

## BUSINESS GROUPS

- Business & Civil Litigation
- Commercial Finance
- Corporate
- Employment
- Environmental
- Franchise & Distribution
- Health Care
- Intellectual Property
- Mergers & Acquisitions
- Real Estate
- Tax Planning

## CONSUMER GROUPS

- Family Law
- Personal Injury
- Trusts & Estate Planning

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**2018 Tax, Trust and Estate Planning Seminar.** Michael Hackman (Certified Specialist in Tax Law) and Kira S. Masteller will present their annual Tax, Trust & Estate Planning seminar on Tuesday, May 8th. Details will be forthcoming and available on our website.

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### MARCH 2018

#### *Recent Professional & Community Accomplishments*

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Congratulations to our **2018 Southern California Super Lawyers**, including: **Michael Hackman** (Tax); **Andrew L. Shapiro** and **David B. Bobrosky** (Personal Injury); **Paul C. Bauducco** (Business Litigation), **Sue M. Bendavid** (Employment & Labor); **Barry Kurtz**, **David Gurnick** and **Tal Grinblat** (Franchise/Dealership); **Stephen T. Holzer** (Environmental); **Kira S. Masteller** (Estate & Probate); and **Vanessa Soto Nellis** and **Lynn Soodik** (Family Law). To be selected, our attorneys were first nominated by other lawyers and then subjected to a 12-point peer review process.

**Veronica R. Woods** obtained a favorable property award which included a \$2 million dollar real property holding, and resolved all remaining issues for her client through a Voluntary Settlement Conference. The lengthy divorce matter involved property division of a \$19 million estate, custody and support of a minor child as well as that of an older child still in college, and a deliberate decrease in income.

**David Gurnick** (Certified Specialist in Franchise & Distribution Law) and **Matthew J. Soroky** defeated an adversary's request to bring a dispositive motion over the legal significance of a dealer agreement. In the same case, David and Matt won a motion to compel production of documents and a second deposition after the opposing party was evasive in a first deposition.

**Tal Burnovski Yeyni** represented a client in a Labor Commissioner audit. The client did not have compliant paystubs which could have resulted in tens of thousands in penalties. At the hearing, Tal succeeded in negotiating with a deputy labor commissioner to reduce the cited amount by approximately one fourth of the initial amount owed.

**Nicole Kamm** prevailed at a Department of Labor Standards Enforcement hearing before an Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) in which our client's long-term employee alleged the employer violated state rest break regulations. The ALJ ruled in favor of our client, awarding the former employee \$0 in penalties and fees as a result of Nicole's successful defense.

**Barry Kurtz** (Certified Specialist in Franchise & Distribution Law) worked with outside counsel in conducting the necessary due diligence, review and preparation of franchise-related documents for our client's purchase of a large, regional franchisee that successfully closed. In a separate matter, Barry assisted other counsel on franchise issues involved with our client's sale of an equity interest in the client's franchise business.

**Vanessa Soto Nellis** (Certified Specialist in Family Law) obtained an increased spousal support order for a client when the other side not only wanted a reduction, but a termination of spousal support altogether. Vanessa also recovered attorneys' fees from the opposing party for her efforts.

**Tal Grinblat** (Certified Specialist in Franchise & Distribution Law) was retained by a Russian firm to assist their client in negotiating an area development agreement with a prominent US franchise system. The agreement will permit the client to open franchises across Russia.

**Paul C. Bauducco** and **John B. Marshall** negotiated a favorable settlement of a construction defect lawsuit involving the complex remodeling of an expensive home in San Diego, aided by a series of successful motions they brought against the contractor, reducing his damage claims in the case by nearly \$600,000.



**Nicholas Kanter** and **Hannah Sweiss** obtained early dismissal of seven causes of action alleged against an international

manufacturer client facing discrimination, harassment and retaliation claims. Nick and Hannah demurred to the operative complaint, demonstrating the causes of action were not legally sufficient. The court agreed and sustained the demurrer as to seven of the alleged 16 causes of action without leave to amend.

**Veronica R. Woods** successfully negotiated a complete settlement of a dissolution matter in a private court setting involving three small children, real property, a spousal support buy-out, and division of property. Our client received a greater portion of the marital estate.

**Barry Kurtz** provided his expertise to outside counsel regarding franchise challenges and issues arising with a member's buyout of another member's equity interest in a food service franchisor. In another matter, Barry and **Katherine L. Wallman** are preparing franchise disclosure documents for a restaurant/bakery franchisor and a residential and commercial moving company.

**Nicole Kamm** resolved claims for unpaid wages, liquidated damages, and waiting time penalties brought before the Labor Commissioner. In exchange for a nominal settlement, Nicole obtained a full release of all claims.

**Kira S. Masteller** and **Amy I. Huberman** represented a client accused by a sibling of stealing from their parents' estate. The accusation stemmed from a long-standing sibling dispute. Our client took care of the parents for many years, often using his own financial resources to pay their expenses. Kira and Amy resolved the pending Court Petition with a settlement that included a chance for each side to be heard and a very minor monetary payment. The solution keeps the parents' estate from being drained by Court costs and legal fees, and allows for the estate to be distributed as the parents intended.

**Paul C. Bauducco** and **Kira S. Masteller** recently settled a case in Mediation wherein a Trustee who failed to provide the beneficiaries of the Trust with the required annual accounting for several years sought excessive Trustee fees when he finally did so years later. Paul and Kira mediated the matter on behalf of the beneficiaries resulting in lower trustee fees and a plan of action for providing and approving Trust accountings going forward.

**Tal Grinblat** represented a client with several restaurant locations in resolving a trademark dispute with another party. The negotiations lasted nearly six months but allowed the parties to finally resolve their differences. In another matter, Tal worked with a client in France in responding to formal comments received from the US Trademark Office. The client filed their US application via the Madrid Protocol, but needed the assistance of US counsel in responding to the comments. Tal's last minute intervention permitted the US application to proceed to publication.

**Veronica R. Woods** attended the 20th Annual Installation Dinner of the Officers & Board of Governors of the Asian Pacific American Bar Association held in Los Angeles. This prestigious event honored many notable dignitaries including California Appellate Court Justice Honorable Elwood Lui; Douglas S. Chin, Attorney General of Hawaii who received a Public Service Award; and the keynote speaker, Associate Justice Leondra R. Kruger of the California Supreme Court.

**Stephen T. Holzer** participated in a town hall-styled debate to showcase viewpoints of candidates running in a special election for the West San Fernando Valley's 45th Assembly Seat. The event was held at the West Valley-Warner Center Chamber of Commerce. Steve was a co-panelist for the event, one of two attorneys posing pointed questions to the Seat's candidates regarding key San Fernando Valley and State issues.

**John B. Marshall** was invited to speak and moderate a panel presentation regarding health care real estate, by the Los Angeles Chapter of the Urban Land Institute. The panel included a healthcare real estate broker, an architect and the Director of Real Estate for a nationally recognized hospital here in Southern California. As Chair of our Health Care, and Co-chair of Real Estate Practice Groups, John is uniquely positioned as a legal authority in this overlapping area of specialties.

## PUBLICATIONS & MEDIA MENTIONS

### **The Los Angeles Times**

*Visits by ICE Spooking California Businesses, Workers*  
**Sue M. Bendavid**, quoted

### **KPCC: Air Talk with Larry Mantle**

*California Legislature: The Latest on the Mendoza Investigation and More*  
**Sue M. Bendavid**, participant

### **Valley Lawyer**

(San Fernando Valley Bar Association)  
*Product Liability Litigation Tests Jurors' Perspectives*  
**Andrew L. Shapiro**, author

### **San Francisco Chronicle**

*State Senator Bob Hertzberg's Accuser Says He Should Go*  
**Sue M. Bendavid**, quoted

### **San Fernando Valley Business Journal**

*California Employment Law Roundtable: What Owners, Executives Need to Know*  
**Sue M. Bendavid**, participant

### **Valley Lawyer**

(San Fernando Valley Bar Association)  
*Book Review: Legal Ethics and Social Media: A Practitioners Handbook*  
**David Gurnick**, reviewer

### **Valley Lawyer**

(San Fernando Valley Bar Association)  
*Mentoring New Lawyers Roundtable*  
**Hannah Sweiss**, participant

### **San Fernando Valley Business Journal**

*Franchise Companies Find Retail Room to Grow*  
**Barry Kurtz**, quoted

### **Valley Lawyer**

(San Fernando Valley Bar Association)  
*Unconscionability in California: Contract Power Tool for the Powerless, Powerful*  
**David Gurnick**, author

### **Business Law Section e-Bulletin**

(State Bar of California)  
*U.S. House of Representatives Passes Save Local Business Act*  
**Matthew J. Soroky**, author

### **Valley Lawyer**

(San Fernando Valley Bar Association)  
*Stress Free Holidays: A Primer for Attorneys and Their Clients*  
**Vanessa Soto Nellis**, author

### **Corporate Counsel**

*Should Uber's Salle Yoo Have Taken Earlier Look at Due Diligence Report?*  
**David Gurnick**, quoted