

# We Keep Going and Growing

April 22, 2019

October 2017 marked the reboot of Lathrop Gage's Los Angeles office, and barely over a year later, we have made many great strides! We wanted to make sure that you were up-to-date on all the exciting developments. It's just the start of 2019 and we now boast more than a dozen Lathrop Gage L.A. attorneys, serving clients in areas ranging from Insurance Recovery and Counseling to Intellectual Property Litigation and Toxic and Mass Tort law. So how did we do it? Here's a recap.

## **First things first: A great foundation**

The strategic build-up of the firm's Los Angeles office that began in October 2017 started with the onboarding of Nancy Sher Cohen, who became our Partner in Charge of the Los Angeles office and our Insurance Recovery and Counseling practice team leader. Joining the new office - and the same practice group - alongside her was Partner Ronald Valenzuela from Proskauer Rose LLP. In March 2018, Lathrop Gage added Partner Alexandra Roje from Latham & Watkins, and in June 2018, Joshua Pollack and Caroline Sayers joined the office as well.

Partner in Charge Nancy Sher Cohen has been lead counsel in the prosecution of many insurance coverage lawsuits related to life insurance claims and environmental and product liabilities, resulting in recoveries in excess of \$1.5 billion. Some of her notable cases include serving as lead counsel for the lender on the World Trade Center in prosecuting claims for insurance coverage for the towers, prosecution of claims by Holocaust survivors against insurance carriers that failed to pay life insurance benefits and serving as lead counsel in complex environmental litigation including cost recovery litigation in connection with a Southern California Superfund site. Cohen also advised on insurance issues related to Los Angeles' successful bid for the 2028 Summer Olympics.

Partner Ronald Valenzuela represents policyholders in disputes with insurers involving a wide range of coverages and has extensive experience in other complex litigation matters including products liability, mass tort, environmental and consumer cases. He advised a large real estate developer on the availability of coverage for Chinese drywall claims under third-party general liability and first-party property insurance policies. In addition, he has significant experience in counseling biotechnology companies in products liability and insurance matters arising from clinical trials of investigational new drugs.

Partner Alexandra Roje is highly skilled in complex commercial litigation and insurance matters, representing policyholder clients in a wide range of insurance coverage disputes involving directors' and officers' liability, product and environmental liability, employment practice liability, first-party property coverage, crime/fidelity coverage, and insurance coverage matters in bankruptcy proceedings. Alex's extensive trial experience extends to healthcare litigation and general commercial litigation matters and her achievements include a multi-year trial and appellate proceedings before the International Criminal Tribunal for Former Yugoslavia in the Hague and a bench verdict on behalf of a national healthcare system and hospital against a health maintenance organization.

Of Counsel Joshua Pollack focuses his practice on insurance recovery and counseling on behalf of policyholders as well as complex business litigation matters. He has extensive experience litigating in federal and state courts across the country and represents policyholders seeking coverage under a wide variety of policy types, including directors and officers, errors and omissions, employment practices liability, property, environmental, life, business interruption, and commercial general liability. Josh's litigation experience includes second chairing a three-week federal jury trial and an eight-day AAA arbitration. He has successfully represented clients in a broad range of matters, including claims for breach of contract, fraud, strict liability, breach of warranty, unfair competition, and trademark and copyright infringement.

Of Counsel Caroline Sayers focuses her practice on complex business litigation, general counseling, and corporate and real estate transactions. She has served as lead trial counsel in numerous matters and has litigated a wide range of national and international matters involving commercial contract disputes, unfair competition, commercial fraud, trademark, auditor liability, application of the Foreign Sovereign Immunities Act, and issues under the Hague Conventions for service of process and discovery abroad. Also a transactional lawyer, her practice includes counseling and advising clients in connection with a wide variety of corporate and real estate transactions so as to avoid litigation and minimize exposure to risk.

### **Then we added some great intellectual property talent**

In September and October 2018, we added four Intellectual Property Litigation attorneys, all from Glaser Weil. Their arrival added diversity of practice to our Los Angeles office and broadened our IP footprint from coast-to-coast.

Partner Andrew Choung is an accomplished IP attorney focused primarily on high-tech, complex patent litigation and strategic counseling, including the development of licensing and monetization programs. He represents a wide range of clients, with a particular focus on Korean universities, research institutions and companies. Just before joining Lathrop Gage, Andrew won a \$400 million jury verdict for client KAIST IP US regarding a patent related to semiconductor technology. (Desmond Jui and Guy Rodgers also part of the

KAIST IP US trial team.)

Partner Erica Van Loon is an experienced trial attorney who focuses her practice on high-stakes copyright, trademark, trade secret and patent litigation matters at trial and on appeal. Since joining Lathrop Gage, she has won two copyright litigation matters. She won a bench trial for client Reuben Klamer, in which the Court found Mr. Klamer was the author of the iconic board game, The Game of Life and dismissed plaintiffs' claim for copyright termination, finding her late-husband's work on the prototype was a work-for-hire for Mr. Klamer. She also won a motion to dismiss, dismissing all defendants in a copyright infringement matter on the novel ground of *forum non conveniens*, due to the fact that the plaintiff had entered into a prior agreement with defendants' affiliate containing a forum selection clause.

Of Counsel Desmond Jui is a litigator with an impressive resume of trial experience. He primarily handles patent infringement and invalidity matters on behalf of plaintiffs and defendants before U.S. district courts, the Federal Circuit and the Patent Trial and Appeal Board in the areas of electronics, hardware, software, semiconductors and other related technologies.

Associate Guy Rodgers is a registered patent attorney who focuses his practice on patent litigation matters as well as advising clients in the area of trademarks and copyrights. Guy has a background in the IT industry and previously helped inventors and businesses prosecute their patent applications.

### **We kept adding IP professionals**

In January and March this year, we welcomed Patent Agent Sunyoung Kim and IP Litigation Associate Amy Burke.

Sunyoung is a registered patent agent. Her practice includes patent and technical analyses, prosecution, litigation, and counseling. Prior to joining the firm, she served as an inhouse patent engineer at one of the world's largest display companies.

Amy represents clients in trademark and copyright infringement matters, IP regulatory compliance, and has focused her practice on serving clients in the personal care products industry. She also serves clients in areas including contract disputes, false advertising, unfair competition, employment, violations of the California Health & Safety Code, and complex construction disputes.

## **We welcomed an impressive Tort team from Hawkins Parnell Thackston & Young.**

On January 17, Lathrop Gage announced an exciting expansion into Texas and the addition of seven attorneys from Hawkins Parnell Thackston & Young LLP - four who christened the firm's new Dallas office and three who joined in Los Angeles. Our new Dallas office is led by former name partner Robert Thackston, and he is joined there by associates Samuel Garcia, Ryan C. Hale and Lanita Morgan. The Los Angeles additions included Partner Julia A. Gowin, Partner Paula D. Pendley and Associate Nilofar Karbassi. The additions broaden our already-deep tort capabilities and expanded the range of services offered in our Los Angeles office.

Partner Julia Gowin brings more than a decade of experience in the areas of asbestos and silica defense and currently acts as national coordinating counsel in a cosmetic talc litigation matter. She has also managed the litigation for multiple mass tort clients with cases pending in state and federal courts across the country and is especially skilled at managing complex national dockets involving coordinated written discovery, experts, motion practice and trial strategy. Gowin represents a wide range of clients in product and premises liability matters and specializes in the defense of negligence and strict liability actions involving latent diseases from exposure to various products, raw materials and other toxins.

Partner Paula Pendley focuses her practice primarily on litigating products liability, premises liability, toxic tort and environmental cases. She has defended clients in federal and state trials throughout California and worked up cases for trials venued in Arizona, Illinois, and North Carolina. She has extensive experience representing clients involved in automobile product liability, toxic tort, RICO, premises liability for hospitality and restaurant companies (internationally and domestically), and high-profile nuisance litigation that garnered media attention. Paula is skilled in preparing cases for trial including, but not limited to, taking lead on plaintiff and percipient witness depositions, preparing experts for deposition and trial, and preparing and arguing complex trial and pre-trial motions. She has served as an active second chair on a number of trials having prepared and argued motions in limine, participated in voir dire, and conducted both direct and cross examinations of experts. Besides her litigation experience, in her varied practice she has worked on commercial disputes involving intellectual property (with a particular focus on licensing matters) and advises entertainment companies and producers on matters including copyright and breach of contract issues, negotiating clearances, talent agreements, option agreements, shopping agreements and other production-related matters.

Associate Nilofar Karbassi has a wide range of experience in complex product liability and toxic tort litigation in relation to catastrophic injury and wrongful death cases. She has a history of representing clients ranging

from *Fortune* 500 companies to small businesses and individuals in complex litigation. Nilo has represented companies involved in the manufacturing, selling and distribution of various products including, personal care and cosmetics, pharmaceutical products, automotive parts, surgical hardware, adhesives, building and construction materials and raw materials. Along with handling a variety of business tort claims and employment law issues, Nilo's background includes investment banking and real estate secured transactions, most notably involving secured and unsecured debt financing.

### **And we're not the only ones talking**

The dynamic growth of our L.A. office - and the high caliber attorneys that have joined us there - has garnered some attention in the Golden State and around the country:

- No stranger to the headlines, Nancy Sher Cohen showed up again as the featured "Attorney of the Month" in *Attorney at Law* magazine's April 2018 issue.
- A feature article from *The Recorder*, "Changing of the Guard at Glaser Weil's IP Group," provides more detail on the additions of Andrew Choung and Erica Van Loon.
- *Texas Lawyer* reported on the opening of our Dallas office and the addition of the Hawkins Parnell group in "Midwest Firm Lathrop Gage Launches Dallas Office, Hiring Seven Litigators."
- Last month, *Law.com*'s article, "Game of Life Copyright Dispute Meets 'Day of Reckoning,'" reported on Erica Van Loon's big win regarding a 50-year-old dispute over the Game of Life
- And most recently, Nancy Sher Cohen showed up in print once again, profiled in *Southern California Super Lawyers 2019* magazine. "A Midwestern Soul" shares Nancy's story, from Kansas City tomboy to Holocaust and 9/11 insurance recovery superstar. **Stay tuned**

We are proud to report on the success of our L.A. office. Having laid a solid foundation, we know our future looks bright (dare we say, golden?) and we'll be sure to continue to keep you updated on all things L.G. in L.A. as we continue to reach beyond the expected here and everywhere our clients need us.