

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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Recent Professional & Community Accomplishments

Sue M. Bendavid resolved hotly contested wage & hour and retaliation claims by several former employees of our client. The employees argued they worked round the clock and were fired after filing their claims. The Plaintiffs were claiming in excess of \$1 Million in damages and fees. After much debate about the disputed law and facts the employees dismissed their claims for a sum far less than the client's anticipated defense costs.

Barry Kurtz and **Bryan H. Clements** are working with companies in unique industries to register their businesses as franchises, including an e-cigarette retailer and a pothole repair and maintenance business. Barry also prepared a Master License Agreement for the owners of a well-known Middle-Eastern restaurant – the agreement will enable the company to expand significantly throughout California.

Michael Hackman and **David Gurnick** represented a client who accepted a position with a prominent consulting firm, in matters regarding several noncompetition agreements the client had entered into in the past. Mike and David aided the client in obtaining releases and in taking other steps to avoid potential claims under the noncompetition restrictions.

Keith T. Zimmet counseled a company through a recapitalization involving both debt and equity. The recapitalization allows the company to continue to operate multiple locations of a nationally-known, casual dining franchise, and provides additional capital for further expansion.

Kira S. Masteller worked with clients to update their estate plan to include Protective Trusts for children so that each child's inheritance will be protected from their creditor's, from spouses in the event of a divorce, and from estate taxes in the child's estate – avoiding double taxation.

Nicole Kamm convinced two Plaintiffs who alleged wage & hour violations, discrimination, harassment, and wrongful termination, to dismiss their claims. During the litigation, Nicole prevailed on two separate demurrers, convincing the court Plaintiffs' initial and amended complaints were deficient and knocking out various alleged claims. She also obtained several admissions helpful to our client, through thorough discovery and deposition testimony. After months of contentious litigation and a lengthy mediation process, the other side opted to dismiss their claims for a fraction of the initial demand.



Elizabeth A. Erickson obtained family law restraining orders to protect a client and her child. The child's father

physically and viciously attacked our client in front of the child, and was subsequently incarcerated. A criminal protective order was issued to safeguard our client but the order did not include safeguards for the child. Elizabeth obtained family law restraining orders which included the child as a protected person, and also obtained full custody of the child for our client. The father will have very limited, and professionally supervised visitation with the child, upon his release from incarceration.

David Gurnick obtained a judgment for a client against a marketing company that failed to provide promised services. David negotiated a settlement which included a stipulated judgment for the full amount of the service provider's debt to the client, avoiding the cost of lengthy litigation. In a separate matter, David negotiated an agreement for the web design services for an international version of our client's website.

Nicole Kamm settled an overtime claim made against a client by a former worker before the Labor Commissioner. As part of the settlement, Nicole negotiated a general release of all potential claims on behalf of the client. In a separate matter also before the Labor Commissioner, Nicole resolved a claim by a former domestic worker against an individual client for alleged unpaid vacation time, for less than \$1,000.

Tal Grinblat convinced the Trademark Office to grant an immediate review of our client's application. Normally a four month wait period, Tal petitioned to expedite the application review period because the client found someone infringing their mark. The Trademark Office granted Tal's petition thereby permitting the trademark application to be reviewed immediately.

Vanessa Soto Nellis prepared a prenuptial agreement to help the parties establish a financial plan and outline fiscal expectations and responsibilities before their impending nuptials.

Barry Kurtz, Tal Grinblat and **David Gurnick** attended the 30th Annual International Franchise Association Legal Symposium in Chicago, in which experienced franchise attorneys shared information regarding the latest developments in domestic and international franchise law. David was one of the presenters, discussing aspects of the cooperative business model, and Tal served as a roundtable facilitator on manufacturing issues facing franchise companies.

Sue M. Bendavid, Nicole Kamm and **Hannah Sweiss** presented an employment law seminar for individuals who hire personal caregivers, nannies, and other domestics; as well as for residential care facilities who employ round-the-clock staff. There is concern the new Domestic Worker Bill of Rights will give rise to more wage and hour claims by these workers, putting more and more employers at risk for claims. Sue was also the guest speaker at the East Ventura County Employer Advisory Council and discussed the top wage and hour mistakes made by employers.

Kira S. Masteller gave two presentations regarding estate planning for family business owners – at the San Fernando Valley Estate Planning Council, and for clients and friends here at our Firm. Kira also presented 2014 Estate & Gift Tax Updates for the San Fernando Valley Bar Association's Tax Section.

David B. Bobrosky co-founded a new chapter of the California State University Northridge Alumni Association. The CSUN Attorney Networking Group will provide networking opportunities and a forum for exchanging ideas and earning continuing education credits, and will meet at our Firm each month. **Hannah Sweiss** attended the inaugural mixer.

Michael Hackman, Tal Grinblat, Sue M. Bendavid, Kira S. Masteller, and Keith T. Zimmet recently attended Valley Presbyterian Hospital's 1st Annual Celebration of Excellence dinner. Lewitt Hackman was a sponsor of the event which raised funds for the hospital. Many dignitaries, including elected representatives and leaders in the business and professional communities, attended the event held at the Skirball Cultural Center.

PUBLICATIONS & MEDIA MENTIONS

Los Angeles Business Journal

Employment & Labor Law Roundtable

contributor: Sue M. Bendavid

American Bar Association's Franchise Law Journal

OPIP: When Is It Lawful to Use Other People's Intellectual Property in Franchising?

by David Gurnick & Tal Grinblat

The Bar Bulletin - Fresno County Bar Association

Is Franchising the Right Model for Your Client's Business?

by Barry Kurtz & Bryan H. Clements

Valley Lawyer - San Fernando Valley Bar Association

California's New Uniform Limited Liability Company Act

by Hannah Sweiss

American Bar Association Text

Collateral Issues in Franchising - Beyond Registration & Disclosure

contributor: David Gurnick

American Bar Association's Franchise Law Journal

Beer Distribution Law as Compared to Traditional Franchise Law

by Barry Kurtz & Bryan H. Clements

SFV Business Journal

Digital Tools Level Playing Field

quoted: Keith T. Zimmet

Los Angeles Lawyer

Cooperatives: California Law Allows for Flexible Application of the Operative Principles

by David Gurnick

U.S. News & World Report

Los Angeles Best Law Firms 2014

Lewitt Hackman selected

Gilliot Communications

A Lawyer's Guide to Crisis PR: Protecting Your Clients In & From the Media

Contributor: John B. Marshall