

NEW LEADERS OF THE LAW

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DEVELOPMENT OF THE LAW AWARD

One of the most important things a leader can do is further the field in which they practice. Our new leaders have handled cases that have pushed the boundaries of the law, that have helped define judicial interpretation, that have set the legal standards for others to follow.

JOSEPH WILLIAMS Shipman & Goodwin

Williams practices in the areas of environmental and land use litigation. In his eight years in practice, Joseph P. Williams has combined a successful legal career with significant *pro bono* and community service work. Many of his activities have a common theme: Assuring fair and affordable housing for the state's residents.

For example, he has fought for mixed-income housing in Orange, achieved a record settlement in a housing discrimination case involving families with children, and is helping to rebuild neighborhoods through two housing rehab programs, Habitat for Humanity and "Christmas in April."

In his work on behalf of affordable housing, Williams has won several definitive victories before the state Supreme Court. In those cases, he represented AvalonBay Communities in its quest to build mixed-income housing in the Town of Orange. In one recent decision



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that cleared the way for the development to move forward, a unanimous Supreme Court upheld the power of the trial courts to enforce prior orders (*AvalonBay Communities, Inc. v. Plan and*

Zoning Commission of the Town of Orange).

In an earlier, landmark decision, the state's highest court upheld AvalonBay's right to retain its property against eminent domain, finding that the Town of Orange had acted in bad faith (*AvalonBay Communities, Inc. v. Town of Orange*). The decision marked the first ruling on the issue from the Supreme Court in 50 years.

In a key housing discrimination case, *Adkins v. Birch Realty*, Williams represented the Connecticut Fair Housing Center in its suit against a Hartford realty company that refused to rent apartments to families with children. Williams reached a settlement in 1998 that was reported to be the largest in the state for a housing discrimination case involving families with children.

In another career highlight, this one on behalf of coaches of women's sports teams, Mr. Williams wrote an article for the *Journal of College and University Law* in which he used federal statutes to analyze—and debunk—common reasons why coaches of women's sports were paid less than coaches of men's sports. His article, "Lower Pay for Women's Coaches: Refuting Some Common Justifications," was cited in a federal EEOC Enforcement Guidance seeking to reduce such pay discrepancies (No. 95 002, Oct. 29, 1997). ■