

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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Family Law & Your Business: Vanessa Soto Nellis and Melissa Mayer (both Certified Family Law Specialists) will present a 90 minute seminar on Thursday, September 7th. Attorneys and accountants may earn continuing education credits, and a light breakfast will be provided. More information will be forthcoming.

JULY 2017

Recent Professional & Community Accomplishments

Congratulations to **Vanessa Soto Nellis**, (Family Law) and **Nicole Kamm** (Labor & Employment) selected for Southern California's **Up-and-Coming 50 Women**, as well as the region's **Up-and-Coming 100** by *Super Lawyers Magazine*. The awards list appeared in the publication's annual *Rising Stars* edition. Also selected this year as **Southern California Rising Stars: Nicholas Kanter** (Business Litigation), **Hannah Sweiss** (Labor & Employment), and **Samuel C. Wolf** (Franchise & Distribution). To be designated a *Rising Star*, Vanessa, Nicole, Nicholas, Hannah and Sam underwent a patented selection process based on peer evaluations and professional achievements.

Barry Kurtz (Certified Franchise & Distribution Specialist) is working with a restaurant client in the assignment of its lease and sale of equipment, to a national restaurant chain. In a separate matter, Barry is developing franchise disclosure documents for a Mexican seafood restaurant client.

Nicholas Kanter and **Amy I. Huberman** resolved a lawsuit for discrimination, retaliation, wrongful termination and fraudulent inducement of employment. Plaintiff demanded a sum just short of six figures. Nick and Amy obtained a full release of all claims in return for a settlement of a couple hundred dollars.

Samuel C. Wolf and **David Gurnick** resolved a breach of contract matter for a client who was victimized by a Ponzi scheme. As the start of trial approached, the defendant agreed to a settlement promising to repay money the firm's client had invested many years earlier.

Thomas Cecil represents one of several people hurt in a high profile shooting incident at Los Angeles International Airport. The City of Los Angeles and LAX filed a demurrer, claiming the suits should be dismissed because of various government immunities and other protections. Tom defeated the motion to dismiss by successfully arguing that there was a mandatory duty to provide proper security, despite such immunities. The City and LAX then asked the Court of Appeal to get involved. Tom defeated the City and LAX at the Appellate level as well. The case is now moving forward with Tom seeking justice for our client.

Sue M. Bendavid and **Amy I. Huberman** represented a client accused by former employees of meal and rest break violations, and unfair business practices. Sue and Amy obtained a full waiver of all known and unknown claims for four percent of the employees' initial demand.

Tal Grinblat prepared a trademark acknowledgement agreement for a local jewelry and watch company to facilitate negotiations with a large retailer that owns and operates stores around the country. The client requested the national retailer acknowledge its intellectual property rights before continuing discussions on having the retailer pick up the client's products for sale at its stores.

Paul C. Bauducco and **John B. Marshall** defeated a motion to continue trial and reopen discovery, thus saving our client significant fees in preparing for trial.



Tal Grinblat (Certified Specialist in Franchise & Distribution Law) finalized an agreement on behalf of a master franchisee client operating in Paraguay, to acquire the interests of a minority stake holder and to obtain the franchisor's consent for the transfer.

Vanessa Soto Nellis represented our client in a contentious battle in which the opposing party argued for 50/50 custody. Vanessa successfully convinced the Court to honor our client's preferred custody schedule, thus denying the opposing party's argument. In addition, Vanessa won an award for significant attorneys' fees awarded to our client.

Barry Kurtz and **Matthew J. Soroky** have completed franchise registration for a hamburger chain. In unrelated matters, Barry and **Gabriel A. Wintner** have completed registrations for a grilled cheese restaurant concept, as well as for an automotive repair concept.

Hannah Sweiss represented an event production client whose former employee brought wage and hour claims to the state labor commissioner. On the day of the hearing, Hannah settled the claim for less than 10 percent of the demand.

Paul C. Bauducco represented clients denied reimbursement for a cancelled vacation. Paul succeeded in obtaining all monies due our client. In a separate matter, Paul favorably resolved a franchise dispute for our client, thus saving him significant litigation costs.

Tal Grinblat worked with a game software company to successfully invalidate three South Korean trademark registrations owned by a large public company, which were blocking our client's applications. After researching the public company's usage of their marks in South Korea, it was discovered that the company was not using the marks. Invalidation of the registrations paved the way for our client's marks to proceed.

Hannah Sweiss resolved four Labor Commissioner wage and hour claims brought against our trucking industry client. Potential damages for our client were in the six figures. Hannah obtained a full release of claims and settled all four claims in the low five figures (less than 20 percent of the amounts demanded).

Andrew L. Shapiro obtained a mid-six figure award for a client who stepped on a water utility cover in the common parkway of her residential Home Owners Association (HOA). When her foot went through the case's cover, our client fell and landed in a forward sprawl. She suffered a fractured toe and aggravated previous injuries to both shoulders. No settlement negotiations were initiated as the matter was set for mediation. After mediation briefs and exhibits were exchanged, the defendant HOA agreed to pay our client's initial and only settlement demand on the day prior to the hearing.

Paul C. Bauducco and **John B. Marshall** prevailed on several significant discovery motions for our client who is preparing to go to trial.

Nicole Kamm provided sex harassment, discrimination and bullying prevention training for a client's supervisors. The two-hour, interactive training is mandated by California law for employers with 50 or more employees, and must be provided every two years.

David Gurnick gave a presentation to members of the Santa Clarita Valley Bar Association regarding legal and ethical ways to reduce and respond effectively to on-line negativity.

Melissa L. Mayer serves on the Executive Committee of the American Inns of Court Southern California Family Law Chapter, which recently organized and held its annual *Judges' Night*. This year, the Southern California Chapter honored Judge Hank M. Goldberg. The award was presented by Judge Thomas Trent Lewis, Supervising Family Law Judge of the Los Angeles Superior Court. The Family Law Inns of Court meets regularly to discuss litigation trends and legislative events impacting the Family Law bench and bar.

We are pleased to announce the arrival of our newest Lewitt Hackman family member: **Gabriel A. Wintner's** wife **Ellen** gave birth to a baby daughter on July 10th. The Wintner family, including older siblings, Jesse, Nathan, and Daphne are all doing well.

PUBLICATIONS & MEDIA MENTIONS

Los Angeles Daily Journal

New Accounting Rule May Lower Perceived Value of Franchisors
Barry Kurtz, author

Valley Lawyer

(San Fernando Valley Bar Association)
Confusing Trademarks: The Next Course of Action
Tal Grinblat, author

SFV Business Journal

Business Roundtable: How You Can Avoid Traps in New Labor and Employment Laws
Sue M. Bendavid, participant

Business Law Section e-Bulletin

(State Bar of California)
Recent Waive of Repleves re Joint Employer Liability
Matthew J. Soroky, author

KHTS Radio AM 1200

Santa Clarita Valley Business Chamber Spotlight with Fred Arnold
Sue M. Bendavid, guest

Franchise Law Journal

(American Bar Association)
Teaching Franchise Law in Law Schools
David Gurnick, co-author

Valley Lawyer

(San Fernando Valley Bar Association)
The Evolution of the Private Attorneys General Act 2004
Hannah Sweiss, author

San Fernando Valley Business Journal

Curious Practices
Kira S. Masteller quoted

Courthouse News Network

Labor Secretary Nominee's Company Hit With Antitrust Class Action
David Gurnick quoted

Super Lawyers

2017 SoCal Super Lawyers
Paul C. Bauducco (Business Litigation)
Sue M. Bendavid (Employment)
David B. Bobrosky (Personal Injury)
Tal Grinblat (Franchise & Dealership)
David Gurnick (Franchise & Dealership)
Michael Hackman (Tax)
Stephen T. Holzer (Environmental)
Barry Kurtz (Franchise & Dealership)
Kira S. Masteller (Estate & Probate)
Andrew L. Shapiro (Personal Injury)
Lynn Soodik (Family Law)

The Los Angeles Times

Buy a Home Now, Move in After the Seller Dies
Kira S. Masteller quoted