

EMPLOYMENT DEFENSE

California lawyers companies turn to first



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Year in review: After a years-long battle, a civil rights case Bruno won on behalf of UC Berkeley was finally put to rest in 2009 after the plaintiff made two unsuccessful attempts to appeal to the California Supreme Court. The case, which went to trial in 2008, involved a student at Berkeley School of Law who sued the university and two of its deans alleging they discriminated against him because of a disability. Bruno was able to prove that quite the opposite was true — the university went above and beyond their duties to accommodate the student's disabilities, including paying \$150,000 to create hard bound texts with large print.

Bruno successfully defended the Regents of the University of California against a federal discrimination lawsuit that was heard in U.S. District Court in February and March. The suit was filed by a

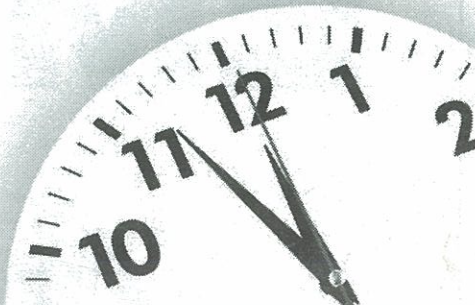
former groundskeeper, who claimed she was fired because of a previous lawsuit against her employer and supervisor. Bruno was able to show the woman was let go after other employees complained about her caustic personality and confrontations she had with them.

Next challenge: The chair of the employment practice at Gordon & Rees is lead counsel in more than 50 pending employment litigation matters.

EDITOR'S NOTE

Employment law has always represented a significant portion of legal work done in California. The practice has become even more crucial as California continues to build on its reputation as one of the nation's most employee-friendly states. As a result, some of the nation's most sophisticated employment lawyers are based here. In this issue, we highlight the very top practitioners in the field, and the cutting-edge cases they are handling across the state, the nation and even internationally.

We also explore the growing number of meal and rest-break cases being brought in California, and what the fallout might be from the Supreme Court's decision in *Brinker Restaurant Corp. v. Superior Court of San Diego County*. We also look at the growing challenges throughout the state to project labor agreements.



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