



2023

WOMEN IN LAW Leaders Leaning In

**CARLA
COLAIANNI**

TRIAL ATTORNEY
Smith LaCien LLP

Carla Colaiani, a plaintiff trial lawyer at Smith LaCien LLP, has extensive experience in complex litigation, with a concentration in medical negligence. Having worked on over 60 birth injury cases during her career, she is passionate about the work and cares deeply about her clients as they address their life-changing trauma.

Since joining Smith LaCien in 2022, Carla has worked on cases ranging from birth injuries to a failure to diagnose skin cancer that left a woman severely disfigured. She is pursuing civil damages for a female student who was sexually assaulted on a college campus.

A staunch advocate for women, Carla and lawyers at Smith LaCien have been cultivating relationships with female expert witnesses to bring a new voice to expert testimony in complex medical malpractice cases. She also mentors another lawyer at the firm, Allyson Cox. They work on cases together and through their advocacy work for the Women's Bar Association of Illinois.

Since she began practicing law in 2007, Carla has always

represented injured plaintiffs and has been involved in procuring settlements of over \$40 million for prior clients. While working at a top plaintiff law firm in New York, she was "honored" to handle most of the firm's cases which poured in when the state enacted the Child Victims Act, a new law that extended the Statute of Limitations and allowed childhood victims of sexual abuse to finally seek justice.

After receiving an undergraduate degree, she began her career as a vocational training instructor at a Chicago-based refugee resettlement agency. The injustices which her students had experienced inspired her to become a lawyer. She received her law degree from DePaul University College of Law, *Cum Laude*, in 2007.

In summary, Carla Colaiani has proven to be a strategic, creative and caring trial lawyer who fights for the rights of women and men who have suffered catastrophic injuries and personal losses. In the process, she has become recognized as a beacon of light for those who felt lost but triumphed over adversity.