim was documented with the GCCF. Eventually, with the BP Medical Settlement Agreement, Ms. Robertson strategically chose to be represented by private counsel. However, her friends at Legal Services wish her a speedy and full recovery.



“Without Mr. Allen’s diligence and persistent efforts to follow the ever changing rules of the Gulf Coast Claims Facility (GCCF), I would have been more confused than normal. It was impossible for the lay person to follow Mr. Feinburg’s ever changing “methodology.” Thanks to Mr. Allen; he explained the facts to me in a clear and concise manner. I have nothing but praise for Mr. Allen.”

***Wayne Braun,
Client***