



PHOTO BY CARMEN NATALE

ADAM SLATER

\$7M for Worksite Accident in Bergen
Wisniewski v. Hazekamp Construction:
A former construction worker left para-

lyzed from the waist down when a scaffold plank on which he was standing broke will receive \$7 million as compensation.

Plaintiff Adam Wisniewski, now 59, of Garfield, and Selective Ins. Co., the carrier for defendant Hazekamp Construction Co. of Riverdale, agreed to the settlement on June 8 after a settlement conference before Bergen County Superior Court Judge **Brian Martinotti**, said one of Wisniewski's attorneys, **Adam Slater**.

The case had been scheduled to go to trial June 8, said Slater, of Roseland's **Mazie Slater Katz & Freeman**, who handled the case along with **Matthew Mendelsohn** of the same firm.

The case had been mediated twice before retired Superior Court Judge **John Keefe Sr.**, of **Keefe Bartels** in Red Bank, said Slater.

Wisniewski was injured on Oct. 27, 2012, while working on a pool house at a site where a private home was being built, Slater said. A scaffolding plank on which Wisniewski was standing broke and he fell about eight feet to the ground. Wisniewski sustained a broken back and now is paralyzed from the waist down and is confined to a wheelchair.

The defense, according to Slater, claimed that either Wisniewski built the scaffold himself or used existing scaffolding without permission.

Slater said the scaffold was located where Wisniewski had to work and that David Hazekamp, the owner of Hazekamp Construction and the general contractor, should have been at the worksite while Wisniewski was there.

The award will be offset by a \$1 million workers' compensation lien, Slater said.

Selective retained **Donald Okner**, of **Dwyer Connell & Lisboa** in Fairfield, to represent Hazekamp. He declined to comment.

— *By Michael Booth*