

Troy Roe

Troy Roe began his training as a neutral at an early age.

"I'm a middle child," Roe, 52, says. "Part of being a middle kid, you start off as a mediator and a negotiator."

Back then, his clients were his rebellious older brother and sweet younger sister. Both needed help dealing with their parents and other authority figures, he says.

"I was always the negotiator," Roe says.

These days, those asking for his assistance are grown-up attorneys who benefit from his 23-year career as a trial lawyer. In 1987, he served as president of the Orange County Trial Lawyers Association.

For the first couple of years after graduating Pepperdine University School of Law in 1976, he did insurance defense work. From then on, he specialized in plaintiffs' personal injury.

That background doesn't seem to bother defense counsel.

"[Roe] possesses high morals, he possesses class and he evaluates [cases] as an attorney, not as an attorney wearing a plaintiffs' hat," defense attorney Bruce L. Schechter says.

Over the last three years, Schechter has brought 10 cases for Roe to help settle, everything from minor rear-enders to multimillion-dollar claims, he says.

"[Roe] is an excellent listener," Schechter says. "He doesn't sugarcoat. He doesn't browbeat."

Roe opened his neutral practice in 1999.

"I like solving the riddle," he says. "What will it take to settle the case? It's a challenge."

He's carved a niche for himself as a mediator in medical malpractice cases.

A few months ago, he settled for \$3.5



million a suit brought by a family against a hospital because its nursing staff allegedly failed to contact a physician early enough after a mother began experiencing labor difficulties. Her uterus ruptured, and the baby had brain damage.

In October, he resolved for \$3.75 million a claim against a city for not properly trimming a bush that allegedly obscured the view of a 14-year-old bicyclist who was hit by a car.

Roe is affiliated with Judicate West, working most of the time from its Santa Ana office. He handles two-to-three mediations a day, charging \$450 an hour, and spends 5 percent of his time in arbitration.

"For a mediator, the art of this job is finding tranquillity of compromise in the chaos of advocacy," he says. "We go looking for that tranquil place."

— Eron Ben-Yehuda