

Daily Journal

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TOP BOUTIQUES IN CALIFORNIA 2021



Front Row, Left to Right: Sarah Kelly-Kilgore, Evan C. Borges and Deborah S. Mallgrave
 Back Row, Left to Right: Brian L. Williams, Wayne R. Gross, Alan A. Greenberg and Michael H. Strub Jr.

**GREENBERG
GROSS
LLP**

LOS ANGELES

COSTA MESA

BUSINESS

LITIGATION

NICOLE TYAU/DAILY JOURNAL

Founders Alan A. Greenberg and Wayne R. Gross were shareholders at Greenberg Traurig LLP in 2011 when they co-tried a high-profile case and won a \$50 million verdict on a counterclaim for a real estate developer. The experience inspired them to form their own shop, which they opened in 2013.

Today Greenberg Gross has 20 attorneys, two offices and a roster of clients that includes American International Group Inc., Waste Management Inc., Lowe's Home Centers, Buchalter APC, Cox Castle Nicholson LLP, UC Hastings College of the Law, the City of Huntington Beach and the trustee of the PG&E Fire Victim Trust.

Greenberg Gross also represents plaintiffs in suits against Uber Technologies Inc., the Ogletree Deakins firm, Mercedes Benz auto sales magnate Fletcher Jones Jr., the Montebello School District, the global religious institution La Luz Del Mundo and the Gucci fashion empire.

"The firm is routinely called upon to represent clients in need of out-

standing representation in cases grappling with some of the most important issues facing society," Gross said. "It is our honor to do so and we take that privilege quite seriously."

Gross said the firm's sexual abuse and human trafficking litigation practice, headed by firm partner Deborah S. Mallgrave, a past president of Orange County's Public Law Center, is proceeding with claims of sexual assault, trafficking, forced labor, harassment and financial exploitation against an exploitative sect. *Martin v. La Luz Del Mundo*, 2:20-cv-01437 (C.D. Cal., filed Feb. 12, 2020).

In another case designed to better society, Gross added, the firm represents the trustee of the PG&E Fire Victim Trust, John K. Trotter, a former state appellate justice, in pursuing assigned claims against former PG&E vegetation management contractors and management consulting companies over their responsibility for contributing to the 2017 North Bay Fires and the 2018 Camp Fire. California North Bay Fire Cases, JCCP

4955 (S.F. Super. Ct., filed Jan. 4, 2018).

"We are looking at others who are jointly responsible for these fires," Greenberg said. Added Gross, "By holding the enablers responsible, we send an important message to all those in the future called on by utilities to assist in the mission to keep California safe—rather than charging a lot of money and then enhancing the risk by failing to clear vegetation from power lines, for example."

In a business case, Greenberg and firm partner Sarah Kelly-Kilgore represented a major dairy cooperative in a multimillion-dollar breach of contract case against two competitors and won \$1.9 million for their client after a four-day arbitration. *Darigold Inc. v. Danone North American Public Benefit Corp.*, 01-19-0004-4827 (AAA, final award issued July 12, 2021).

Greenberg Gross partner Evan C. Borges represents reality star Erika Girardi, also known as Erika Jayne, the estranged wife of disgraced lawyer Thomas V. Girardi, as she raised concerns about the bankruptcy trustee

overseeing the Girardi estate. That case took a turn in late September with the announcement of a \$1.8 billion settlement in the Porter Ranch gas leak case. Borges noted that an attorney for the trustee stated that the defunct Girardi & Keese firm, which represented thousands of clients in the Porter Ranch cases, may receive as much as \$40 million from the settlement.

"Ms. Girardi supports the trustee maximizing value from the Porter Ranch cases, among other cases of Girardi Keese, and we are glad to see that the trustee is projecting that the funds received will result in commencing payments to former GK clients with legitimate claims," Borges said.

Said Greenberg, "It has been extremely gratifying to see our very talented lawyers make such a difference in cutting-edge litigation that impacts so many in such a positive way. Our commitment to these important cases brings out the best in our team."

—John Roemer