



## What Counsel, Litigants, and the Media Say About Judge Howard S. Chasanow (Ret.)

### Media Quotes About Judge Chasanow

“One of Maryland’s best known retired judicial mediators is the Honorable Howard S. Chasanow, who won national acclaim for settling the high profile ‘bridge collapse’ case last summer before a lawsuit was filed. After 20 years as a trial attorney, then 20 years as a trial judge, Chasanow retired from the Court of Appeals of Maryland in 1999 and now juggles an impressive docket of settlement conferences. In his new career as a mediator, he tackles some of the most complicated civil cases filed in Anne Arundel, Howard and Prince George’s Circuit Courts.” Quoted from Eveleth, Janet Stidman, *Settling Disputes Without Litigation: Retired Judges Serve as Mediators*, XXXVIII no. 2, *Maryland Bar Journal*, 6, March/April 2001.

“You’re a lawyer with a tremendous legal headache – you’ve got clients who don’t want their case to drag on for years and run up tens of thousands of dollars in legal fees. Who do you call? Lawyers and judges in Maryland would give you the telephone number of a man they say is one of the state’s smartest peacemakers: retired Judge Howard S. Chasanow.”

Quoted from Jacobson, Joan, *Chasanow’s Mediation Cuts Through Litigation: Ex-judge’s new job is to keep lawsuits from reaching court*, *The Sun*, July 20, 2000, at 1B, col. 2.

“Judge Howard Chasanow admits to difficulty in stepping down from his soapbox on the topic of alternative dispute resolution. But, since he has freshly staked his claim to some jurisprudence history—he mediated a \$2.6 million settlement in the aftermath of a terrible trucking accident over which no lawsuits had been filed—he’s earned some bragging rights. Carl M. Helmstetter, chairman of mediation committee of the American Bar Association, alternative dispute resolution section, confirms the settlement’s place in history. He said he has never heard of a case of this magnitude, in this country where you have tragic injuries and death settled without a lawsuit. It is a great credit to the skill of the mediator, Helmstetter said of Chasanow’s work.” Quoted from [Law.com](http://www.law.com).

### Excerpts From Unsolicited Letters Received By Judge Chasanow From Counsel And Litigants In Cases He Mediated

#### Comments from Counsel:

“Thank you so much for using your incredible skills to mediate the case. You have single-handedly restored my client’s faith in the justice system. We all appreciate your hard work, and hope you will consider traveling to Michigan to facilitate a case if we should need it.” K.E.

“Your tenacity and sensitivity was greatly appreciated and I felt honored to be able to work with you. I have always heard such amazing stories of your competence, tenacity and intelligence—however, I now have a profound personal respect for you and just thought you should know how respected and admired you are.” V.B.N.

“You did a masterful job. I know of no one else who could have brought the parties together. Thank you.” J.D.L.

“To say that I have never before had the pleasure or opportunity of working with as skilled, thoroughly prepared, and personable a mediator (and a humble one at that) such as yourself, would be an understatement and unintentionally failure to do you justice.” D.W.

“I have not had the pleasure and privilege of previously being involved in a case mediated by you. The job you did was superb and I am utterly convinced that the parties would not have settled if not for your effort. It was a pleasure on my part to be a small part of this process.” M.D.G.

“There are no other mediators who bring your experience, intelligence, level of commitment and wit to mediation. The service you provide is invaluable. My client was very impressed by you. She said she could tell you cared and talked to her as a person.” M.M.

"Thanks for your assistance. It's hard to imagine how anyone could more completely master the dynamics of producing a settlement. A tour de force." J.F.

"I want to reiterate my thank you of yesterday evening for the wonderful job you did in bringing the parties to this case to a resolution of their claims. As you know, I was doubtful that you would be able to do so given the posture of the matter. No one could have worked harder or more skillfully than you did to overcome those obstacles. My clients were also most appreciative of the respect and consideration you showed them throughout the process. That meant almost as much to them as the settlement itself. Thank you again." K.M.M.

"I want to reiterate my appreciation and certainly, that of our clients, for your fine efforts in resolving this matter short of litigation. Everyone wins when mediation or the equivalent alternate dispute resolution efforts work. That is true for the lawyers as well, because we have too much to do and too little time to do it. Every successful resolution short of litigation is a welcome occurrence. Many thanks." M.J.J.

"Quite candidly, I do not believe that this case could have settled without your ability to bring an air of calm and reason to a potentially explosive situation." C.M.

"I want to personally thank you again for a job well done. Once again you were able to work your magic. I truly wish more Judges would take your approach to mediation vs. litigation." D.A.R.

"Thank you for your involvement in the settlement of the above-referenced cases. It was a pleasure seeing you again. This phase of your career certainly uses many of your talents that were not apparent on the bench. My clients and I appreciated your patience, persistence, and powers of persuasion." E.E.P.

"My clients and I were especially impressed by the professionalism, courtesy, and understanding that you displayed at mediation." J.G.H.

"Your ability to bring the parties together in this case is nothing short of magnificent and we are truly in your debt for being able to achieve a settlement without giving up on the parties." B.M.K.

"Thank you very much for your fine assistance in helping the parties resolve this case. I appreciate that this was a very difficult mediation and am convinced that only through your efforts was a satisfactory resolution reached." N.M.B.

"I personally wish to thank you for your outstanding efforts and patience in resolution of the above-captioned case. Absent your able assistance this case and the companion workers compensation cases would not have been resolved." G.L.H.

"I want to take another opportunity to thank you for your efforts in the case. There is no question that it would not have been settled without your guidance and patience." G.G.H.

"Just wanted to write and thank you again for your great work yesterday. Without your persistence and persuasiveness and exceptional efforts this case would not have settled. Thank you." D.M.C.

"I sincerely thank you for your help, your concern and your sensitivity. I am delighted to be working in the same profession that you chose." M.R.P.

"Thank you again for your expertise and efficiency, which led to a mutually satisfactory settlement reached in a most economical way." L.E.C.

"Thank you again for expert assistance in achieving a successful resolution of a case that seemed highly unlikely to settle." B.S.

"In what appeared to be one of the more difficult cases that I have faced as an attorney, you were able to forge out an amicable resolution in which all parties were satisfied." J.J.T.

"As always, it was indeed a pleasure to observe the "guru" of mediation work his magic to efficiently resolve a complex claim that would otherwise have consumed the parties, their resources, and the court system to an extreme degree." D.G.W.

"Once again, I have been awed by your masterful abilities. Our clients are very grateful to you for your expertise and assistance with their case." B.J.K.

"I wanted to thank you for your assistance in conducting the mediation in this case. I am absolutely convinced that without your professionalism, even handedness and objectivity, that we would not have been able to achieve a result of this nature, on behalf of a young man who truly should benefit from this settlement, after having suffered such horrific injuries." S.B.G

"The enclosed reflects the best money my client has ever spent. We are extremely grateful for the hard work you put into this case." S.J.Z.

"I believe that our clients were very well served by your preparation, compassion, practicality and energy." J.T.W.

"It goes without saying that it is a great privilege to work with you in these cases. You are truly extraordinary at what you do. I look forward to the opportunity to conduct another mediation with Your Honor in the near future." B.M.K.

"I wish to express my appreciation for your efforts. If you had not been involved, I believe that this case would probably have gone to trial with results that would have not been beneficial to any of the parties." C.W.A.

#### **Comments From Litigants:**

"You should take great pride in your ability to reach across chasms, find common ground, and help heal lives." P.B.

"I can't thank you enough for your courtesy and sensitivity in handling this painful situation for all of us so masterfully." H.D.

"My attorney said you were the best; now I am a believer. You are a true gentleman and I feel fortunate that we were able to have you lead us through such an intense and often heart wrenching process. All the best." R.N.

"Let me take this opportunity to once again thank you for your patience and fairness in helping resolve this matter. Not knowing who really is at fault, makes your job that much harder. However, your experience and integrity seems to get the job done." J.S.

"Many thanks for your time, patience, assistance, skills and talents with respect to our case. I cannot be more appreciative of your efforts. I believe those efforts, inclusive of doing what was "right" in the face of what initially appeared to be a horrendous legal mess, became the force driving the parties toward a better sense of reasonableness." A.F.J.

"I want to express to you my sincere gratitude for your diligence, your expertise and your very hard work in mediating this case. Personally, it is a great relief to me to have this matter concluded. More importantly, the process you so skillfully developed and used provide a ray of hope that the field of medical malpractice may eventually move toward fairer and saner methods of resolutions. I wish you the very best in continued success." Dr. A.

"Our lawyer had relayed his high opinion of you and yesterday we saw firsthand your incredible grasp of the case's details and how skillfully you brought both parties to resolution, while preserving our dignity. In one day, you have single-handedly elevated our opinion of the "justice system." Thank you for your dedication and professionalism." J.C.

"Your careful preparation allowed the day to unfold the way it did. Your handling of counsel was superb, and your strategy was well executed. We owe you a great debt for taking this matter and handling it so skillfully and from the heart." J.E.P.

"Thank you again for your tireless efforts in helping the parties reach a settlement. Your insight, advice and wisdom made everything come together. Thank you for making this difficult process as painless as possible. I look forward to seeing you again."

#### **A Judge's Observation:**

"I am quite pleased to learn that you have agreed to private mediation. I don't need to tell you that I think this is a case that should be compromised, and certainly Howard Chasanow is eminently qualified to bring the matter to a conclusion. Indeed, with his stature in Prince George's County, to say nothing of his stature in the legal profession, if he can't resolve the case no one can." Judge D.