

Daily Journal

JANUARY 12, 2011

Top 20 Under 40

Editor's Note

A lot of hand wringing is going on about the current state of the legal industry and the value of a law degree. It is true that a new law degree is not worth what it was a couple of years ago — if your matrix is the number of new graduates with six-figure salaries at marquee law firms. But every January, when the Daily Journal publishes this list of California's emerging legal leaders, we are reminded of how rewarding legal work

is, far beyond money. We receive hundreds of nominations [672 this year] from lawyers across California at big and small firms, corporations, public agencies and nonprofits. The work they are doing is far-reaching and inspiring. Yet most of these men and women do not start out making six-figure annual salaries. Some may never make that much money in a single year. They work long hours because they love what they are doing and because they are committed to

the law. At its core, law is about service — and that doesn't change all that much whether you are helping Lakers star Kobe Bryant with a legal problem or guiding a multinational corporation through a complex acquisition.

So there is much to be positive about in the legal industry. Read on, because we think we've found a little bit of it.

— The Editors



Aaron J. Moss

Greenberg Glusker
Los Angeles
Practice: Entertainment litigation

Despite becoming a partner five years ago, Aaron Moss, 38, still feels that some clients don't take him as seriously as they do his more senior colleagues.

"I still get the sense people want someone with more gray hair," Moss said, "so I try to stress myself out a bit."

Given that Moss' practice is essentially three jobs rolled into one, that may not be too hard.

His work primarily is made up of contract and royalty disputes involving copyright licenses and the ownership of fictional characters — cases that unfold mostly out of the public eye and in arbitration proceedings.

As a copyright litigation expert who co-founded the firm's entertainment law blog in early 2010, Moss also is active in writing articles and giving presentations on his practice area.

And since the beginning of last year, Moss headed Greenberg Glusker Fields Claman & Machtinger's litigation department, a duty that consists of doling out assignments to associates, developing case strategies and marketing the department to potential clients.

Throw in six early-morning gym sessions a week, and one can see why Moss is happy to see his family after his grueling office routine comes to a close.

"It's great coming home at the end of the day and having two little girls run up to you and give you a hug," said Moss, who often brings work home at night to get more time with his wife and children on the weekends.

Moss, a Granada Hills native and Harvard Law School graduate, always had his sights set on Hollywood and only seriously considered law school after contemplating the reality of spending years answering telephones as an assistant to a showbiz big shot.

"I then realized I could meld my interest in entertainment and the law," Moss said. "I thought it was a great opportunity for me."

Fresh out of law school, Moss quickly worked his way up the ranks at the firm, where he now finds himself in the thick of the entertainment industry's most pressing copyright issues.

In the past year, Moss represented Marvel Entertainment in several licensing disputes involving key properties such as Spider Man and Iron Man.

He also represented the widow of "The Twilight Zone" creator Rod Serling on several copyright issues involving old episodes, and helped the estate of "Lord of the Rings" author J.R.R. Tolkien sort out chain-of-title issues.

Moss and partner Charles Shephard also handle the copyright enforcement work for Toho Co., the Japanese company that owns the rights to big-screen monster Godzilla.

One such case in 2010 involved a company that made a 4-foot-tall dog toy called "Tuffzilla" that looked like the movie monster.

The case quickly settled after Moss and Shephard were able to show that the toy too closely resembled Godzilla.

Shephard, who showed Moss the ropes when the associate first arrived at the firm, said that "it's stunning how knowledgeable Aaron is in the area of copyright."

"As an associate, he was one of our superstars and everyone recognized that from day one," said Shephard, who headed the firm's litigation department for 13 years. "Even at his young age, he is a tremendous resource for the firm."

— Jean-Luc Renault