



Ricardo P. Cestero

Partner

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Ricardo Cestero is best known for developing creative strategies and winning arguments for his clients—celebrities, athletes, and sports and entertainment companies—in a wide range of entertainment-related disputes and lawsuits. Ricardo’s practice also extends beyond the entertainment industry to complex commercial litigation involving partnership, contract, and real estate disputes.

Ricardo has particular expertise in First Amendment issues, such as defamation and restraint of speech, as well as extensive experience handling motion picture and television production and distribution disputes and profit participation cases. Over the years handling these types of disputes, Ricardo has built a reputation for delivering exceptional legal work. But rarely does he find that a case fits neatly into a particular box or set of legal precedents.

“Every case has its own set of facts, both good and bad. My job is to uncover and highlight the good facts,” explains Ricardo. “You have to look at a case from all different angles in order to present the good facts in a way that appeals to the judge or jury and that the other side doesn’t expect.”

Many of Ricardo’s client relationships start with litigation, but evolve into more general legal advice. They call on him to review and advise on a variety of business matters, including reviewing or drafting contracts and counseling on business deals.

“Clients appreciate that I look at their deals and documents like a litigator. They like that I can see the things that could go wrong, things that could land them in litigation again. This type of proactive counsel results in fewer headaches and wasted resources down the road.”

An amateur musician and avid sports fan and participant, Ricardo set his sights on establishing an entertainment litigation practice after law school. Looking for a sophisticated litigation practice in a mid-sized law firm with a collegial culture, he joined Greenberg Glusker as a first-year associate. And the rest, as they say, is history.

Awards

- *Los Angeles Business Journal*, Leaders of Influence: Litigators and Trial Attorneys, 2024
- Listed, *Southern California Super Lawyers*, 2014-2023

- *Los Angeles Business Journal*, Minorities of Influence: Attorneys, 2021
- Listed, Southern California Rising Stars, 2005-2007, 2009
- Top 10 Impact Verdicts of 2009, *Los Angeles Daily Journal*

Bar Admissions

- California, 1999

Court Admissions

- United States District Courts for the Central, Northern, Eastern, and Southern Districts of California
- United States District Court for the District of Nevada

Education

- University of California, Los Angeles School of Law (J.D., *Order of the Coif*, 1999)
- Oberlin College (B.A., 1991)
 - Government

Languages

- Spanish

Litigation Experience

- Currently representing Univision Communications, Inc. in a lawsuit brought by the heirs of Mexican pop singer Jenni Rivera arising out of the airing of the television biopic *Su Nombre Era Dolores, la Jenn que you conocí*.
- Assisted the estate of J.R.R. Tolkien and HarperCollins Publishers in licensing the television series rights to J.R.R. Tolkien's classic *Lord of the Rings*.
- Represented the estate of J.R.R. Tolkien and HarperCollins Publishers in a lawsuit against Warner Bros. and The Saul Zaentz Company related to improper merchandising exploitation of J.R.R. Tolkien's classic novels, *The Hobbit*, and the three volumes of *The Lord of the Rings*.
- Currently representing boxing promoter Golden Boy Promotions in various matters, including litigation and transactional matters.
- Recently represented Disco Productions, Inc. and its owner "Disco" Donnie Estopinal in a lawsuit against Insomniac, Inc. and its founder Pasquale Rotella arising out of the breach of a joint venture agreement to promote and develop electric dance music festivals such as the widely popular Electric Daisy Carnival festival.
- Successfully defended "Disco" Donnie Estopinal in a lawsuit claiming breach of several purported joint venture and partnership agreements.

- Recently represented music video production company, Riveting Entertainment in connection with a lawsuit brought by three actresses who claim their images were used improperly in a music video of Tyga's song "Make It Nasty."
- Recently represented the heirs of Bob Marley in a claim for unpaid royalties against Universal Music Group.
- Recently represented a Spanish jewelry company in connection with a celebrity endorsement agreement.
- Represented the internationally known dancer and entertainer, Michael Flatley, in a defamation and civil extortion lawsuit in which Mr. Flatley was awarded an \$11 million judgment against one defendant and obtained a significant monetary settlement against the other.
- Obtained a favorable arbitration award in favor of the Marina City Club condominium owner & association against Essex Property Trust related to the proper allocation of substantial repair costs to the Marina City Club development.
- Successfully represented Starpoint Properties, LLC, a Los Angeles real estate development and management company, in connection with numerous lawsuits seeking to recover more than \$8 million in loans made to Ezri Namvar and his related businesses and family members.
- Represented heirs of J.R.R. Tolkien in lawsuit against New Line Cinema arising out of New Line's failure to pay any profit participation resulting from the three Lord of the Rings films.
- Successfully represented homeowner's association in enforcing CC&Rs against a homeowner who had installed solar panels next to a public sidewalk. The homeowner was ordered to remove the panels in a case with significant implications on green energy measures. The verdict was recognized by the *Los Angeles Daily Journal* as one of the top 10 impact verdicts of 2009.
- Represented the producers of "Alpha Dog," a major motion picture starring Justin Timberlake, in defeating a lawsuit which attempted to stop the release of the film less than a month before the scheduled premiere.