



1250 CONNECTICUT AVENUE NW, SUITE 300 • WASHINGTON, DC 20036
TEL 202.822.5100 • FAX 202.822.4997 • WWW.FINDJUSTICE.COM

CYRUS MEHRI (DC, CT)
STEVEN A. SKALET (DC, MD)
CRAIG L. BRISKIN (NY, MA)*
ANNA M. POHL (DC, MA)
ELLEN L. EARDLEY (DC, IL)
JANELLE M. CARTER (IL)*

PAMELA COUKOS (DC, MA, NY)
WOODLEY B. OSBORNE (DC, MD)
OF COUNSEL

*(PENDING IN DC)

MEHRI & SKALET, PLLC **A Commitment to Racial Equality**

Our Background and Commitment

Mehri & Skalet, PLLC (M&S) is a private law firm dedicated to using the legal system to serve the public interest. In cases ranging from civil rights to consumer protection to corporate fraud, M&S has a track record of changing the way America does business. We strongly believe that corporations and other powerful institutions are not above the law and can be changed for the better. This belief inspires our work and informs every aspect of our practice.

Following the success of monumental race discrimination settlements with Texaco and Coca-Cola, which set new gold standards for diversity in the industry, M&S continued its effort to tackle racial discrimination in the workplace. We have spoken to minorities who, despite years of dedicated service to their employers, have met pay and promotion disparities, exclusionary practices, and hostile work environments. Through litigation and public advocacy, M&S is committed to fighting for racial equality.

Fighting for Racial Equality in the Workplace

Roberts v. Texaco

Attorney Cyrus Mehri served as co-lead counsel in the landmark *Roberts v. Texaco Inc.* case which was one of the first race glass ceiling cases. The case involved the famous “Texaco Tapes.” The settlement included a record \$176 million dollar settlement and an outside independent Task Force chaired by Deval L. Patrick. Plaintiff Bari-Ellen Roberts authored a book about the case: *Roberts versus Texaco*.

Ingram v. The Coca-Cola Company

In 2001, M&S won one of the largest race discrimination class actions in history: *Ingram v. The Coca-Cola Company*, which settled for \$192.5 million. Linda Ingram and Kimberly Gray Orton, along with several other African-American employees of The Coca-Cola Company, contacted us after experiencing and witnessing systematic race based differences in pay, promotions, and evaluations. Linda was repeatedly denied

promotional opportunities and was making thousands of dollars less than her white counterparts. Kimberly, despite 13 years at the company, was earning tens of thousands of dollars less than her white counterparts, and even less than the white employees whom she supervised.

Stories like these prompted us to launch a nine month investigation into the company's policies and practices and then to file a class action suit on behalf of 2,200 current and former African-American Coca-Cola Employees.

The settlement brought about historic programmatic relief, featuring independent Task Forces chaired by former Labor Secretary Alexis Herman with sweeping powers to reform key human resources practices such as pay, promotions and evaluations. As a result of the lawsuit, Coca-Cola intrinsically changed its culture and treatment of people of color.

Trial Lawyers for Public Justice named M&S attorneys Cyrus Mehri and Pamela Coukos as finalists for "Trial Lawyer of the Year" in 2001 for their work on the Coca-Cola matter.

Robinson v. Ford Motor Company

Mehri & Skalet and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission ("EEOC") each filed lawsuits challenging Ford's procedures for selecting apprentices nationwide. These suits alleged that, since 1997, Ford has discriminated against African-Americans on the basis of race in selecting apprentices. The two cases were consolidated in front of Senior Judge S. Arthur Spiegel in the Southern District of Ohio.

After extensive negotiations, the parties arrived at a settlement which resolved all claims in both lawsuits. The settlement provided monetary and non-monetary benefits to the class, as well as substantial systemic relief. Key features of the settlement included:

- Ford ceased the use of the apprenticeship test for selection of apprentices at Ford facilities in the U.S. The parties jointly selected an independent industrial psychologist to serve as an expert to devise new apprenticeship selection procedures;
- Ford selected 276 members of the Settlement Class and placed them, along with three Charging Parties, on a Ford apprenticeship program eligibility list. This aspect of the Settlement Agreement was designed to remedy claims for lost job opportunities; and
- To remedy compensation damages claims for the class, Ford agreed to pay \$8.5 million, or \$2400 to each Settlement Class member who submitted a properly executed Claim and Release Form and did not opt-out of the lawsuit.

Advocating for Minorities Inside and Outside the Courtroom

M&S attorneys are advocates of racial equality inside and outside the courtroom. We work hard for results that ensure justice not only for our clients, but for society at large.

In 2002, M&S issued a landmark report “**Black Coaches in the NFL: Superior Performance, Inferior Opportunities,**” the most in-depth study ever completed on the hiring practices of the NFL. M&S’ work led the NFL to adopt diversity policies that have brought about historic change in professional football, including hiring a record number of minority head coaches and front office executives. M&S also created the only minority affinity group in major league sports: the Fritz Pollard Alliance.

In a May 2007 EEOC Commissioners meeting, Cyrus Mehri testified about the Robinson v. Ford Motor Company’s settlement significance on testing procedures in the workplace. Cyrus is a frequent guest on radio and TV and is a guest columnist for Diversity, Inc.

Associate Anna M. Pohl has significant experience litigating a variety of complex employment matters, including race and gender discrimination class action cases. She recently settled a case, prior to litigation, with programmatic relief provisions that will greatly improve the training and promotion opportunities for African American employees at the company.

Associate Janelle Carter practices civil rights litigation as an Associate of the firm. She has represented plaintiffs in various class action and individual matters involving race discrimination in employment and public accommodations. As a law student, Ms. Carter interned with the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc.