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TOP BOUTIQUES IN CALIFORNIA 2021



KEYSTONE
LAW
GROUP
P.C.

LOS ANGELES

PROBATE

Left to Right: Roee Kaufman, Lindsey Munyer, Verlan Kwan, Joshua Taylor, Shawn Kerendian, Monica Yun

COURTESY OF KEYSTONE LAW GROUP, P.C.

Probate cases often wade into messy family dynamics to protect the wishes of those who've died or can't speak up for themselves. It's an area of law Keystone Law Group, P.C. has litigated this year, especially as the COVID-19 pandemic has become a topic of conservatorship matters.

"If it's not COVID, it's some other type of issue that deals with health and safety," said Shawn S. Kerendian, founder and managing partner. "COVID is just the latest in a long line of issues that come up."

For instance, Keystone credits its fast work in establishing a woman's temporary conservatorship with potentially saving her life. In re: Conservatorship of Mizrahi, 20STPB02325 (Los Angeles Sup. Ct., filed March 9,

2020). Keystone partner Joshua D. Taylor represented a client who wanted to remove her elderly mother from her brother's home due to concerns she would contract COVID-19 from people there.

Time was not on their side. Beyond the imminent threat of illness to a senior with advanced Alzheimer's disease, many courts were closed or only offered limited functions.

"At that time, the probate courts were only hearing emergency matters," said Taylor, explaining that the temporary conservatorship petition "counted as an emergency filing under the existing COVID rules."

Keystone's team obtained emergency orders from a probate judge authorizing the client to move her mother into her home immediately. The daughter re-

ported that her mother's health and mood markedly improved.

"It was very rewarding to see all the progress that she made," Kerendian said.

Keystone began in 2014 with three attorneys; it now has 20 and the firm is expanding its office suite in West Los Angeles.

They handle wills, trusts, estates, beneficiary rights, elder abuse cases, conservatorships, creditor claims, and partition actions. As a result, the boutique firm's clientele can span from creditors to heirs and trustees.

Keystone recently represented the daughter of Hollywood producer Stephen L. Bing in her petition to gain control over her late father's estate. In re: Estate of Stephen L. Bing, 20STPB-07026 (Los Angeles Sup. Ct., filed Aug. 26, 2020). The law

firm helped their client become administrator of Bing's estate, despite not having been named as a beneficiary.

Kerendian said that even amid the pandemic, Keystone's contemporary approach to practicing probate law allowed it to hire more employees and take on more clients this year than in any year prior. Keystone's attorneys easily shifted to remote work, virtual mediations and court proceedings, and advanced video conferencing options for its clients.

"We've always been a very young, tech-forward type of law firm," Kerendian said. "I think due to COVID and the technological advancements that came with it, I think we became even more attractive to a wider range of clients."

— John Roemer