

ATTORNEY AT LAW

MAGAZINE®

ATTORNEY OF THE MONTH

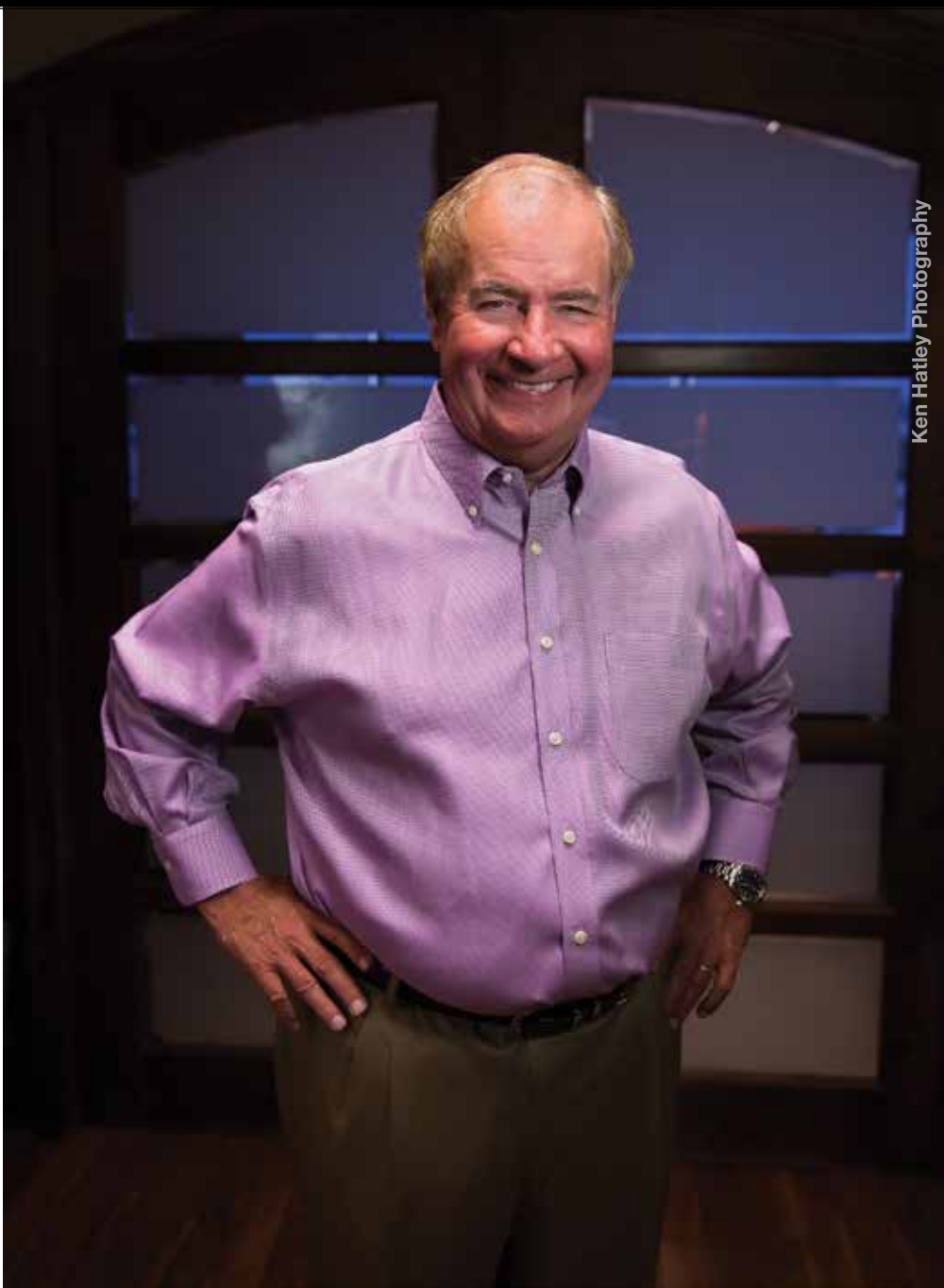
TED B. LYON, JR.

Trying Cases.

Rebuilding Lives.

By Dan Baldwin

"I really care about representing injured people and helping them rebuild their lives. That's what motivates me to continue practicing law and that means actually trying cases for people in serious need."



The law firm is based in Dallas, but serves clients throughout Texas and other states. Of the firm's current caseload of approximately 600 cases, 200 are out of state. Ted B. Lyon & Associates has seven lawyers, a full-time business manager, and a number of paralegals.

Lyon says trial experience is his firm's competitive edge. "We're real trial lawyers. Every year we get cases ranked in the Top 100 Cases in the state of Texas. We also get verdicts that are in the top 10 in the nation. We've done that three times. Texas Lawyer publishes a feature on the top 100 verdicts and we're in it almost every year."

Ted B. Lyon & Associates has won numerous multimillion-dollar cases such as a \$296 million verdict in *Smalley v. Koch*,

an \$84 million verdict in *Waldrip v. U-Haul*, and a \$20.4 million verdict in *Wiles v. Ford Motor Co.*

Lyon is a recognized expert in personal injury and has been featured in local and national media coverage, including Good Morning America, 60 Minutes, NBC Dateline, Texas Lawyer, The National Law Journal, Dallas Observer and D Magazine.

He graduated from East Texas University (now known as Texas A&M Commerce) with a Bachelor of Science in political science in 1972 and earned his Juris Doctor degree from Southern Methodist University School of Law in 1975. Like many successful attorneys his interest in a law career was influenced early in life when he saw the film, "To Kill a Mockingbird."

GREATER DALLAS EDITION | VOL. 3 NO. 3
ATTORNEY AT LAW
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TED B. LYON, JR.

ATTORNEY OF THE MONTH

JOHN CREUZOT

SOLO PRACTITIONER OF THE MONTH

LAUREN C. LARSON

PROFESSIONAL PROFILE

STEPHANIE HOLAN

ATTORNEY PROFILE

CHIEF JUDGE BARBARA M.G. LYNN

JUDICIAL PROFILE

"That really motivated me to help people as a lawyer. After watching that movie, I knew that's what I wanted to be. The natural evolution of my law practice led me to an awareness of what I wanted to do, which is helping severely injured people. That is a calling for me," Lyon says.

Lyon received an early, real-world introduction to trial work during law school, trying his first case in his third year. "I had a senior lawyer supervising me. I brought the case in, tried it all basically by myself and won it. It was a big deal for me at that time. It was during my third year in law school. I lost 12 pounds in a week. I didn't eat or sleep for a week basically. After that I knew I could do it and I knew I could be good at it," he says.

Lyon says he enjoys the competitive nature of trial work. "I've always been a real sportsman. I enjoyed sports when I was young. I coached baseball for 18 years. I played some college football. I'm very competitive. The only game I know where you can still put the uniform on at my age is being a trial lawyer."

"
We're real trial lawyers. Every year we get cases ranked in the Top 100 Cases in the state of Texas. We also get verdicts that are in the top 10 in the nation. We've done that three times. Texas Lawyer publishes a feature on the top 100 verdicts and we're in it almost every year.
"

Lyon could have taken his law career in an entirely different direction. He got married right out of high school and eventually took a job as a police officer, working nights and attending school during the day. His ultimate goal was to form his own firm, so he opened his own law practice right after law school. Having been the president of a local police association in Mesquite, it provided him with numerous business contacts. Still, he went through the expected struggles of a startup business. "If you had fifty dollars or a promise to pay me fifty dollars I'd be your lawyer," he says.

He took on everything that came in the door, but having been a police officer he had a competitive edge because of his understanding of criminal cases. For example, he tried 12 DWI cases in one year and won every one of them.

Lyon says his biggest challenge in the early days was just learning how to do things, noting that law schools teach one how to think like a lawyer, but not the day-to-day practice and managing of a law firm.

The hardest aspect of that early learning curve was in the practice of civil law, a process Lyon calls a "butt kicking." His first five years out of law school he had three cases that went to the Texas Supreme Court. Because of that learning curve he did not



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GREATER DALLAS EDITION
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AT A GLANCE

TED B. LYON & ASSOCIATES
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PRACTICE AREAS

Personal Injury
Business Litigation
Consumer Protection

EDUCATION

Juris Doctor, Southern Methodist University Dedman School of Law, 1975
Bachelor of Science in Political Science, East Texas University, 1972

SELECT HONORS

The 500 Most Powerful Business Leaders in Dallas-Fort Worth, D CEO Magazine, 2016
Legends of the Bar Recipient, Dallas Bar Association, 2016
Wildlife Recovery Award, Montana Sportsmen for Fish and Wildlife, 2014
Teddy Roosevelt Conservationist of the Year, Big Game Forever, 2012
Included in Texas Super Lawyers, 2003-2016
AV Rated, Martindale Hubbell, 1986-2016
Top 100 Trial Lawyers in America, The American Trial Lawyers Association, 2007-2013

PUBLICATION

"The Real Wolf"

FAMILY

Wife of 49 Years - Donna
Sons - Ted III & Payton
Grandchildren - Madelyn, Harper & Turner

HOBBIES

Hunting & Fishing



"I'VE ALWAYS BEEN A REAL SPORTSMAN I'M VERY COMPETITIVE. THE ONLY GAME I KNOW WHERE YOU CAN STILL PUT THE UNIFORM ON AT MY AGE IS BEING A TRIAL LAWYER."

then know that an attorney needs an appellate lawyer. He took those cases all the way up himself.

Lyon says, "I just thought that's what you do. You spend endless hours trying to figure that stuff out and I had these older lawyers I could bounce things off, but I had to do all the work myself. It was a process. I was so competitive and I wanted to do whatever to make sure I won. I spent the hours, whatever the hours took. That's the way I went through law school. I worked full time after my first semester, so it wasn't anything for me to spend 70 or 80 hours a week working. And I did it."

Training and real-world experience are hallmarks of the attorneys at Ted B. Lyon & Associates. Each year all of the attorneys invest considerable time attending legal seminars and conferences. Additionally, Lyon stresses the importance of actual trial practice. "I want every lawyer in the firm to go to trial several times every year. We have small cases and we have younger lawyers working on them. I want those younger lawyers to go to trial at least four or five times a year. The reason for that is that small cases don't generate enough income to be profitable, but when I go to trial against the Koch brothers or I go to trial against Ford Motor Company or I go to trial against one

of the big corporations in America I want real trial lawyers who have participated in real trials assisting me," Lyon says.

In his personal life, Lyon and his wife, Donna, have been married 49 years. They have two boys, Ted III and Payton. They have three grandchildren a 12-year-old granddaughter, Madelyn, a 2-year-old granddaughter, Harper, and a 4-month-old grandson, Turner.

Lyon enjoys fishing and hunting, especially with his sons. The family has a place in Montana and a ranch in South Dakota where they spend at least a month each year climbing the mountains, hunting and fishing. "I love being outdoors. I love the mountains," he says.

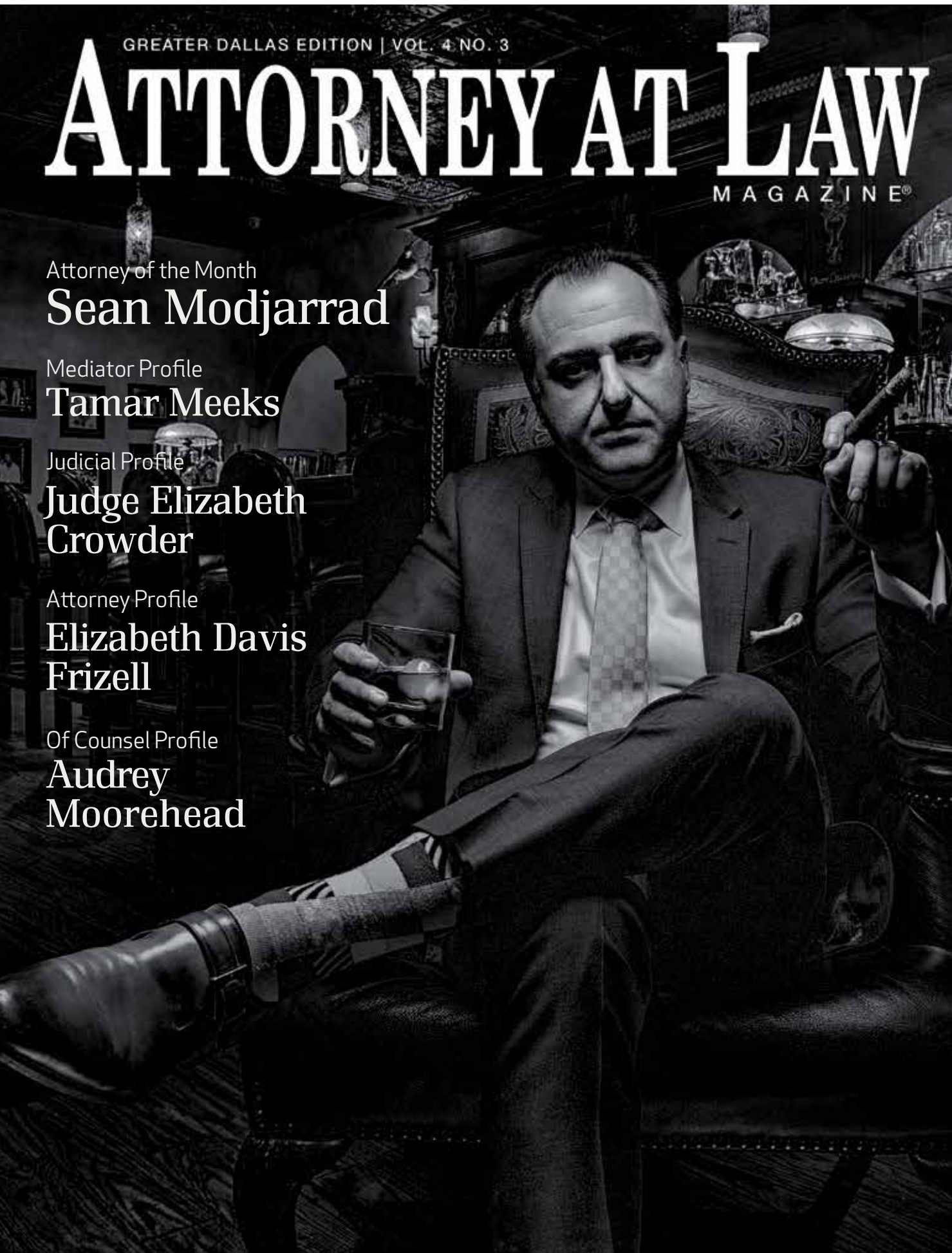
Lyon is also an author. His book "The Real Wolf," based on a case he had in Montana, is about the devastation of the deer and elk herds in Yellowstone National Park and has been picked up by a New York publishing house. He is very active in wildlife conservation.

Lyon is an attorney who loves his work and the challenges and opportunities it brings. "My current challenge is to try to remain relevant. I want to help people as long as I'm physically and mentally capable of doing it" he says.

ATTORNEY AT LAW

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Attorney of the Month

Sean Modjarrad

Fighting for
Justice.

Fighting for the
Underdog.

By Dan Baldwin

“Being an immigrant and coming to America, you’re always behind. You’re always trying to catch up. And as a result, you see a lot of injustice. I can see what is wrong and what could go wrong. Also, what can be done better. The underdog doesn’t always get a chance to speak and present his or her own point of view. Being a mouthpiece, being a person who advocates for the person with no voice, that is important,” says Sean Modjarrad, managing shareholder at Modjarrad Abusaad Said Law Firm (MAS Law Firm).

He comes by his commitment to fighting for the underdog naturally. He and his family are Iranian immigrants who arrived in the United States unable to speak English. Unfortunate incidents with the legal system formed his opinions and his desire to advocate for the underdog early.



“My father was in the restaurant business, but he had challenges running a business. He struggled with negotiating lease agreements and other contracts properly as well as minutia that should never have been an issue. It wasn’t a lack of intelligence or hard work, but a lack of knowledge of the process that ultimately became an issue. He just never knew what he was getting into, which is a common plight of immigrants. Lawyers were expensive and out of the price range of many small business owners. The only reason he was unable to protect himself is because he didn’t have good counsel or proper guidance. It’s very difficult for regular ordinary people to find a lawyer or even go to a lawyer’s office. You can’t just say, ‘Hey, let’s go to a lawyer and ask this question.’ If you have a friend who is a lawyer it’s easy, but if are completely out of the legal system, you just don’t pick up the phone and say, ‘Hey, I’ll call a lawyer today,’” Modjarrad says.

His family upbringing had another effect on his decision to become an attorney. He says, “As a Middle Easterner, the way we are raised since you’re knee-high, a half-pint, is that you’re always going to be a doctor, a lawyer or an engineer. Those are the three life choices. One of my sisters is a doctor. One studied to be an architect, so, being a lawyer was my path.”

A Linear Education

His education in two varying fields provides support in his chosen profession. “Accounting helps on the commercial litigation side in analyzing documents. It makes decision making easier and quicker. Also, accounting is a linear process and law is the same way. It is like going from step number one to step number two to step number three to step number four; basically, that’s how one analyzes legal matters as well. Accounting teaches you to think logically,” he says.

In 2000, immediately after law school, Modjarrad moved to Texas and opened his own firm, working out of a single office in Deep Ellum. The move was intimidating and one that friends and relatives said would be the biggest mistake of his life.

Modjarrad credits a lot of his early success to having good mentors, which at the time proved to be something of a surprise. “Our legal community is incredible when it comes to helping young attorneys succeed – regardless of the person’s background. This is especially true of the older generation. Back when I started everyone wanted me to succeed. They could see you working and struggling and they all had an open-door policy. Come on over and I’ll help you. I was just not expecting that much help. I’m very grateful for it. I see it as part of my duty to continue that tradition in my own mentoring efforts. It’s a way to pass the baton on to the next generation.”



Nazeh Abusaad joined the firm in 2003 and they operated under the name of M&A. Mohamad Said’s name was added in 2012 and now the firm operates under the name of MAS.

Prominent Cases for the Little Known Underdogs

Modjarrad played a significant role in the 2006 *Good v. The City of Irving and Detective Curtis* suit, in which a new law was enacted by the Fifth Circuit Federal Court of Appeals. This case was just one of many in which Modjarrad fought and won for the little guy.

Donald Good was a young man who was picked up and charged for crimes he did not commit – burglary of habitation with intent to commit theft, rape and sexual abuse. He had three trials and served more than 13 years – wrongfully. The case against him was based on improper or fabricated evidence. After passing summary judgment motions, the case was appealed to the Fifth Circuit, and after prevailing at the Fifth Circuit, the case was sent on a writ to the U.S. Supreme Court. The Court declined the writ and about a week before trial, the case was settled.

Modjarrad says, “This case is dear to my heart because when I came to America I didn’t speak English. I really felt for the man. At the same time that my life’s trajectory went up, Donald’s life went down and it went down far and fast. Somehow, coincidence, whatever you want to call it, we met and I took the case. Again, everybody told me not to take the case. ‘You shouldn’t do this. This doesn’t make sense.’ But I saw it as my duty to pay back because my life had become so great and this man’s life went south for something he did not do. That’s how I got involved in civil rights cases.”

Currently the firm is representing the family of another “little guy,” one with a personal connection. Modjarrad worked his way through school waiting on tables. The man he used to work with was arrested and put in jail. The man was a diabetic and had suffered from the disease for 15 years, but he was not allowed to take his medication in jail. “Unfortunately, he passed away, so I am representing the family. Four and a half years have gone by and we’re still fighting it. We won a pretty good victory recently so I’m hopeful that in the next three or four years this case will get wrapped up,” Modjarrad says.

Professor or ABC at the Office

“One of the jokes that they make about me here is that they call me ‘the Professor’ or ‘ABC’ because I’m always explaining – or as it is called around the office, giving lectures – and, of course, one of my favorite sayings is ABC – Always Be Closing,” Modjarrad says.

His work ethic is basic. After you’re done working, work some more. His business philosophy is to focus on doing a good job for each client and in doing that the business side will take care of itself. His management style is, in his own words, OCD. “I’m very micro. My door is always open. I follow every step. I realize that everyone makes mistakes, but you don’t make the same mistake twice.”

One of the other matters he is currently focused on is finding a balance between the passion of work with the needs of the family. He and his wife, Dr. Nasa Safdarian, have just celebrated their third anniversary. “We met on a blind date and the moment we met we knew we were going to be married, at least I knew. She is a double board certified physician and her practice is limited to allergies and immunology these

At A Glance

Modjarrad Abusaad Said Law Firm

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Firm Practice Areas

Civil Rights Law
Serious Personal Injury
Business and Corporate Law
Civil Litigation
Family Law
Criminal Law
Social Security
Consumer Law
Immigration Law

Bar Admissions

State Bar of Texas
U.S. District Court, Northern District of Texas
U.S. District Court, Eastern District of Texas

Education

Juris Doctor, Samford University, 2000
MBA, Samford University, 2000
Master of Accountancy, Samford University, 2000
Bachelor of Science in Accounting, University of North Texas, 1997

Professional Affiliations

Texas Bar Foundation, Fellow
Cumberland School of Law, Advisory Board
UNT Dallas College of Law, Board of Visitors
College of the State Bar of Texas
Order of Barristers
Beta Alpha Psi
Iranian American Chamber of Commerce, Founding Member
Iranian American Bar Association
American Bar Association
University of Texas at Dallas, Adjunct Professor
Shahrivand Magazine, Columnist, 2010-Present

Awards

Best Lawyers in Dallas, D Magazine, 2014, 2016
Texas Super Lawyers, Super Lawyers, 2014, 2017
Top 100 Trial Lawyers, The National Trial Lawyers, 2014, 2017
Premier 100, American Academy of Trial Attorneys, 2015-2017
AVVO Rating of 10/10
Featured in Newsweek

days and her clinic is at Dallas Presbyterian,” he says.

They have two daughters – Suri and Saya. “My mother and father live in Dallas. My sisters live here, so family is very important to us. What we do at this age for my kids is to get the whole family together at least once or twice a week so my kids get to understand the meaning and importance of family,” he says.

He enjoys golfing, a good cigar, single malt scotch, and deep sea fishing – trolling for game fish.

Much of his time is invested in volunteer work. He was one of the founding members of the Iranian-American Chamber of Commerce in Dallas about five years ago. He also was one of the founding members of the Iranian-American Bar Association. “This is for the younger generation, so they’ll know you have to work hard. You cannot just show up to work and expect everything to be handed to you. I wanted to provide a pathway, a support system – something my father didn’t have. That’s another example of passing the baton to the younger generation,” he says.

He sits on an advisory board for his law school in Alabama and on the board of visitors for University of North Texas School of Law.

“Life is a daily struggle and every day I’m learning something new that I can do better than I did yesterday. Remembering how we came to this country and remembering struggling, I know it doesn’t matter how tough things may be today; they’re not as tough as they were back then. You need to be appreciative and grateful of what you have,” he says.

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MAGAZINE®



MINNESOTA EDITION
NOVEMBER 2016

Kathleen M. Newman



Nancy E. Murphy



Alexandra L. Michelson



Shaina Praska



Kathleen M. Newman & Associates P.A.

The Space & Dignity to Choose

By Haley Freeman

Few family law practitioners possess the breadth of experience or numerous accolades earned by Kathleen M. Newman in her 35-plus years in the profession. She is board certified as a family law trial advocate by the National Board of Trial Advocacy and also a skilled mediator who is adept at resolving family law matters including complex and high-asset divorce, pre-marriage considerations, child custody and appellate issues.

After clerking for a family court judge, practicing with a boutique firm and then rising to partner in a large firm, Newman made the decision to open a family law practice predicated on holistic client representation. Today, she and her team begin by asking clients to tell their story, and then provide the right balance of space and guidance to help people make the best possible choices for themselves and their families. Newman is also a certified life coach, trained at the distinguished Hudson Institute of Santa Barbara. These special skills enhance the care and compassion she and her team convey to each of the families they serve.

Newman is joined by an exceptional group of women lawyers and staff who share her passion for excellence and desire to see families through momentous life changes with confidence and grace. While her legal team is currently made up of all women, Newman says that has not always been the case, as she has previously employed men, as well. But the present band of women are a dynamic force, spanning generations and areas of experience in family law.

Nancy E. Murphy has more than three decades of experience helping Minnesota families with family law matters including divorce, child custody, child support, spousal maintenance and property division. Her caring and competent representation is further enhanced by her pro bono service to local organizations, among them, the Volunteer Lawyers Network, Chrysalis, and Harriet Tubman.

Newman has also welcomed two young women attor-

neys to her practice, Alexandra Michelson and Shaina Praska, each with impeccable credentials and the drive to offer the highest standard of representation.

"One of the reasons they are so amazing is that they both clerked for the family court for very experienced judges," Newman said. "They bring to the firm not just knowledge about family law, but they really have an intimate knowledge of how the system works in Hennepin County. I find that is invaluable for our clients."

According to Newman, when people are in the throes of divorce, they don't tend to think about the long-term, or how the decisions they are currently making will impact them in years to come. Newman and her associates are skilled at listening and helping their clients to think past their immediate concerns.

"Even when people want a divorce, a lot of them are focused on the immediacy of their need to get out. People even in their 40s and 50s are not thinking about retirement or planning for the allocation of their assets. They have no idea what their Social Security income will be, or how much they can pull out of their retirement and how long it will last in terms of life expectancy. People come to us in a state I call 'divorce crazy.' It's something almost everybody experiences. They are being asked to make hugely important decisions for their life and their kids' lives at a time when they are least prepared to make them. I want to help clients get through that. On the other side, they're not divorce crazy, and they have to live with the consequences of the decisions they made when they were not at their best."

Although she is a seasoned trial attorney, Newman is a strong proponent of mediation, which allows people to become the architects of their own lives after divorce. "I've invested a lot in the firm on mediation training, including in-house training with the other lawyers. I bring them to as many of my mediations as I can to give them hands-on experience. Life coaching skills are also a real help here because it helps people to move off the win-lose mentality and focus on what is realistic. That's what negotiation means - bringing compromise into the picture. Compromises people make for themselves are almost invariably better than decisions made by a judge who doesn't know them. Kids can be a big motivator. Most people care enough about their kids to move off their own unhappiness or concerns about money to swallow a lot of compromise for their kids' sake."

Newman's holistic culture is also felt by the people inside the firm, where she has created a supportive practice environment that allows everyone to make choices about the time they devote to their careers, families and personal pursuits.

Michelson commented, "The firm is very supportive of me balancing my professional and personal goals. We have a marketing team that we are able to utilize for coaching and defining our professional goals and how to achieve them. I am personally involved in many groups and volunteer work, and that work greatly supported by the firm both financially and emotionally. In

“

I believe that when you're a more well-rounded person and satisfied with life, you are able put more of yourself out there for your clients. You can better listen to them and focus on what they need. It also makes you a better negotiator, because in my mind, angry people don't tend to be good negotiators.”

addition, I am able to go to seminars around the world relating to family law to expand my knowledge and learn from other practitioners. For example, this fall, the firm is sending me to an American Bar Association family law conference in Quebec City, where I will be able to learn from family law practitioners from all over the world."

Newman added, "I believe that when you're a more well-rounded person and satisfied with life, you are able put more of yourself out there for your clients. You can better listen to them and focus on what they need. It also makes you a better negotiator, because in my mind, angry people don't tend to be good negotiators."

Early in Newman's career, she experienced a very different kind of legal culture, and she takes a passionate stand for giving women in the legal profession the space and dignity to structure their own careers. "There weren't many women litigators when I started out, and hardly any women judges. There was a lot of expectation to act like our male peers. Most of the mentoring came from men, and mentoring in the male style may not feel comfortable for a woman. As I went along, I realized there were tons of expectations set for me by other people. I feel a responsibility to share my experiences with other women and tell them that it's important to do good work, but it's also important to give attention to your health and your spiritual and intellectual development. Without balance, you burn out. There is no rule about what a young woman lawyer is supposed to be. From my perspective, having been at a large firm for a long time, it's easy to feel like a failure when you can't do the impossible. There will always be that one superstar who seems to be doing it all, but the rest of us are normal people. Avoid the expectation trap and look around and develop a style that works for you."

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Practice Areas

High-Asset Divorce
Pre-Marriage Considerations
Child Custody
Appellate Law

Attorneys

Kathleen M. Newman
Nancy E. Murphy
Alexandra L. Michelson
Shaina Praska

Staff

Paralegal Adrienne Summerfield
Paralegal Carol Spohn
Legal Assistant April Meyers

Select Honors

10 Best Client Satisfaction,
American Institute of Family Law
Attorneys, 2015
Best Law Firms, Best Lawyers, 2011-
2012
Top 50 Women Lawyers in
Minnesota,
Super Lawyers

ATTORNEY AT LAW

MAGAZINE®



DOWNTOWN LA EDITION

VOL.2 NO. 1

arning international acclaim for winning the \$30 million wrongful death jury verdict against actor Robert Blake, Dubin struck big again in 2016 with a landmark \$10.2 million jury verdict that created a brand-new path around the much hated MICRA. Dubin successfully argued that post-death concealment should not be limited by MICRA, and opened the door for punitive damages in wrongful death cases. In 2017, Dubin will be co-lead trial counsel on the massive lawsuit resulting from the devastating big rig crash in Orland, California.

Dubin's is a face, name and reputation recognized and admired well beyond his California practice. Certain facets of his personality that are rarely discussed, however, are his humanity and humility. There is something decidedly salt-of-the-earth, grounded and wholly Midwestern in his nature. Despite a hailstorm of superlatives used to describe him, Dubin remains modest and steadfast in his core values. Portrayed as everything from "celebrity attorney" to "the real-life Superman," Dubin, while admitting to being flattered, mildly eschews these epithets.

"I don't consider myself a celebrity attorney," he says, "just beyond proud and flattered to be mentioned along with trial lawyers that I consider to be the best in the business. To be considered at that level, is something I worked very hard to achieve, and work harder to maintain. Many of the lawyers working on the FedEx case with me are trial lawyers I have admired my entire career, just dripping with passion and talent.

"I never really got too hung up on that Hollywood stuff," he adds. "Through all the years of worldwide attention during the Robert Blake case, I figured out how to use the power of the media only when it benefits my clients."

Still glowing in the spotlight more than a decade later, it's apparent that Dubin is not a one-hit wonder. While he doesn't actively seek high-profile cases, clients typically seek him out, confident they will receive undaunting devotion and the highest level of representation.

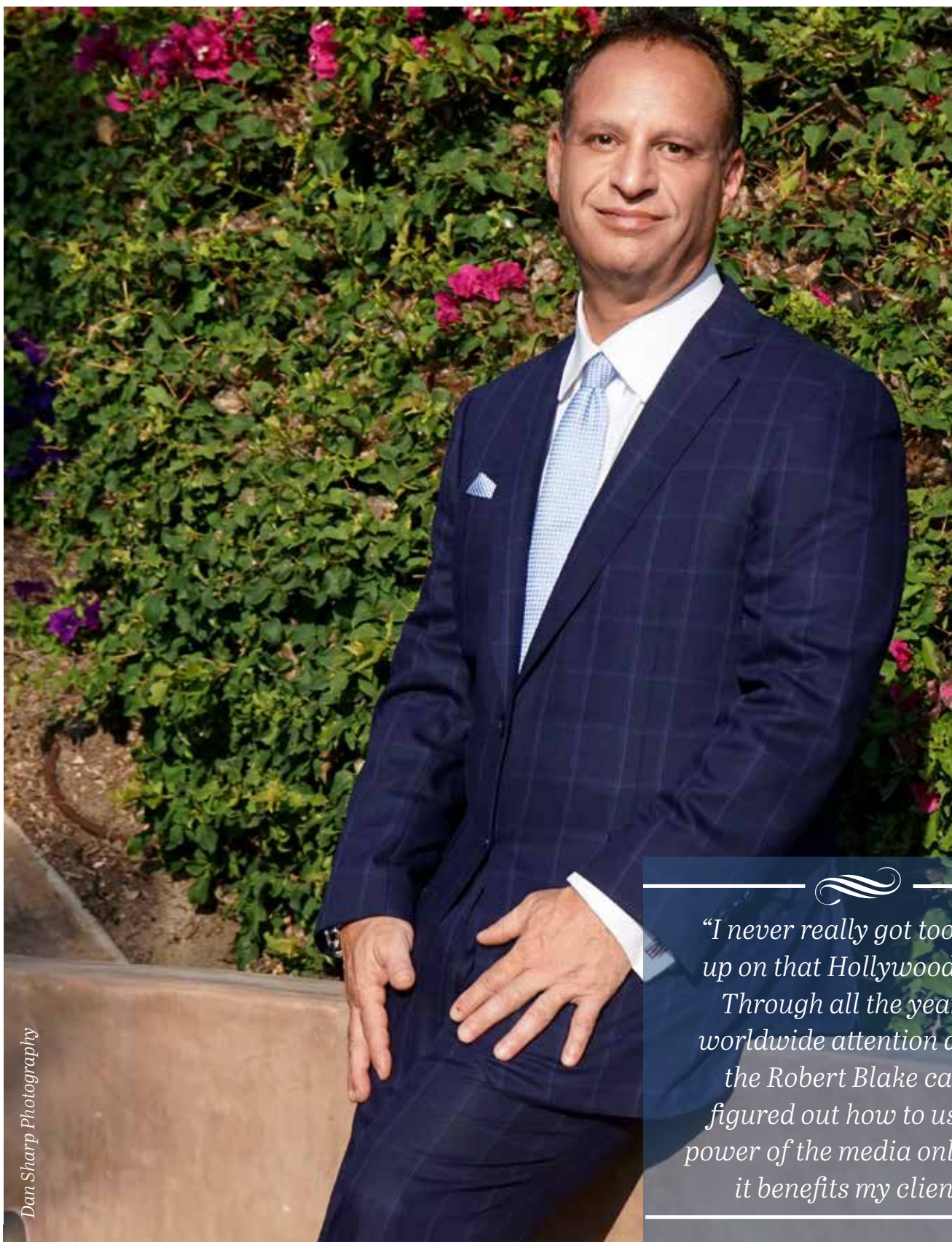
"If someone comes to me with what might be considered a high-profile case, they know I'm not going to do things just to get my name out there. Utilizing the media is an art form that can't be ignored in these high-profile cases, but every move must have a purpose."

While Dubin is still often called for his legal opinions on current headline cases, he rarely agrees.

"I often get calls from ABC, CNN, and other major networks, asking me to appear on a program or comment on whatever the current case may be," he says, "and I don't. Having gone through a high-profile trial on that level, I understand the frustration when someone else is talking about my case and doesn't know everything, yet goes on national TV as an expert. I'm really turned off by talking heads for that reason. So, the only time you'll see me on TV is for involving my case, and if it's beneficial to my client to do so. If both of those prongs aren't met, well, the trap of celebrity in Los Angeles is something that I admire from a distance."

GO WEST, YOUNG MAN

When Dubin left his Michigan home for Los Angeles, it wasn't bright lights or fame he sought, but rather the sunny relief from long, cold and blustery winters. Already focused on a law career, his



Dan Sharp Photography

"I never really got too hung up on that Hollywood stuff. Through all the years of worldwide attention during the Robert Blake case, I figured out how to use the power of the media only when it benefits my clients."

ATTORNEY of the YEAR

inherent sense of right and wrong, compelled him to choose his specialty in personal injury and wrongful death. In this niche, he's not only found success but tremendous satisfaction.

"I always dreamed of coming to L.A. Somehow, I always knew that I'd wind up here," he says. "When I finally did make it out here, the first time was during college, it was definitely a feeling of coming home."

"I have the utmost respect for the system, the courtroom, the bailiff, the jurors, opposing counsel, it just makes me so proud to be a part of it all. I've often teared up driving to jury trials, so proud, that I'm actually doing what I've always dreamed of doing."

Dubin's commitment to righting wrongs and preserving justice was matched only by his desire to prove worthy of the faith his mother had invested in him. He attributes his "good heart" to her, and despite his obvious financial success and subsequent material acquisitions, Dubin's most prized possession is a seemingly long-lost photo of him and his beloved mother. Taken right before she succumbed to cancer, he was both surprised and delighted, when the L.A. Times ran the photo with a full-page prestigious profile article.

"This picture seemed to just turn up out of nowhere," he says.

"I'm not sure I'd ever seen it before, and there she is right in the center. What's amazing, is that's the only press conference she'd ever attended, and hence the only photo she ever appeared in."

"That to me, is something that's priceless."

"She was the best friend I've ever had," he continues, his voice reverberating with emotion. "When I deposed Blake, she came out. I'd come home every night with the videos and she watched them, literally from about 5 p.m. until four in the morning. And, it wasn't because she was my mom, but because they were fascinating!"

Unfortunately, his mother did not live long enough to witness her son's unmitigated success and national acclaim, proving actor Robert Blake was in fact, responsible for the death of his wife Bonnie Lee Blakey. Aside from winning a \$30 million jury verdict on behalf of the victim's family (after the state failed to prove Blake guilty), for Dubin, it was equally important for the sake of Blakey's children, to clear their mother's name after being ruthlessly slandered by Blake and his lawyers.

"As far as the Blake case," says Dubin, "I really wanted to win for her kids and for the detectives who worked so hard and then lost in the criminal trial. I needed to prove he killed her to validate their hard work and get closure for those kids. Proving Blake guilty was naturally the prime objective, but it was also incredibly important for me to rectify the damage he and his defense had done to her reputation. In a sense, he killed her twice, first in the car and then in the media. Getting that verdict literally changed the course of those kids' lives."

While his sense of justice applies to everyone, Dubin is particularly moved by inequities affecting children, and works both through his practice and on his own time to effectuate change. He was recently presented with the 2016 Hero of Hope Award by longtime friend Tom Mesereau for his work with the N-Action Family Network.

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ATTORNEY of the YEAR



Dan Sharp Photography

ERIC DUBIN

ADDICTED TO JUSTICE

By Susan Cushing

It's virtually impossible to find new adjectives to describe the outstanding career of Eric Dubin, our Attorney of the Year. Peppered with well-deserved praise and accolades, his many accomplishments have been highly publicized in dozens of prestigious publications. However, the most articulate validation of Dubin's supreme prowess is best evidenced through the multitude of wins and monumental monetary awards for his clients.

GROUNDBREAKING DECISION

An example of Dubin's deep-seated compassion for his clients can be found in the historic 2016 case, representing the family of a 15-year-old who died at a Mission Viejo care facility. The boy suffered from cerebral palsy and a seizure disorder, and Dubin successfully argued he died as a direct result of staff failure to administer his anti-seizure medication. This was compounded by the fact that the caregiver not only delayed calling emergency services after finding him unresponsive, but did not attempt CPR. It was subsequently discovered, that she was not trained or certified to do so. When EMTs arrived, she was bathing two other patients.

A heartbreaking case from the outset, Dubin was incensed to discover that even if the facility was found guilty, damages were capped at \$250,000. Nor could elder abuse rights be enforced, because the child was not yet 16, qualifying him as a dependent adult.

Thanks to Dubin's tenacious fight to find a way around the Medical Injury Compensation Reform Act (MICRA), the parents were awarded \$10.2 million in punitive and actual damages. Moreover, a law that has been in place for nearly 40 years, putting a \$250,000 cap on pain and suffering damages in medical malpractice cases, has been successfully challenged and the verdict immediately snatched up for inclusion in the 2016 California Jury Instructions Handbook. This momentous win also lays the groundwork for future attorneys to attack the archaic law.

"Clearly, his death was caused by the wrongdoing of the defendant, who claimed zero liability from day one," reports Dubin. "To prove everything the parents were claiming was true, and to have a jury unanimously say, '\$10.2 million,' was a moment I'll never forget. It was literally a movie moment for this mom, who could take a deep exhale for the first time in like three years, and let it go."

"It was an American stamp of justice and validation," he says, "and that's who I am and that's why I work 20 hour days to win these cases. There's no other way to do it."

FULL-ON FOCUS

Fully immersed in each case, Dubin says nothing else matters, in fact, he doesn't even check his emails. "My family and friends understand this," he says. "Honestly, that's how you win. I know my case better than anyone in the courtroom. I can go to a page line in the deposition in a heartbeat, and if opposing counsel strays, I can pull that page up almost from memory. It's like I have a short-term, photographic memory. It goes away, but it's probably because I've lived and breathed the material for so long."

Doing his own "footwork" isn't a control issue for Dubin, nor his ego, but rather, his belief that only by reviewing each piece of evidence, every witness and deposition himself, can he truly be as prepared as he wants to be before setting foot into the courtroom.

"There's a tremendous advantage when you can pull up details," he says. "As a trial attorney, I don't feel that's optional; it's my job."

His skills were certainly put to the test during the Blake trial, which was the biggest investigation in LAPD history. With 70 witnesses, each with about eight banker boxes of materials, Dubin handled all the review and preparation on his own. Just the way he prefers.

"It was like climbing Mount Everest without oxygen," he quips. "Now, every trial since has been a little bit easier. When you've conquered Mount Everest without oxygen, you have the supreme confidence to tackle less daunting peaks."

"Preparing for, and during trials, I don't have a life," he continues candidly. "It's like being a surgeon, fully focused on his patient. Cases can be all-consuming, especially when it involves wrongful death. It's hard for that not to play tricks with your mind and take control of your psyche."

A consummate professional, Dubin also understands the importance of balance and has a variety of ways to relax and decompress.

"I do try to pace myself, taking a breather from time to time. I enjoy yoga, music, and I like to run on the beach during sunsets. I have great friends, and feel so blessed to be living here in beautiful Southern California."

Topping his list of favorite ways to spend his downtime are his children. Dubin and his son have season tickets for the Rams games and he says he's had to brush up his dance skills to keep up with his talented daughter.

"My daughter is crazy talented, and we did the daddy-daughter dances in front of thousands with her dance studio for many years," he says, "so I had to perfect my Running Man moves by drawing on my Motown swagger. And my son has already written more books than me at the age of 12, I am beyond blessed to have them both in my life."

EMOTIONS AND EMOTING

Every lawyer develops a style, and Dubin is no exception. Previously a professor of law at Whittier College and the co-author of two bestselling books, "The Star Chamber" and "Beyond a Reasonable Doubt," Dubin's life truly centers around the justice system.

He's particularly proud of the tutelage he received from the legendary Gerry Spence. It is from Spence, Dubin says, that he learned "people don't go to the theatre to see if actors memorized their lines, they go to be moved by the story."

In the courtroom, that translates to not being about the perfect lawyer, wearing the perfect tie, and not forgetting any of your words," says Dubin. "All of that is really counter-productive. If you open your heart to the jurors, they'll open theirs to you."

He goes on to offer a comparison of an ego-filled actor and one who relates to his audience.

"If an actor drops a prop on stage," he says, "and is too pompous

ATTORNEY of the YEAR



Dan Sharp Photography

NOTABLE YEARS

"Legally Speaking with Eric Dubin," Talk Show on CBS Radio every Saturday Morning on FM 97.1.

2003

\$30 Million Jury Verdict against Robert Blake in Los Angeles, CA.

2005

Published "The Star Chamber" and collaborated with Larry King to write, "Reasonable Doubt."

2007

Named Best Lawyer in Orange County by OC Weekly for his work on the Kelly Thomas matter.

2013

\$10.2 Million Dollar Jury Verdict MICRA/Wrongful Death Case.

2015

Hero of Hope Award. From the n-Action Organization, presented by Tom Mesereau.

2016

Co-Lead Trial Counsel with Paul Kinsel and Greene Bruller & Wheeler in the FedEx school bus crash.

2017

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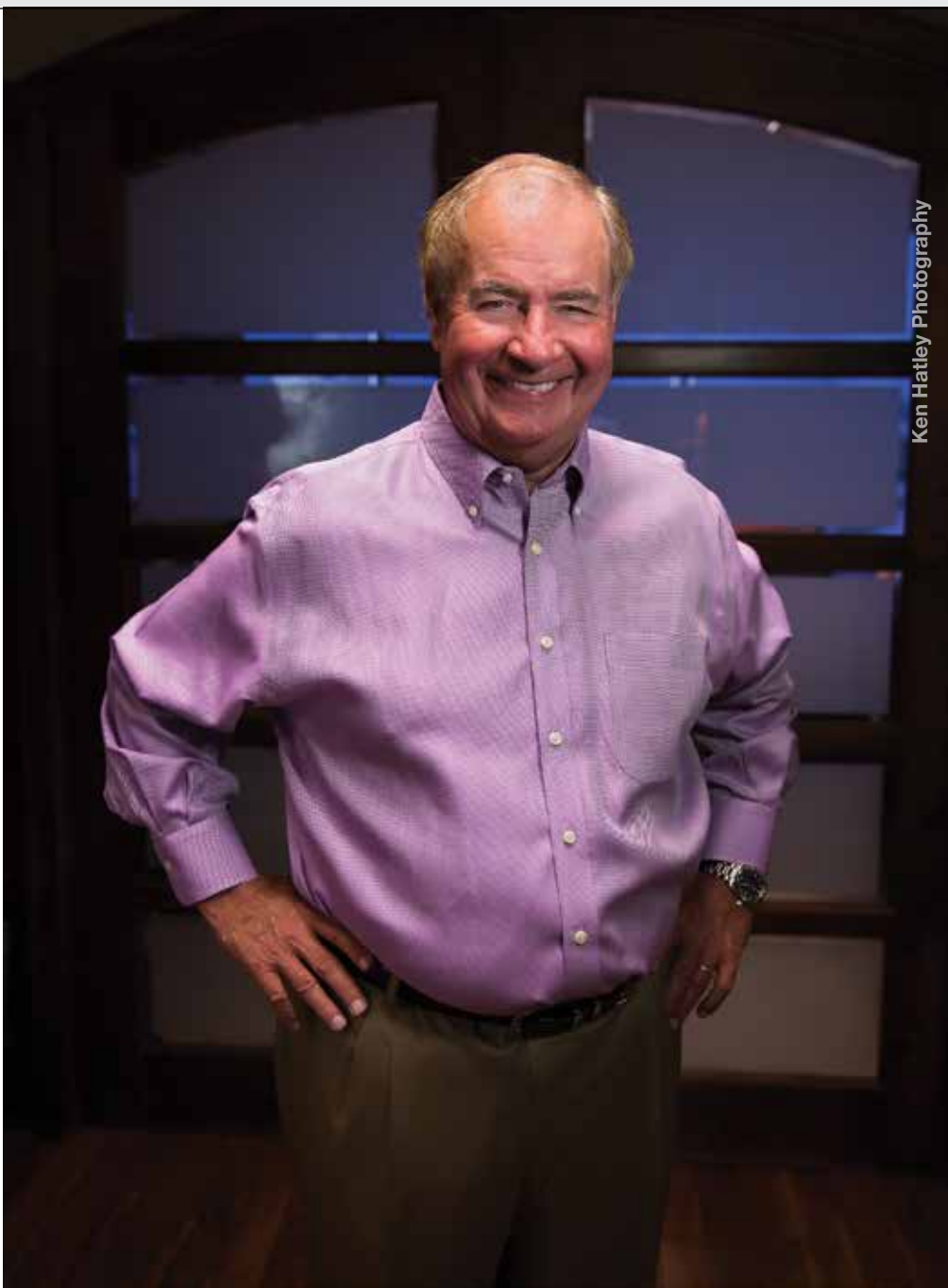
TED B. LYON, JR.

Trying Cases.

Rebuilding Lives.

By Dan Baldwin

"I really care about representing injured people and helping them rebuild their lives. That's what motivates me to continue practicing law and that means actually trying cases for people in serious need."



Ken Halley Photography

The law firm is based in Dallas, but serves clients throughout Texas and other states. Of the firm's current caseload of approximately 600 cases, 200 are out of state. Ted B. Lyon & Associates has seven lawyers, a full-time business manager, and a number of paralegals. Lyon says trial experience is his firm's competitive edge. "We're real trial lawyers. Every year we get cases ranked in the Top 100 Cases in the state of Texas. We also get verdicts that are in the top 10 in the nation. We've done that three times. Texas Lawyer publishes a feature on the top 100 verdicts and we're in it almost every year."

Ted B. Lyon & Associates has won numerous multimillion-dollar cases such as a \$296 million verdict in *Smalley v. Koch*,

an \$84 million verdict in *Waldrip v. U-Haul*, and a \$20.4 million verdict in *Wiles v. Ford Motor Co.*

Lyon is a recognized expert in personal injury and has been featured in local and national media coverage, including Good Morning America, 60 Minutes, NBC Dateline, Texas Lawyer, The National Law Journal, Dallas Observer and D Magazine.

He graduated from East Texas University (now known as Texas A&M Commerce) with a Bachelor of Science in political science in 1972 and earned his Juris Doctor degree from Southern Methodist University School of Law in 1975. Like many successful attorneys his interest in a law career was influenced early in life when he saw the film, "To Kill a Mockingbird."

"That really motivated me to help people as a lawyer. After watching that movie, I knew that's what I wanted to be. The natural evolution of my law practice led me to an awareness of what I wanted to do, which is helping severely injured people. That is a calling for me," Lyon says.

Lyon received an early, real-world introduction to trial work during law school, trying his first case in his third year. "I had a senior lawyer supervising me. I brought the case in, tried it all basically by myself and won it. It was a big deal for me at that time. It was during my third year in law school. I lost 12 pounds in a week. I didn't eat or sleep for a week basically. After that I knew I could do it and I knew I could be good at it," he says.

Lyon says he enjoys the competitive nature of trial work. "I've always been a real sportsman. I enjoyed sports when I was young. I coached baseball for 18 years. I played some college football. I'm very competitive. The only game I know where you can still put the uniform on at my age is being a trial lawyer."

"We're real trial lawyers. Every year we get cases ranked in the Top 100 Cases in the state of Texas. We also get verdicts that are in the top 10 in the nation. We've done that three times. Texas Lawyer publishes a feature on the top 100 verdicts and we're in it almost every year."

Lyon could have taken his law career in an entirely different direction. He got married right out of high school and eventually took a job as a police officer, working nights and attending school during the day. His ultimate goal was to form his own firm, so he opened his own law practice right after law school. Having been the president of a local police association in Mesquite, it provided him with numerous business contacts. Still, he went through the expected struggles of a startup business. "If you had fifty dollars or a promise to pay me fifty dollars I'd be your lawyer," he says.

He took on everything that came in the door, but having been a police officer he had a competitive edge because of his understanding of criminal cases. For example, he tried 12 DWI cases in one year and won every one of them.

Lyon says his biggest challenge in the early days was just learning how to do things, noting that law schools teach one how to think like a lawyer, but not the day-to-day practice and managing of a law firm.

The hardest aspect of that early learning curve was in the practice of civil law, a process Lyon calls a "butt kicking." His first five years out of law school he had three cases that went to the Texas Supreme Court. Because of that learning curve he did not



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AT A GLANCE

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PRACTICE AREAS

Personal Injury
Business Litigation
Consumer Protection

EDUCATION

Juris Doctor, Southern Methodist University Dedman School of Law, 1975
Bachelor of Science in Political Science, East Texas University, 1972

SELECT HONORS

The 500 Most Powerful Business Leaders in Dallas-Fort Worth, D CEO Magazine, 2016
Legends of the Bar Recipient, Dallas Bar Association, 2016
Wildlife Recovery Award, Montana Sportsmen for Fish and Wildlife, 2014
Teddy Roosevelt Conservationist of the Year, Big Game Forever, 2012
Included in Texas Super Lawyers, 2003-2016
AV Rated, Martindale Hubbell, 1986-2016
Top 100 Trial Lawyers in America, The American Trial Lawyers Association, 2007-2013

PUBLICATION

"The Real Wolf"

FAMILY

Wife of 49 Years - Donna
Sons - Ted III & Payton
Grandchildren - Madelyn, Harper & Turner

HOBBIES

Hunting & Fishing



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"I'VE ALWAYS BEEN A REAL SPORTSMAN I'M VERY COMPETITIVE. THE ONLY GAME I KNOW WHERE YOU CAN STILL PUT THE UNIFORM ON AT MY AGE IS BEING A TRIAL LAWYER."

then know that an attorney needs an appellate lawyer. He took those cases all the way up himself.

Lyon says, "I just thought that's what you do. You spend endless hours trying to figure that stuff out and I had these older lawyers I could bounce things off, but I had to do all the work myself. It was a process. I was so competitive and I wanted to do whatever to make sure I won. I spent the hours, whatever the hours took. That's the way I went through law school. I worked full time after my first semester, so it wasn't anything for me to spend 70 or 80 hours a week working. And I did it."

Training and real-world experience are hallmarks of the attorneys at Ted B. Lyon & Associates. Each year all of the attorneys invest considerable time attending legal seminars and conferences. Additionally, Lyon stresses the importance of actual trial practice. "I want every lawyer in the firm to go to trial several times every year. We have small cases and we have younger lawyers working on them. I want those younger lawyers to go to trial at least four or five times a year. The reason for that is that small cases don't generate enough income to be profitable, but when I go to trial against the Koch brothers or I go to trial against Ford Motor Company or I go to trial against one

of the big corporations in America I want real trial lawyers who have participated in real trials assisting me," Lyon says.

In his personal life, Lyon and his wife, Donna, have been married 49 years. They have two boys, Ted III and Payton. They have three grandchildren a 12-year-old granddaughter, Madelyn, a 2-year-old granddaughter, Harper, and a 4-month-old grandson, Turner.

Lyon enjoys fishing and hunting, especially with his sons. The family has a place in Montana and a ranch in South Dakota where they spend at least a month each year climbing the mountains, hunting and fishing. "I love being outdoors. I love the mountains," he says.

Lyon is also an author. His book "The Real Wolf", based on a case he had in Montana, is about the devastation of the deer and elk herds in Yellowstone National Park and has been picked up by a New York publishing house. He is very active in wildlife conservation.

Lyon is an attorney who loves his work and the challenges and opportunities it brings. "My current challenge is to try to remain relevant. I want to help people as long as I'm physically and mentally capable of doing it" he says.

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Attorney of the Month
Sean Modjarrad

Mediator Profile
Tamar Meeks

Judicial Profile
Judge Elizabeth Crowder

Attorney Profile
Elizabeth Davis Frizell

Of Counsel Profile
Audrey Moorehead

Attorney of the Month

Sean Modjarrad

Fighting for
Justice.

Fighting for the
Underdog.

By Dan Baldwin

“Being an immigrant and coming to America, you’re always behind. You’re always trying to catch up. And as a result, you see a lot of injustice. I can see what is wrong and what could go wrong. Also, what can be done better. The underdog doesn’t always get a chance to speak and present his or her own point of view. Being a mouthpiece, being a person who advocates for the person with no voice, that is important,” says Sean Modjarrad, managing shareholder at Modjarrad Abusaad Said Law Firm (MAS Law Firm).

He comes by his commitment to fighting for the underdog naturally. He and his family are Iranian immigrants who arrived in the United States unable to speak English. Unfortunate incidents with the legal system formed his opinions and his desire to advocate for the underdog early.

Ken Halley Photography

Ken Halley Photography

“My father was in the restaurant business, but he had challenges running a business. He struggled with negotiating lease agreements and other contracts properly as well as minutia that should never have been an issue. It wasn’t a lack of intelligence or hard work, but a lack of knowledge of the process that ultimately became an issue. He just never knew what he was getting into, which is a common plight of immigrants. Lawyers were expensive and out of the price range of many small business owners. The only reason he was unable to protect himself is because he didn’t have good counsel or proper guidance. It’s very difficult for regular ordinary people to find a lawyer or even go to a lawyer’s office. You can’t just say, ‘Hey, let’s go to a lawyer and ask this question.’ If you have a friend who is a lawyer it’s easy, but if are completely out of the legal system, you just don’t pick up the phone and say, ‘They, I’ll call a lawyer today.’” Modjarrad says.

His family upbringing had another effect on his decision to become an attorney. He says, “As a Middle Easterner, the way we are raised since you’re knee-high, a half-pint, is that you’re always going to be a doctor, a lawyer or an engineer. Those are the three life choices. One of my sisters is a doctor. One studied to be an architect, so, being a lawyer was my path.”

A Linear Education

His education in two varying fields provides support in his chosen profession. “Accounting helps on the commercial litigation side in analyzing documents. It makes decision making easier and quicker. Also, accounting is a linear process and law is the same way. It is like going from step number one to step number two to step number three to step number four; basically, that’s how one analyzes legal matters as well. Accounting teaches you to think logically,” he says.

In 2000, immediately after law school, Modjarrad moved to Texas and opened his own firm, working out of a single office in Deep Ellum. The move was intimidating and one that friends and relatives said would be the biggest mistake of his life.

Modjarrad credits a lot of his early success to having good mentors, which at the time proved to be something of a surprise. “Our legal community is incredible when it comes to helping young attorneys succeed – regardless of the person’s background. This is especially true of the older generation. Back when I started everyone wanted me to succeed. They could see you working and struggling and they all had an open-door policy. Come on over and I’ll help you. I was just not expecting that much help. I’m very grateful for it. I see it as part of my duty to continue that tradition in my own mentoring efforts. It’s a way to pass the baton on to the next generation.”

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Nazeh Abusaad joined the firm in 2003 and they operated under the name of M&A. Mohamad Said’s name was added in 2012 and now the firm operates under the name of MAS.

Modjarrad played a significant role in the 2006 *Good v. The City of Irving and Detective Curtis* suit, in which a new law was enacted by the Fifth Circuit Federal Court of Appeals. This case was just one of many in which Modjarrad fought and won for the little guy.

Donald Good was a young man who was picked up and charged for crimes he did not commit – burglary of habitation with intent to commit theft, rape and sexual abuse. He had three trials and served more than 13 years – wrongfully. The case against him was based on improper or fabricated evidence. After passing summary judgment motions, the case was appealed to the Fifth Circuit, and after prevailing at the Fifth Circuit, the case was sent on a writ to the U.S. Supreme Court. The Court declined the writ and about a week before trial, the case was settled.

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Modjarrad says, “This case is dear to my heart because when I came to America I didn’t speak English. I really felt for the man. At the same time that my life’s trajectory went up, Donald’s life went down and it went down far and fast. Somehow, coincidence, whatever you want to call it, we met and I took the case. Again, everybody told me not to take the case. ‘You shouldn’t do this. This doesn’t make sense.’ But I saw it as my duty to pay back because my life had become so great and this man’s life went south for something he did not do. That’s how I got involved in civil rights cases.”

Currently the firm is representing the family of another “little guy,” one with a personal connection. Modjarrad worked his way through school waiting on tables. The man he used to work with was arrested and put in jail. The man was a diabetic and had suffered from the disease for 15 years, but he was not allowed to take his medication in jail. “Unfortunately, he passed away, so I am representing the family. Four and a half years have gone by and we’re still fighting it. We won a pretty good victory recently so I’m hopeful that in the next three or four years this case will get wrapped up,” Modjarrad says.

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Professor or ABC at the Office

“One of the jokes that they make about me here is that they call me ‘the Professor’ or ‘ABC’ because I’m always explaining – or as it is called around the office, giving lectures – and, of course, one of my favorite sayings is ABC – Always Be Closing,” Modjarrad says.

His work ethic is basic. After you’re done working, work some more. His business philosophy is to focus on doing a good job for each client and in doing that the business side will take care of itself. His management style is, in his own words, OCD. “I’m very micro. My door is always open. I follow every step. I realize that everyone makes mistakes, but you don’t make the same mistake twice.”

One of the other matters he is currently focused on is finding a balance between the passion of work with the needs of the family. He and his wife, Dr. Nasa Safdarian, have just celebrated their third anniversary. “We met on a blind date and the moment we met we knew we were going to be married, at least I knew. She is a double board certified physician and her practice is limited to allergies and immunology these

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At A Glance

Modjarrad Abusaad Said Law Firm

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Firm Practice Areas
Civil Rights Law
Serious Personal Injury
Business and Corporate Law
Civil Litigation
Family Law
Criminal Law
Social Security
Consumer Law
Immigration Law

Bar Admissions
State Bar of Texas
U.S. District Court, Northern District of Texas
U.S. District Court, Eastern District of Texas

Education
Juris Doctor, Samford University, 2000
MBA, Samford University, 2000
Master of Accountancy, Samford University, 2000
Bachelor of Science in Accounting, University of North Texas, 1997

Professional Affiliations
Texas Bar Foundation, Fellow
Cumberland School of Law, Advisory Board
UNT Dallas College of Law, Board of Visitors
College of the State Bar of Texas
Order of Barristers
Beta Alpha Psi
Iranian American Chamber of Commerce, Founding Member
Iranian American Bar Association
American Bar Association
University of Texas at Dallas, Adjunct Professor
Shahrvand Magazine, Columnist, 2010-Present

Awards
Best Lawyers in Dallas, D Magazine, 2014, 2016
Texas Super Lawyers, Super Lawyers, 2014, 2017
Top 100 Trial Lawyers, The National Trial Lawyers, 2014, 2017
Premier 100, American Academy of Trial Attorneys, 2015-2017
AVVO Rating of 10/10
Featured in Newsweek

days and her clinic is at Dallas Presbyterian,” he says.

They have two daughters – Suri and Saya. “My mother and father live in Dallas. My sisters live here, so family is very important to us. What we do at this age for my kids is to get the whole family together at least once or twice a week so my kids get to understand the meaning and importance of family,” he says.

He enjoys golfing, a good cigar, single malt scotch, and deep sea fishing – trolling for game fish.

Much of his time is invested in volunteer work. He was one of the founding members of the Iranian-American Chamber of Commerce in Dallas about five years ago. He also was one of the founding members of the Iranian-American Bar Association. “This is for the younger generation, so they’ll know you have to work hard. You cannot just show up to work and expect everything to be handed to you. I wanted to provide a pathway, a support system – something my father didn’t have. That’s another example of passing the baton to the younger generation,” he says.

He sits on an advisory board for his law school in Alabama and on the board of visitors for University of North Texas School of Law.

“Life is a daily struggle and every day I’m learning something new that I can do better than I did yesterday. Remembering how we came to this country and remembering struggling. I know it doesn’t matter how tough things may be today; they’re not as tough as they were back then. You need to be appreciative and grateful of what you have,” he says.

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MINNESOTA EDITION
NOVEMBER 2016

Kathleen M. Newman



Nancy E. Murphy



Alexandra L. Michelson



Shaina Praska



Kathleen M. Newman & Associates P.A.

The Space & Dignity to Choose

By Haley Freeman

Few family law practitioners possess the breadth of experience or numerous accolades earned by Kathleen M. Newman in her 35-plus years in the profession. She is board certified as a family law trial advocate by the National Board of Trial Advocacy and also a skilled mediator who is adept at resolving family law matters including complex and high-asset divorce, pre-marriage considerations, child custody and appellate issues.

After clerking for a family court judge, practicing with a boutique firm and then rising to partner in a large firm, Newman made the decision to open a family law practice predicated on holistic client representation. Today, she and her team begin by asking clients to tell their story, and then provide the right balance of space and guidance to help people make the best possible choices for themselves and their families. Newman is also a certified life coach, trained at the distinguished Hudson Institute of Santa Barbara. These special skills enhance the care and compassion she and her team convey to each of the families they serve.

Newman is joined by an exceptional group of women lawyers and staff who share her passion for excellence and desire to see families through momentous life changes with confidence and grace. While her legal team is currently made up of all women, Newman says that has not always been the case, as she has previously employed men, as well. But the present band of women are a dynamic force, spanning generations and areas of experience in family law.

Nancy E. Murphy has more than three decades of experience helping Minnesota families with family law matters including divorce, child custody, child support, spousal maintenance and property division. Her caring and competent representation is further enhanced by her pro bono service to local organizations, among them, the Volunteer Lawyers Network, Chrysalis, and Harriet Tubman.

Newman has also welcomed two young women attorneys to her practice, Alexandra Michelson and Shaina Praska, each with impeccable credentials and the drive to offer the highest standard of representation.

"One of the reasons they are so amazing is that they both clerked for the family court for very experienced judges," Newman said. "They bring to the firm not just knowledge about family law, but they really have an intimate knowledge of how the system works in Hennepin County. I find that is invaluable for our clients."

According to Newman, when people are in the throes of divorce, they don't tend to think about the long-term, or how the decisions they are currently making will impact them in years to come. Newman and her associates are skilled at listening and helping their clients to think past their immediate concerns.

"Even when people want a divorce, a lot of them are focused on the immediacy of their need to get out. People even in their 40s and 50s are not thinking about retirement or planning for the allocation of their assets. They have no idea what their Social Security income will be, or how much they can pull out of their retirement and how long it will last in terms of life expectancy. People come to us in a state I call 'divorce crazy.' It's something almost everybody experiences. They are being asked to make hugely important decisions for their life and their kids' lives at a time when they are least prepared to make them. I want to help clients get through that. On the other side, they're not 'divorce crazy,' and they have to live with the consequences of the decisions they made when they were not at their best."

Although she is a seasoned trial attorney, Newman is a strong proponent of mediation, which allows people to become the architects of their own lives after divorce. "I've invested a lot in the firm on mediation training, including in-house training with the other lawyers. I bring them to as many of my mediations as I can to give them hands-on experience. Life coaching skills are also a real help here because it helps people to move off the win-lose mentality and focus on what is realistic. That's what negotiation means - bringing compromise into the picture. Compromises people make for themselves are almost invariably better than decisions made by a judge who doesn't know them. Kids can be a big motivator. Most people care enough about their kids to move off their own unhappiness or concerns about money to swallow a lot of compromise for their kids' sake."

Newman's holistic culture is also felt by the people inside the firm, where she has created a supportive practice environment that allows everyone to make choices about the time they devote to their careers, families and personal pursuits.

Michelson commented, "The firm is very supportive of me balancing my professional and personal goals. We have a marketing team that we are able to utilize for coaching and defining our professional goals and how to achieve them. I am personally involved in many groups and volunteer work, and that work greatly supported by the firm both financially and emotionally. In

“

I believe that when you're a more well-rounded person and satisfied with life, you are able put more of yourself out there for your clients. You can better listen to them and focus on what they need. It also makes you a better negotiator, because in my mind, angry people don't tend to be good negotiators.”

addition, I am able to go to seminars around the world relating to family law to expand my knowledge and learn from other practitioners. For example, this fall, the firm is sending me to an American Bar Association family law conference in Quebec City, where I will be able to learn from family law practitioners from all over the world."

Newman added, "I believe that when you're a more well-rounded person and satisfied with life, you are able put more of yourself out there for your clients. You can better listen to them and focus on what they need. It also makes you a better negotiator, because in my mind, angry people don't tend to be good negotiators."

Early in Newman's career, she experienced a very different kind of legal culture, and she takes a passionate stand for giving women in the legal profession the space and dignity to structure their own careers. "There weren't many women litigators when I started out, and hardly any women judges. There was a lot of expectation to act like our male peers. Most of the mentoring came from men, and mentoring in the male style may not feel comfortable for a woman. As I went along, I realized there were tons of expectations set for me by other people. I feel a responsibility to share my experiences with other women and tell them that it's important to do good work, but it's also important to give attention to your health and your spiritual and intellectual development. Without balance, you burn out. There is no rule about what a young woman lawyer is supposed to be. From my perspective, having been at a large firm for a long time, it's easy to feel like a failure when you can't do the impossible. There will always be that one superstar who seems to be doing it all, but the rest of us are normal people. Avoid the expectation trap and look around and develop a style that works for you."

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Practice Areas

High-Asset Divorce
Pre-Marriage Considerations
Child Custody
Appellate Law

Attorneys

Kathleen M. Newman
Nancy E. Murphy
Alexandra L. Michelson
Shaina Praska

Staff

Paralegal Adrienne Summerfield
Paralegal Carol Spohn
Legal Assistant April Meyers

Select Honors

10 Best Client Satisfaction,
American Institute of Family Law
Attorneys, 2015
Best Law Firms, Best Lawyers, 2011-
2012
Top 50 Women Lawyers in
Minnesota,
Super Lawyers

ATTORNEY AT LAW

MAGAZINE®



DOWNTOWN LA EDITION

VOL.2 NO. 1

arning international acclaim for winning the \$30 million wrongful death jury verdict against actor Robert Blake, Dubin struck big again in 2016 with a landmark \$10.2 million jury verdict that created a brand-new path around the much hated MICRA. Dubin successfully argued that post-death concealment should not be limited by MICRA, and opened the door for punitive damages in wrongful death cases. In 2017, Dubin will be co-lead trial counsel on the massive lawsuit resulting from the devastating big rig crash in Orland, California.

Dubin's is a face, name and reputation recognized and admired well beyond his California practice. Certain facets of his personality that are rarely discussed, however, are his humanity and humility. There is something decidedly salt-of-the-earth, grounded and wholly Midwestern in his nature. Despite a hailstorm of superlatives used to describe him, Dubin remains modest and steadfast in his core values. Portrayed as everything from "celebrity attorney" to "the real-life Superman," Dubin, while admitting to being flattered, mildly eschews these epithets.

"I don't consider myself a celebrity attorney," he says, "just beyond proud and flattered to be mentioned along with trial lawyers that I consider to be the best in the business. To be considered at that level, is something I worked very hard to achieve, and work harder to maintain. Many of the lawyers working on the FedEx case with me are trial lawyers I have admired my entire career, just dripping with passion and talent.

"I never really got too hung up on that Hollywood stuff," he adds. "Through all the years of worldwide attention during the Robert Blake case, I figured out how to use the power of the media only when it benefits my clients."

Still glowing in the spotlight more than a decade later, it's apparent that Dubin is not a one-hit wonder. While he doesn't actively seek high-profile cases, clients typically seek him out, confident they will receive undaunting devotion and the highest level of representation.

"If someone comes to me with what might be considered a high-profile case, they know I'm not going to do things just to get my name out there. Utilizing the media is an art form that can't be ignored in these high-profile cases, but every move must have a purpose."

While Dubin is still often called for his legal opinions on current headline cases, he rarely agrees.

"I often get calls from ABC, CNN, and other major networks, asking me to appear on a program or comment on whatever the current case may be," he says, "and I don't. Having gone through a high-profile trial on that level, I understand the frustration when someone else is talking about my case and doesn't know everything, yet goes on national TV as an expert. I'm really turned off by talking heads for that reason. So, the only time you'll see me on TV is if it's involving my case, and if it's beneficial to my client to do so. If both of those prongs aren't met, well, the trap of celebrity in Los Angeles is something that I admire from a distance."

GO WEST, YOUNG MAN

When Dubin left his Michigan home for Los Angeles, it wasn't bright lights or fame he sought, but rather the sunny relief from long, cold and blustery winters. Already focused on a law career, his



Dan Sharp Photography

ATTORNEY of the YEAR

inherent sense of right and wrong, compelled him to choose his specialty in personal injury and wrongful death. In this niche, he's not only found success but tremendous satisfaction.

"I always dreamed of coming to L.A. Somehow, I always knew that I'd wind up here," he says. "When I finally did make it out here, the first time was during college, it was definitely a feeling of coming home."

"I have the utmost respect for the system, the courtroom, the bailiff, the jurors, opposing counsel, it just makes me so proud to be a part of it all. I've often teared up driving to jury trials, so proud, that I'm actually doing what I've always dreamed of doing."

Dubin's commitment to righting wrongs and preserving justice was matched only by his desire to prove worthy of the faith his mother had invested in him. He attributes his "good heart" to her, and despite his obvious financial success and subsequent material acquisitions, Dubin's most prized possession is a seemingly long-lost photo of him and his beloved mother. Taken right before she succumbed to cancer, he was both surprised and delighted, when the L.A. Times ran the photo with a full-page prestigious profile article.

"This picture seemed to just turn up out of nowhere," he says. "I'm not sure I'd ever seen it before, and there she is right in the center. What's amazing, is that's the only press conference she'd ever attended, and hence the only photo she ever appeared in."

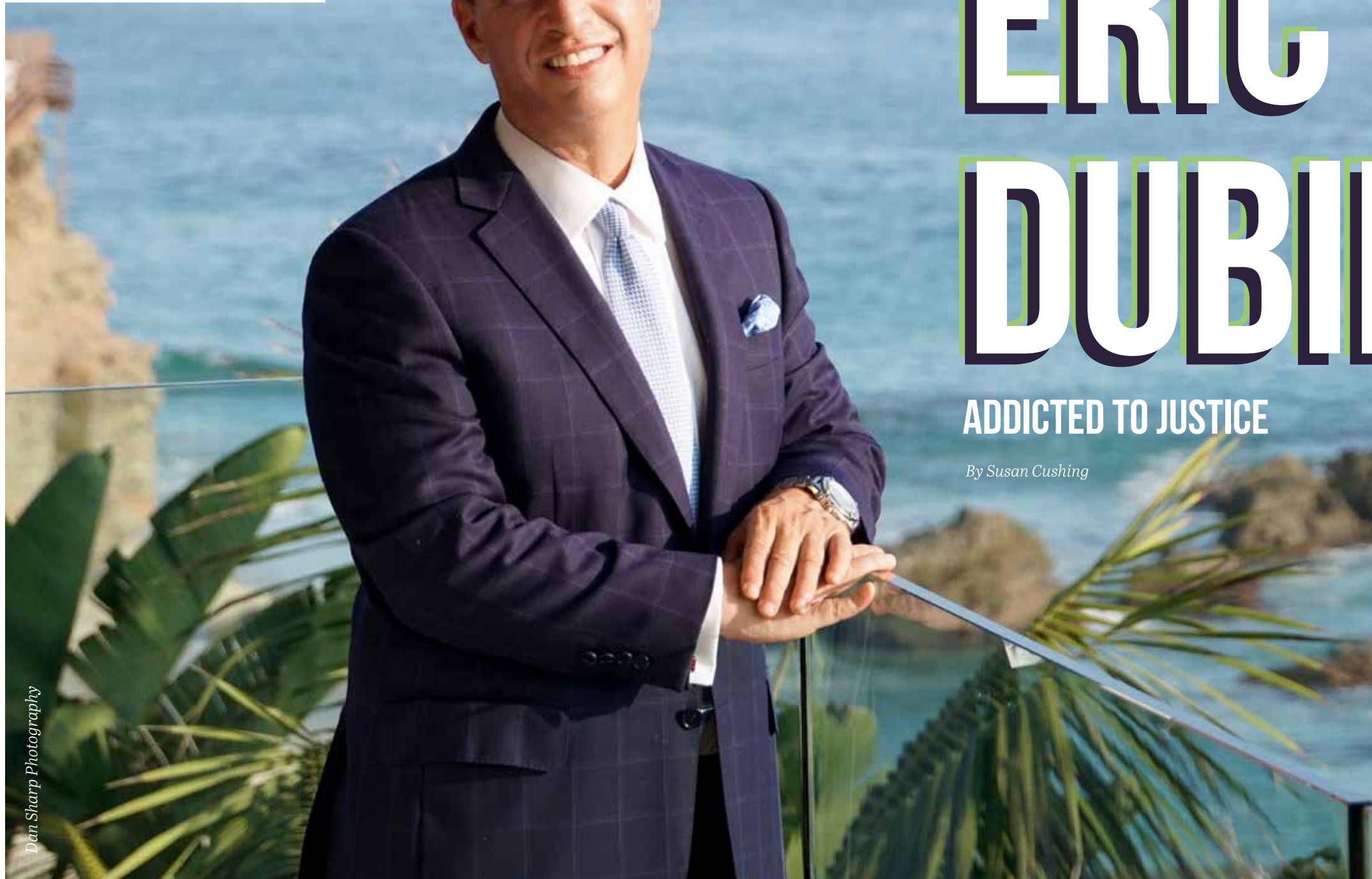
"That to me, is something that's priceless. She was the best friend I've ever had," he continues, his voice reverberating with emotion. "When I deposed Blake, she came out. I'd come home every night with the videos and she watched them, literally from about 5 p.m. until four in the morning. And, it wasn't because she was my mom, but because they were fascinating!"

Unfortunately, his mother did not live long enough to witness her son's unmitigated success and national acclaim, proving actor Robert Blake was in fact, responsible for the death of his wife Bonnie Lee Blakey. Aside from winning a \$30 million jury verdict on behalf of the victim's family (after the state failed to prove Blake guilty), for Dubin, it was equally important for the sake of Blakey's children, to clear their mother's name after being ruthlessly slandered by Blake and his lawyers.

"As far as the Blake case," says Dubin, "I really wanted to win for her kids and for the detectives who worked so hard and then lost in the criminal trial. I needed to prove he killed her to validate their hard work and get closure for those kids. Proving Blake guilty was naturally the prime objective, but it was also incredibly important for me to rectify the damage he and his defense had done to her reputation. In a sense, he killed her twice, first in the car and then in the media. Getting that verdict literally changed the course of those kids' lives."

While his sense of justice applies to everyone, Dubin is particularly moved by iniquities affecting children, and works both through his practice and on his own time to effectuate change. He was recently presented with the 2016 Hero of Hope Award by longtime friend Tom Mesereau for his work with the N-Action Family Network.

ATTORNEY of the YEAR



Dan Sharp Photography

ERIC DUBIN

ADDICTED TO JUSTICE

By Susan Cushing

It's virtually impossible to find new adjectives to describe the outstanding career of Eric Dubin, our Attorney of the Year. Peppered with well-deserved praise and accolades, his many accomplishments have been highly publicized in dozens of prestigious publications. However, the most articulate validation of Dubin's supreme prowess is best evidenced through the multitude of wins and monumental monetary awards for his clients.

GROUNDBREAKING DECISION

An example of Dubin's deep-seated compassion for his clients can be found in the historic 2016 case, representing the family of a 15-year-old who died at a Mission Viejo care facility. The boy suffered from cerebral palsy and a seizure disorder, and Dubin successfully argued he died as a direct result of staff failure to administer his anti-seizure medication. This was compounded by the fact that the caregiver not only delayed calling emergency services after finding him unresponsive, but did not attempt CPR. It was subsequently discovered, that she was not trained or certified to do so. When EMTs arrived, she was bathing two other patients.

A heartbreaking case from the outset, Dubin was incensed to discover that even if the facility was found guilty, damages were capped at \$250,000. Nor could elder abuse rights be enforced, because the child was not yet 16, qualifying him as a dependent adult.

Thanks to Dubin's tenacious fight to find a way around the Medical Injury Compensation Reform Act (MICRA), the parents were awarded \$10.2 million in punitive and actual damages. Moreover, a law that has been in place for nearly 40 years, putting a \$250,000 cap on pain and suffering damages in medical malpractice cases, has been successfully challenged and the verdict immediately snatched up for inclusion in the 2016 California Jury Instructions Handbook. This momentous win also lays the groundwork for future attorneys to attack the archaic law.

"Clearly, his death was caused by the wrongdoing of the defendant, who claimed zero liability from day one," reports Dubin. "To prove everything the parents were claiming was true, and to have a jury unanimously say, '\$10.2 million,' was a moment I'll never forget. It was literally a movie moment for this mom, who could take a deep exhale for the first time in like three years, and let it go."

"It was an American stamp of justice and validation," he says, "and that's who I am and that's why I work 20 hour days to win these cases. There's no other way to do it."

FULL-ON FOCUS

Fully immersed in each case, Dubin says nothing else matters, in fact, he doesn't even check his emails. "My family and friends understand this," he says. "Honestly, that's how you win. I know my case better than anyone in the courtroom. I can go to a page line in the deposition in a heartbeat, and if opposing counsel strays, I can pull that page up almost from memory. It's like I have a short-term, photographic memory. It goes away, but it's probably because I've lived and breathed the material for so long."

Doing his own "footwork" isn't a control issue for Dubin,

nor his ego, but rather, his belief that only by reviewing each piece of evidence, every witness and deposition himself, can he truly be as prepared as he wants to be before setting foot into the courtroom.

"There's a tremendous advantage when you can pull up details," he says. "As a trial attorney, I don't feel that's optional; it's my job."

His skills were certainly put to the test during the Blake trial, which was the biggest investigation in LAPD history. With 70 witnesses, each with about eight banker boxes of materials, Dubin handled all the review and preparation on his own. Just the way he prefers.

"It was like climbing Mount Everest without oxygen," he quips. "Now, every trial since has been a little bit easier. When you've conquered Mount Everest without oxygen, you have the supreme confidence to tackle less daunting peaks."

"Preparing for, and during trials, I don't have a life," he continues candidly. "It's like being a surgeon, fully focused on his patient. Cases can be all-consuming, especially when it involves wrongful death. It's hard for that not to play tricks with your mind and take control of your psyche."

A consummate professional, Dubin also understands the importance of balance and has a variety of ways to relax and decompress.

"I do try to pace myself, taking a breather from time to time. I enjoy yoga, music, and I like to run on the beach during sunsets. I have great friends, and feel so blessed to be living here in beautiful Southern California."

Topping his list of favorite ways to spend his downtime are his children. Dubin and his son have season tickets for the Rams games and he says he's had to brush up his dance skills to keep up with his talented daughter.

"My daughter is crazy talented, and we did the daddy-daughter dances in front of thousands with her dance studio for many years," he says, "so I had to perfect my Running Man moves by drawing on my Motown swagger. And my son has already written more books than me at the age of 12, I am beyond blessed to have them both in my life."

EMOTIONS AND EMOTING

Every lawyer develops a style, and Dubin is no exception. Previously a professor of law at Whittier College and the co-author of two bestselling books, "The Star Chamber" and "Beyond a Reasonable Doubt," Dubin's life truly centers around the justice system.

He's particularly proud of the tutelage he received from the legendary Gerry Spence. It is from Spence, Dubin says, that he learned "people don't go to the theatre to see if actors memorized their lines, they go to be moved by the story."

In the courtroom, that translates to not being about the perfect lawyer, wearing the perfect tie, and not forgetting any of your words," says Dubin. "All of that is really counter-productive. If you open your heart to the jurors, they'll open theirs to you."

He goes on to offer a comparison of an ego-filled actor and one who relates to his audience.

"If an actor drops a prop on stage," he says, "and is too pompous

ATTORNEY of the YEAR



Dan Sharp Photography

NOTABLE YEARS

"Legally Speaking with Eric Dubin," Talk Show on CBS Radio every Saturday Morning on FM 97.1.

2003

\$30 Million Jury Verdict against Robert Blake in Los Angeles, CA.

2005

Published "The Star Chamber" and collaborated with Larry King to write, "Reasonable Doubt."

2007

Named Best Lawyer in Orange County by OC Weekly for his work on the Kelly Thomas matter.

2013

\$10.2 Million Dollar Jury Verdict MICRA/Wrongful Death Case.

2015

Hero of Hope Award. From the n-Action Organization, presented by Tom Mesereau.

2016

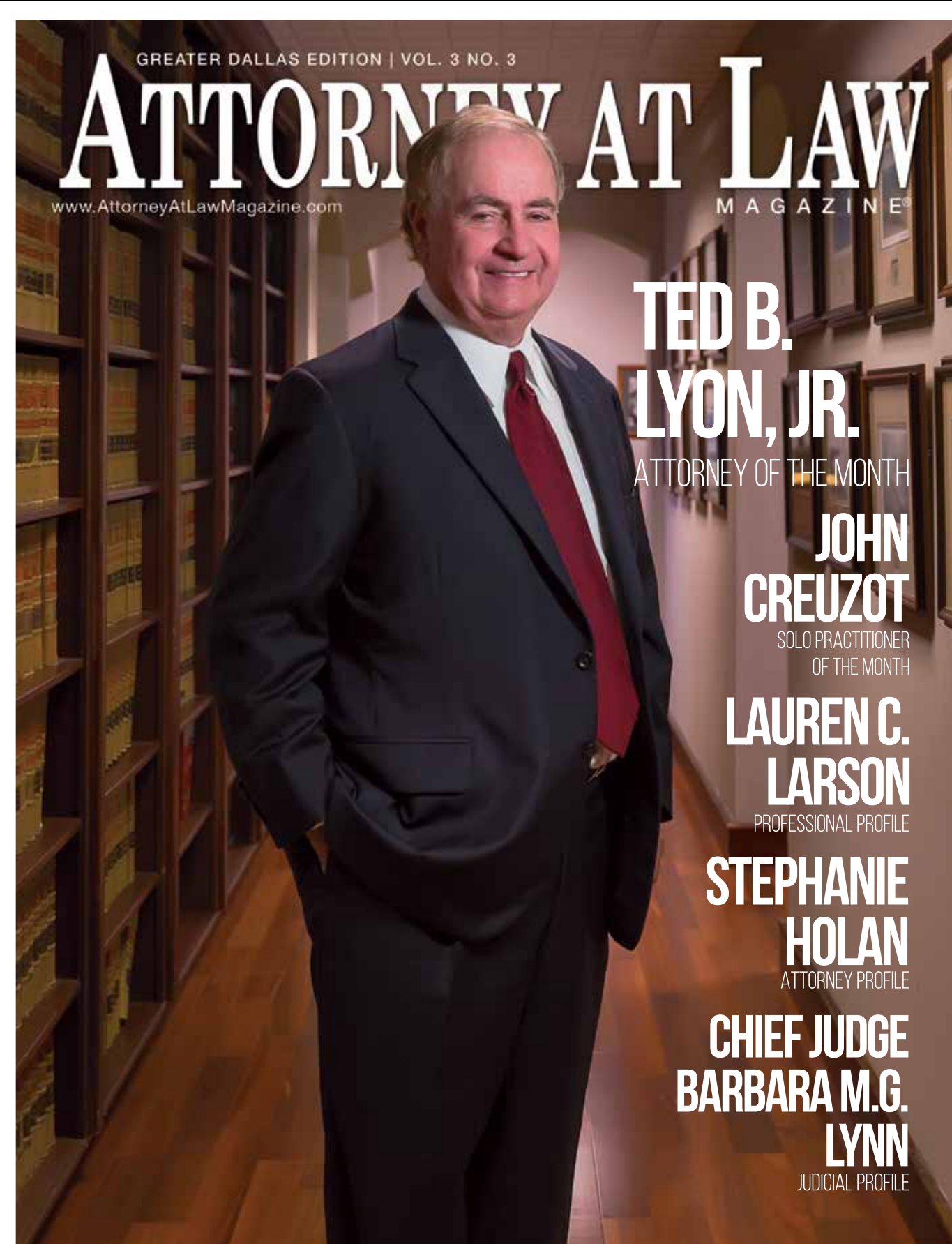
Co-Lead Trial Counsel with Paul Kinsel and Greene Bruller & Wheeler in the FedEx school bus crash.

2017

ATTORNEY AT LAW

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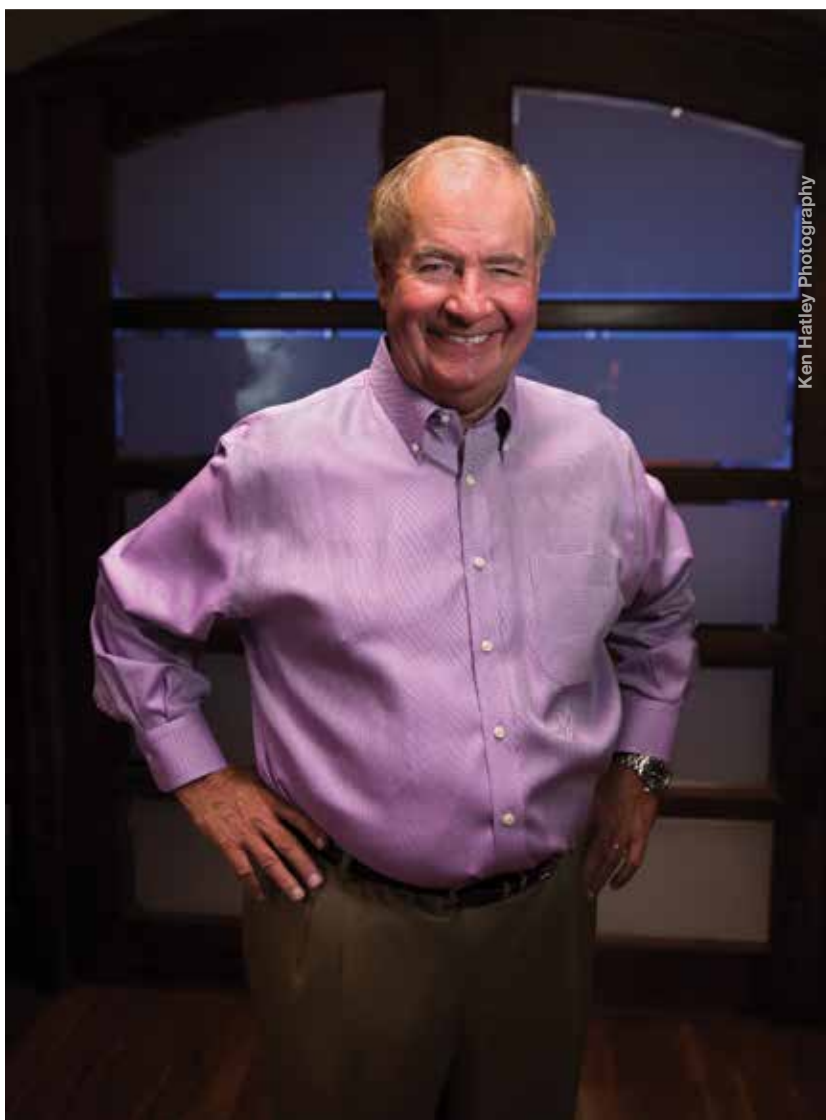
ATTORNEY OF THE MONTH

TED B. LYON, JR.

Trying Cases.

*Rebuilding
Lives.*

By Dan Baldwin



"I really care about representing injured people and helping them rebuild their lives. That's what motivates me to continue practicing law and that means actually trying cases for people in serious need."

The law firm is based in Dallas, but serves clients throughout Texas and other states. Of the firm's current caseload of approximately 600 cases, 200 are out of state. Ted B. Lyon & Associates has seven lawyers, a full-time business manager, and a number of paralegals. Lyon says trial experience is his firm's competitive edge. "We're real trial lawyers. Every year we get cases ranked in the Top 100 Cases in the state of Texas. We also get verdicts that are in the top 10 in the nation. We've done that three times. Texas Lawyer publishes a feature on the top 100 verdicts and we're in it almost every year."

Ted B. Lyon & Associates has won numerous multimillion-dollar cases such as a \$296 million verdict in *Smalley v. Koch*, an \$84 million verdict in *Waldrip v. U-Haul*, and a \$20.4 million verdict in *Wiles v. Ford Motor Co.*

Lyon is a recognized expert in personal injury and has been featured in local and national media coverage, including *Good Morning America*, *60 Minutes*, *NBC Dateline*, *Texas Lawyer*, *The National Law Journal*, *Dallas Observer* and *D Magazine*.

He graduated from East Texas University (now known as Texas A&M Commerce) with a Bachelor of Science in political science in 1972 and earned his Juris Doctor degree from Southern Methodist University School of Law in 1975. Like many successful attorneys his interest in a law career was influenced early in life when he saw the film, "To Kill a Mockingbird."

"That really motivated me to help people as a lawyer. After watching that movie, I knew that's what I wanted to be. The natural evolution of my law practice led me to an awareness of what I wanted to do, which is helping severely injured people. That is a calling for me," Lyon says.

Lyon received an early, real-world introduction to trial work during law school, trying his first case in his third year. "I had a senior lawyer supervising me. I brought the case in, tried it all basically by myself and won it. It was a big deal for me at that time. It was during my third year in law school. I lost 12 pounds in a week. I didn't eat or sleep for a week basically. After that I knew I could do it and I knew I could be good at it," he says.

Lyon says he enjoys the competitive nature of trial work. "I've always been a real sportsman. I enjoyed sports when I was young. I coached baseball for 18 years. I played some college football. I'm very competitive. The only game I know where you can still put the uniform on at my age is being a trial lawyer."

“

We're real trial lawyers. Every year we get cases ranked in the Top 100 Cases in the state of Texas. We also get verdicts that are in the top 10 in the nation. We've done that three times. Texas Lawyer publishes a feature on the top 100 verdicts and we're in it almost every year.

”

Lyon could have taken his law career in an entirely different direction. He got married right out of high school and eventually took a job as a police officer, working nights and attending school during the day. His ultimate goal was to form his own firm, so he opened his own law practice right after law school. Having been the president of a local police association in Mesquite, it provided him with numerous business contacts. Still, he went through the expected struggles of a startup business. "If you had fifty dollars or a promise to pay me fifty dollars I'd be your lawyer," he says.

He took on everything that came in the door, but having been a police officer he had a competitive edge because of his understanding of criminal cases. For example, he tried 12 DWI cases in one year and won every one of them.

Lyon says his biggest challenge in the early days was just learning how to do things, noting that law schools teach one how to think like a lawyer, but not the day-to-day practice and managing of a law firm.

The hardest aspect of that early learning curve was in the practice of civil law, a process Lyon calls a "butt kicking." His first five years out of law school he had three cases that went to the Texas Supreme Court. Because of that learning curve he did not



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PRACTICE AREAS

Personal Injury
Business Litigation
Consumer Protection

EDUCATION

Juris Doctor, Southern Methodist University Dedman School of Law, 1975
Bachelor of Science in Political Science, East Texas University, 1972

SELECT HONORS

The 500 Most Powerful Business Leaders in Dallas-Fort Worth, D CEO Magazine, 2016
Legends of the Bar Recipient, Dallas Bar Association, 2016
Wildlife Recovery Award, Montana Sportsmen for Fish and Wildlife, 2014
Teddy Roosevelt Conservationist of the Year, Big Game Forever, 2012
Included in Texas Super Lawyers, 2003-2016
AV Rated, Martindale Hubbell, 1986-2016
Top 100 Trial Lawyers in America, The American Trial Lawyers Association, 2007-2013

PUBLICATION

"The Real Wolf"

FAMILY

Wife of 49 Years - Donna
Sons - Ted III & Payton
Grandchildren - Madelyn, Harper & Turner

HOBBIES

Hunting & Fishing



"I'VE ALWAYS BEEN A REAL SPORTSMAN I'M VERY COMPETITIVE. THE ONLY GAME I KNOW WHERE YOU CAN STILL PUT THE UNIFORM ON AT MY AGE IS BEING A TRIAL LAWYER."

then know that an attorney needs an appellate lawyer. He took those cases all the way up himself.

Lyon says, "I just thought that's what you do. You spend endless hours trying to figure that stuff out and I had these older lawyers I could bounce things off, but I had to do all the work myself. It was a process. I was so competitive and I wanted to do whatever to make sure I won. I spent the hours, whatever the hours took. That's the way I went through law school. I worked full time after my first semester, so it wasn't anything for me to spend 70 or 80 hours a week working. And I did it."

Training and real-world experience are hallmarks of the attorneys at Ted B. Lyon & Associates. Each year all of the attorneys invest considerable time attending legal seminars and conferences. Additionally, Lyon stresses the importance of actual trial practice. "I want every lawyer in the firm to go to trial several times every year. We have small cases and we have younger lawyers working on them. I want those younger lawyers to go to trial at least four or five times a year. The reason for that is that small cases don't generate enough income to be profitable, but when I go to trial against the Koch brothers or I go to trial against Ford Motor Company or I go to trial against one

of the big corporations in America I want real trial lawyers who have participated in real trials assisting me," Lyon says.

In his personal life, Lyon and his wife, Donna, have been married 49 years. They have two boys, Ted III and Payton. They have three grandchildren a 12-year-old granddaughter, Madelyn, a 2-year-old granddaughter, Harper, and a 4-month-old grandson, Turner.

Lyon enjoys fishing and hunting, especially with his sons. The family has a place in Montana and a ranch in South Dakota where they spend at least a month each year climbing the mountains, hunting and fishing. "I love being outdoors. I love the mountains," he says.

Lyon is also an author. His book "The Real Wolf" based on a case he had in Montana, is about the devastation of the deer and elk herds in Yellowstone National Park and has been picked up by a New York publishing house. He is very active in wildlife conservation.

Lyon is an attorney who loves his work and the challenges and opportunities it brings. "My current challenge is to try to remain relevant. I want to help people as long as I'm physically and mentally capable of doing it," he says.

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ATTORNEY AT LAW

MAGAZINE®

Attorney of the Month
Sean Modjarrad

Mediator Profile
Tamar Meeks

Judicial Profile
Judge Elizabeth Crowder

Attorney Profile
Elizabeth Davis Frizell

Of Counsel Profile
Audrey Moorehead

Attorney of the Month

Sean Modjarrad

Fighting for
Justice.
Fighting for the
Underdog.

By Dan Baldwin

Ken Helly Photography

"Being an immigrant and coming to America, you're always behind. You're always trying to catch up. And as a result, you see a lot of injustice. I can see what is wrong and what could go wrong. Also, what can be done better. The underdog doesn't always get a chance to speak and present his or her own point of view. Being a mouthpiece, being a person who advocates for the person with no voice, that is important," says Sean Modjarrad, managing shareholder at Modjarrad Abusaad Said Law Firm (MAS Law Firm).

He comes by his commitment to fighting for the underdog naturally. He and his family are Iranian immigrants who arrived in the United States unable to speak English. Unfortunate incidents with the legal system formed his opinions and his desire to advocate for the underdog early.



"My father was in the restaurant business, but he had challenges running a business. He struggled with negotiating lease agreements and other contracts properly as well as minutia that should never have been an issue. It wasn't a lack of intelligence or hard work, but a lack of knowledge of the process that ultimately became an issue. He just never knew what he was getting into, which is a common plight of immigrants. Lawyers were expensive and out of the price range of many small business owners. The only reason he was unable to protect himself is because he didn't have good counsel or proper guidance. It's very difficult for regular ordinary people to find a lawyer or even go to a lawyer's office. You can't just say, 'Hey, let's go to a lawyer and ask this question.' If you have a friend who is a lawyer it's easy, but if you're completely out of the legal system, you just don't pick up the phone and say, 'Hey, I'll call a lawyer today,'" Modjarrad says.

His family upbringing had another effect on his decision to become an attorney. He says, "As a Middle Easterner, the way we are raised since you're knee-high, a half-pint, is that you're always going to be a doctor, a lawyer or an engineer. Those are the three life choices. One of my sisters is a doctor. One studied to be an architect, so being a lawyer was my path."

A Linear Education

His education in two varying fields provides support in his chosen profession. "Accounting helps on the commercial litigation side in analyzing documents. It makes decision making easier and quicker. Also, accounting is a linear process and law is the same way. It is like going from step number one to step number two to step number three to step number four; basically, that's how one analyzes legal matters as well. Accounting teaches you to think logically," he says.

In 2000, immediately after law school, Modjarrad moved to Texas and opened his own firm, working out of a single office in Deep Ellum. The move was intimidating and one that friends and relatives said would be the biggest mistake of his life.

Modjarrad credits a lot of his early success to having good mentors, which at the time proved to be something of a surprise. "Our legal community is incredible when it comes to helping young attorneys succeed – regardless of the person's background. This is especially true of the older generation. Back when I started everyone wanted me to succeed. They could see you working and struggling and they all had an open-door policy. 'Come on over and I'll help you.' I was just not expecting that much help. I'm very grateful for it. I see it as part of my duty to continue that tradition in my own mentoring efforts. It's a way to pass the baton on to the next generation."



"The underdog doesn't always get a chance to speak and present his or her own point of view. Being a mouthpiece, being a person who advocates for the person with no voice, that is important.**"**

Nazeh Abusaad joined the firm in 2003 and they operated under the name of M&A. Mohammad Said's name was added in 2012 and now the firm operates under the name of MAS.

Prominent Cases for the Little Known Underdogs

Modjarrad played a significant role in the 2006 *Good v. The City of Irving and Detective Curtis* suit, in which a new law was enacted by the Fifth Circuit Federal Court of Appeals. This case was just one of many in which Modjarrad fought and won for the little guy.

Donald Good was a young man who was picked up and charged for crimes he did not commit – burglary of habitation with intent to commit theft, rape and sexual abuse. He had three trials and served more than 13 years – wrongfully. The case against him was based on improper or fabricated evidence. After passing summary judgment motions, the case was appealed to the Fifth Circuit, and after prevailing at the Fifth Circuit, the case was sent on to the U.S. Supreme Court. The Court declined the writ and about a week before trial, the case was settled.

Modjarrad says, "This case is dear to my heart because when I came to America I didn't speak English. I really felt for the man. At the same time that my life's trajectory went up, Donald's life went down and it went down far and fast. Somehow, coincidence, whatever you want to call it, we met and I took the case. Again, everybody told me not to take the case. 'You shouldn't do this. This doesn't make sense.' But I saw it as my duty to pay back because my life had become so great and this man's life went south for something he did not do. That's how I got involved in civil rights cases."

Currently the firm is representing the family of another "little guy" – one with a personal connection. Modjarrad worked his way through school waiting on tables. The man he used to work with was arrested and put in jail. The man was a diabetic and had suffered from the disease for 15 years, but he was not allowed to take his medication in jail. "Unfortunately, he passed away, so I am representing the family. Four and a half years have gone by and we're still fighting it. We won a pretty good victory recently so I'm hopeful that in the next three or four years this case will get wrapped up," Modjarrad says.

Professor or ABC at the Office

"One of the jokes that they make about me here is that they call me 'the Professor' or 'ABC' because I'm always explaining – or as it is called around the office, giving lectures – and, of course, one of my favorite sayings is ABC – Always be Closing," Modjarrad says.

His work ethic is basic. After you're done working, work some more. His business philosophy is to focus on doing a good job for each client and in doing that the business side will take care of itself. His management style is, in his own words, OCD. "I'm very micro. My door is always open. I follow every step. I realize that everyone makes mistakes, but you don't make the same mistake twice."

One of the other matters he is currently focused on is finding a balance between the passion of work with the needs of the family. He and his wife, Dr. Nasa Sadarian, have just celebrated their third anniversary. "We met on a blind date and the moment we met we knew we were going to be married, at least I knew. She is a double board certified physician and her practice is limited to allergies and immunology these

At A Glance

Modjarrad Abusaad Said Law Firm

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(860) 789-1664
www.dallasarelaw.com

Firm Practice Areas

Civil Rights Law
Serious Personal Injury
Business and Corporate Law
Civil Litigation
Family Law
Criminal Law
Social Security
Consumer Law
Immigration Law

Bar Admissions

State Bar of Texas
U.S. District Court, Northern District of Texas
U.S. District Court, Eastern District of Texas

Education

Juris Doctor, Samford University, 2000
MBA, Samford University, 2000
Master of Accountancy, Samford University, 2000
Bachelor of Science in Accounting, University of North Texas, 1997

Professional Affiliations

Texas Bar Foundation, Fellow
Cumberland School of Law, Advisory Board
UNT Dallas College of Law, Board of Visitors
College of the State Bar of Texas
Order of Barristers
Beta Alpha Psi
Iranian American Chamber of Commerce, Founding Member
Iranian American Bar Association
American Bar Association
University of Texas at Dallas, Adjunct Professor
Shahrvard Magazine, Columnist, 2010-Present

Awards

Best Lawyers in Dallas, D Magazine, 2014, 2016
Texas Super Lawyers, Super Lawyers, 2014, 2017
Top 100 Trial Lawyers, The National Trial Lawyers, 2014, 2017
Premier 100, American Academy of Trial Attorneys, 2015-2017
AVVO Rating of 10/10
Featured in Newsweek

days and her clinic is at Dallas Presbyterian," he says.

They have two daughters – Surt and Sava. "My mother and father live in Dallas. My sisters live here, so family is very important to us. What we do at this age for my kids is to get the whole family together at least once or twice a week so my kids get to understand the meaning and importance of family," he says.

He enjoys golling a good cigar, single malt scotch, and deep sea fishing – trolling for game fish.

Much of his time is invested in volunteer work. He was one of the founding members of the Iranian-American Chamber of Commerce in Dallas about five years ago. He also was one of the founding members of the Iranian-American Bar Association. "This is for the younger generation, so they'll know you have to work hard. You cannot just show up to work and expect everything to be handed to you. I wanted to provide a pathway, a support system – something my father didn't have. That's another example of passing the baton to the younger generation," he says.

He sits on an advisory board for his law school in Alabama and on the board of visitors for University of North Texas School of Law.

"Life is a daily struggle and every day I'm learning something new that I can do better than I did yesterday. Remembering how we came to this country and remembering struggling, I know it doesn't matter how tough things may be today; they're not as tough as they were back then. You need to be appreciative and grateful of what you have," he says.

ATTORNEY AT LAW

M A G A Z I N E ®

MINNESOTA EDITION
NOVEMBER 2016



Kathleen M. Newman



Nancy E. Murphy



Alexandra L. Michelson



Shaina Praska



Kathleen M. Newman & Associates P.A.

The Space & Dignity to Choose

By Haley Freeman

Few family law practitioners possess the breadth of experience or numerous accolades earned by Kathleen M. Newman in her 35-plus years in the profession. She is board certified as a family law trial advocate by the National Board of Trial Advocacy and also a skilled mediator who is adept at resolving family law matters including complex and high-asset divorce, pre-marriage considerations, child custody and appellate issues.

After clerking for a family court judge, practicing with a boutique firm and then rising to partner in a large firm, Newman made the decision to open a family law practice predicated on holistic client representation. Today, she and her team begin by asking clients to tell their story, and then provide the right balance of space and guidance to help people make the best possible choices for themselves and their families. Newman is also a certified life coach, trained at the distinguished Hudson Institute of Santa Barbara. These special skills enhance the care and compassion she and her team convey to each of the families they serve.

Newman is joined by an exceptional group of women lawyers and staff who share her passion for excellence and desire to see families through momentous life changes with confidence and grace. While her legal team is currently made up of all women, Newman says that has not always been the case, as she has previously employed men, as well. But the present band of women are a dynamic force, spanning generations and areas of experience in family law.

Nancy E. Murphy has more than three decades of experience helping Minnesota families with family law matters including divorce, child custody, child support, spousal maintenance and property division. Her caring and competent representation is further enhanced by her pro bono service to local organizations, among them, the Volunteer Lawyers Network, Chrysalis, and Harriet Tubman.

Newman has also welcomed two young women attor-

neys to her practice, Alexandra Michelson and Shaina Praska, each with impeccable credentials and the drive to offer the highest standard of representation. "One of the reasons they are so amazing is that they both clerked for the family court for very experienced judges," Newman said. "They bring to the firm not just knowledge about family law, but they really have an intimate knowledge of how the system works in Hennepin County. I find that is invaluable for our clients."

According to Newman, when people are in the throes of divorce, they don't tend to think about the long-term, or how the decisions they are currently making will impact them in years to come. Newman and her associates are skilled at listening and helping their clients to think past their immediate concerns.

"Even when people want a divorce, a lot of them are focused on the immediacy of their need to get out. People even in their 40s and 50s are not thinking about retirement or planning for the allocation of their assets. They have no idea what their Social Security income will be, or how much they can pull out of their retirement and how long it will last in terms of life expectancy. People come to us in a state I call 'divorce crazy.' It's something almost everybody experiences. They are being asked to make hugely important decisions for their life and their kids' lives at a time when they are least prepared to make them. I want to help clients get through that. On the other side, they're not divorce crazy and they have to live with the consequences of the decisions they made when they were not at their best."

Although she is a seasoned trial attorney, Newman is a strong proponent of mediation, which allows people to become the architects of their own lives after divorce. "I've invested a lot in the firm on mediation training, including in-house training with the other lawyers. I bring them to as many of my mediations as I can to give them hands-on experience. Life coaching skills are also a real help here because it helps people to move off the win-lose mentality and focus on what is realistic. That's what negotiation means - bringing compromise into the picture. Compromises people make for themselves are almost invariably better than decisions made by a judge who doesn't know them. Kids can be a big motivator. Most people care enough about their kids to move off their own unhappiness or concerns about money to swallow a lot of compromise for their kids' sake."

Newman's holistic culture is also felt by the people inside the firm, where she has created a supportive practice environment that allows everyone to make choices about the time they devote to their careers, families and personal pursuits.

Michelson commented, "The firm is very supportive of me balancing my professional and personal goals. We have a marketing team that we are able to utilize for coaching and defining out our professional goals and how to achieve them. I am personally involved in many groups and volunteer work, and that work greatly supported by the firm both financially and emotionally. In

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I believe that when you're a more well-rounded person and satisfied with life, you are able put more of yourself out there for your clients. You can better listen to them and focus on what they need. It also makes you a better negotiator, because in my mind, angry people don't tend to be good negotiators.”

addition, I am able to go to seminars around the world relating to family law to expand my knowledge and learn from other practitioners. For example, this fall, the firm is sending me to an American Bar Association family law conference in Quebec City, where I will be able to learn from family law practitioners from all over the world."

Newman added, "I believe that when you're a more well-rounded person and satisfied with life, you are able put more of yourself out there for your clients. You can better listen to them and focus on what they need. It also makes you a better negotiator, because in my mind, angry people don't tend to be good negotiators."

Early in Newman's career, she experienced a very different kind of legal culture, and she takes a passionate stand for giving women in the legal profession the space and dignity to structure their own careers. "There weren't many women litigators when I started out, and hardly any women judges. There was a lot of expectation to act like our male peers. Most of the mentoring came from men, and mentoring in the male style may not feel comfortable for a woman. As I went along, I realized there were tons of expectations set for me by other people. I felt a responsibility to share my experiences with other women and tell them that it's important to do good work, but it's also important to give attention to your health and your spiritual and intellectual development. Without balance, you burn out. There is no rule about what a young woman lawyer is supposed to be. From my perspective, having been at a large firm for a long time, it's easy to feel like a failure when you can't do the impossible. There will always be that one superstar who seems to be doing it all, but the rest of us are normal people. Avoid the expectation trap and look around and develop a style that works for you."

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Practice Areas

High-Asset Divorce
Pre-Marriage Considerations
Child Custody
Appellate Law

Attorneys

Kathleen M. Newman
Nancy E. Murphy
Alexandra L. Michelson
Shaina Praska

Staff

Paralegal Adrienne Summerfield
Paralegal Carol Spohn
Legal Assistant April Meyers

Select Honors

10 Best Client Satisfaction,
American Institute of Family Law
Attorneys, 2015
Best Law Firms, Best Lawyers, 2011-
2012
Top 50 Women Lawyers in
Minnesota
Super Lawyers

ATTORNEY AT LAW MAGAZINE®

DOWNTOWN LA EDITION VOL.2 NO. 1



ATTORNEY
of the
YEAR

ERIC DUBIN

ADDICTED TO JUSTICE

By Susan Cushing

It's virtually impossible to find new adjectives to describe the outstanding career of Eric Dubin, our Attorney of the Year. Peppered with well-deserved praise and accolades, his many accomplishments have been highly publicized in dozens of prestigious publications. However, the most articulate validation of Dubin's supreme prowess is best evidenced through the multitude of wins and monumental monetary awards for his clients.

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ATTORNEY of the YEAR

arning international acclaim for winning the \$30 million wrongful death jury verdict against actor Robert Blake, Dubin struck big again in 2016 with a landmark \$10.2 million jury verdict that created a brand-new path around the much hated MICRA. Dubin successfully argued that post-death concealment should not be limited by MICRA and opened the door for punitive damages in wrongful death cases. In 2017, Dubin will be co-lead trial counsel on the massive lawsuit resulting from the devastating big rig crash in Orland, California.

Dubin's is a face, name and reputation recognized and admired well beyond his California practice. Certain facets of his personality that are rarely discussed, however, are his humanity and humility. There is something decidedly salt-of-the-earth, grounded and wholly Midwestern in his nature. Despite a hailstorm of superlatives used to describe him, Dubin remains modest and steadfast in his core values. Portrayed as everything from "celebrity attorney" to "the real-life Superman," Dubin, while admitting to being flattered, mildly rebuffs these epithets.

"I don't consider myself a celebrity attorney," he says, "just beyond proud and flattered to be mentioned along with trial lawyers that I consider to be the best in the business. To be considered at that level, is something I worked very hard to achieve, and work harder to maintain. Many of the lawyers working on the FedEx case with me are trial lawyers I have admired my entire career, just dripping with passion and talent."

"I never really got too hung up on that Hollywood stuff," he adds. "Through all the years of worldwide attention during the Robert Blake case, I figured out how to use the power of the media only when it benefits my clients."

Still glowing in the spotlight more than a decade later, it's apparent that Dubin is not a one-hit wonder. While he doesn't actively seek high-profile cases, clients typically seek him out, confident they will receive undaunting devotion and the highest level of representation.

"If someone comes to me with what might be considered a high-profile case, they know I'm not going to do things just to get my name out there. Utilizing the media is an art form that can't be ignored in these high-profile cases, but every move must have a purpose."

While Dubin is still often called for his legal opinions on current headline cases, he rarely agrees.

"I often get calls from ABC, CNN, and other major networks, asking me to appear on a program or comment on whatever the current case may be," he says, "and I don't. Having gone through a high-profile trial on that level, I understand the frustration when someone else is talking about my case and doesn't know everything, yet goes on national TV as an expert. I'm really turned off by talking heads for that reason. So, the only time you'll see me on TV, is if it's involving my case, and if it's beneficial to my client to do so. If both of those prongs aren't met, well, the trap of celebrity in Los Angeles is something that I admire from a distance."

GO WEST, YOUNG MAN

When Dubin left his Michigan home for Los Angeles, it wasn't bright lights or fame he sought, but rather the sunny relief from long, cold and blustery winters. Already focused on a law career, his



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"I never really got too hung up on that Hollywood stuff. Through all the years of worldwide attention during the Robert Blake case, I figured out how to use the power of the media only when it benefits my clients."

inherent sense of right and wrong, compelled him to choose his specialty in personal injury and wrongful death. In this niche, he's not only found success but tremendous satisfaction.

"I always dreamed of coming to L.A. Somehow, I always knew that I'd wind up here," he says. "When I finally did make it out here, the first time was during college, it was definitely a feeling of coming home."

"I have the utmost respect for the system, the courtroom, the bailiff, the jurors, opposing counsel, it just makes me so proud to be a part of it all. I've often teared up driving to jury trials, so proud, that I'm actually doing what I've always dreamed of doing."

Dubin's commitment to righting wrongs and preserving justice was matched only by his desire to prove worthy of the faith his mother had invested in him. He attributes his "good heart" to her, and despite his obvious financial success and subsequent material acquisitions, Dubin's most prized possession is a seemingly long lost photo of him and his beloved mother. Taken right before she succumbed to cancer, he was both surprised and delighted, when the L.A. Times ran the photo with a full-page prestigious profile article.

"This picture seemed to just turn up out of nowhere," he says. "I'm not sure I'd ever seen it before, and there she is right in the center. What's amazing, is that's the only press conference she'd ever attended, and hence the only photo she ever appeared in. That to me, is something that's priceless."

"She was the best friend I've ever had," he continues, his voice reverberating with emotion. "When I deposed Blake, she came out. I'd come home every night with the videos and she watched them, literally from about 5 p.m. until four in the morning. And, it wasn't because she was my mom, but because they were fascinating!"

Unfortunately, his mother did not live long enough to witness her son's unmitigated success and national acclaim, proving actor Robert Blake was in fact, responsible for the death of his wife Bonnie Lee Bakley. Aside from winning a \$30 million jury verdict on behalf of the victim's family (after the state failed to prove Blake guilty), for Dubin, it was equally important for the sake of Bakley's children, to clear their mother's name after being ruthlessly slandered by Blake and his lawyers.

"As far as the Blake case," says Dubin, "I really wanted to win for her kids and for the detectives who worked so hard and then lost in the criminal trial. I needed to prove he killed her to validate their hard work and get closure for those kids. Proving Blake guilty was naturally the prime objective, but it was also incredibly important for me to rectify the damage he and his defense had done to her reputation. In a sense, he killed her twice, first in the trial and then in the media. Getting that verdict literally changed the course of those kids' lives."

While his sense of justice applies to everyone, Dubin is particularly moved by inequities affecting children, and works both through his practice and on his own time to effectuate change. He was recently presented with the 2016 Hero of Hope Award by longtime friend Tom Mesereau for his work with the N-Action Family Network.



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GROUNDBREAKING DECISION

An example of Dubin's deep-seated compassion for his clients can be found in the historic 2016 case, representing the family of a 15-year-old who died at a Mission Viejo care facility. The boy suffered from cerebral palsy and a seizure disorder, and Dubin successfully argued he died as a direct result of staff failure to administer his anti-seizure medication. This was compounded by the fact that the caregiver not only delayed calling emergency services after finding him unresponsive, but did not attempt CPR. It was subsequently discovered, that she was not trained or certified to do so. When EMTs arrived, she was bathing two other patients.

A heartbreaking case from the outset, Dubin was incensed to discover that even if the facility was found guilty, damages were capped at \$250,000. Nor could elder abuse rights be enforced, because the child was not yet 16, qualifying him as a dependent adult.

Thanks to Dubin's tenacious fight to find a way around the Medical Injury Compensation Reform Act (MICRA), the parents were awarded \$10.2 million in punitive and actual damages. Moreover, a law that has been in place for nearly 40 years, putting a \$250,000 cap on pain and suffering damages in medical malpractice cases, has been successfully challenged and the verdict immediately snatched up for inclusion in the 2016 California Jury Instructions Handbook. This momentous win also lays the groundwork for future attorneys to attack the archaic law.

"Clearly, his death was caused by the wrongdoing of the defendant, who claimed zero liability from day one," reports Dubin. "To prove everything the parents were claiming was true, and to have a jury unanimously say, '\$10.2 million,' was a moment I'll never forget. It was literally a movie moment for this mom, who could take a deep exhale for the first time in like three years, and let it go."

"It was an American stamp of justice and validation," he says, "and that's who I am and that's why I work 20 hour days to win these cases. There's no other way to do it."

FULL-ON FOCUS

Fully immersed in each case, Dubin says nothing else matters, in fact, he doesn't even check his emails.

"My family and friends understand this," he says. "Honestly, that's how you win. I know my case better than anyone in the courtroom. I can go to a page line in the deposition in a heartbeat, and I'm opposing counsel strays. I can pull that page up almost from memory. It's like I have a short-term, photographic memory. It goes away, but it's probably because I've lived and breathed the material for so long."

Doing his own "footwork" isn't a control issue for Dubin,

nor his ego, but rather, his belief that only by reviewing each piece of evidence, every witness and deposition himself, can he truly be as prepared as he wants to be before setting foot into the courtroom.

"There's a tremendous advantage when you can pull up details," he says. "As a trial attorney, I don't feel that's optional, it's my job."

His skills were certainly put to the test during the Blake trial, which was the biggest investigation in LAPD history. With 70 witnesses, each with about eight banker boxes of materials, Dubin handled all the review and preparation on his own. Just the way he prefers.

"It was like climbing Mount Everest without oxygen," he quips. "Now, every trial since has been a little bit easier. When you've conquered Mount Everest without oxygen, you have the supreme confidence to tackle less daunting peaks."

A consummate professional, Dubin also understands the importance of balance and has a variety of ways to relax and decompress. "I do try to pace myself, taking a breather from time to time. I enjoy yoga, music, and I like to run on the beach during sunsets. I have great friends, and feel so blessed to be living here in beautiful Southern California."

Topping his list of favorite ways to spend his downtime are his children. Dubin and his son have season tickets for the Rams games and he says he's had to brush up his dance skills to keep up with his talented daughter.

"My daughter is crazy talented, and we did the daddy-daughter dances in front of thousands with her dance studio for many years," he says. "So I had to perfect my Running Man moves by drawing on my Motown swagger. And my son has already written more books than me at the age of 12, I am beyond blessed to have them both in my life."

EMOTIONS AND EMOTING

Every lawyer develops a style, and Dubin is no exception. Previously a professor of law at Whittier College and the co-author of two bestselling books, "The Star Chamber" and "Beyond a Reasonable Doubt," Dubin's life truly centers around the justice system.

He's particularly proud of the tutelage he received from the legendary Gerry Spence. It is from Spence, Dubin says, that he learned "people don't go to the theatre to see if actors memorized their lines, they go to be moved by the story."

In the courtroom, that translates to not being about the perfect lawyer, wearing the perfect tie, and not forgetting any of your words," says Dubin. "All of that is really counter-productive. If you open your heart to the jurors, they'll open theirs to you."

He goes on to offer a comparison of an ego-filled actor and one who relates to his audience.

"If an actor drops a prop on stage," he says, "and is too pompous

ATTORNEY of the YEAR



NOTABLE YEARS

"Legally Speaking with Eric Dubin," Talk Show on CBS Radio every Saturday Morning on FM 97.1.	2003
\$30 Million Jury Verdict against Robert Blake in Los Angeles, CA.	2005
Published "The Star Chamber" and collaborated with Larry King to write, "Reasonable Doubt."	2007
Named Best Lawyer in Orange County by OC Weekly for his work on the Kelly Thomas matter.	2013
\$10.2 Million Dollar Jury Verdict MICRA Wrongful Death Case.	2015
Hero of Hope Award, from the n-Action Organization, presented by Tom Mesereau.	2016
Co-Lead Trial Counsel with Paul Kinsel and Greene, Bravillet & Wheeler in the FedEx school bus crash.	2017

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