

Daily Journal

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Daily Journal's Top 100 Lawyers



*Bethany W.
Kristovich*

Munger, Tolles & Olson

Los Angeles

Civil Litigation Defense

Bethany W. Kristovich might tackle the legendary Gordian Knot if she found it.

In the meantime, the litigation partner in the Los Angeles office of Munger, Tolles & Olson, said she enjoys working at a firm “known for untangling thorny problems, and it’s absolutely my favorite part of the job. I just feel privileged to get to approach each new knot and sit down and start to work untangling it.”

As co-chair of the firm’s class action practice group and professional liability defense group, Kristovich focuses on complex civil litigation, including consumer protection, professional responsibility, and product defect cases, as well as some of the largest mass tort cases of the last five years.

For example, she represented Pacific Gas & Electric against claims arising from the largest single-source wildfire in California history, the Dixie Fire that scorched Northern California in 2021.

“We’re very proud that we helped support the company in rolling out an early payments program, which had not been done for any prior PG&E fires,” she said. “Under that, people can bypass the litigation and get payments so they can begin to rebuild their lives and their homes very quickly.”

In the case of *Gibson v. MGM Resorts International*, she currently represents MGM in a novel antitrust suit, which alleges that hotels on the Vegas strip used software that engaged in price inflation.

“Our client’s hotels in Las Vegas simply did not use this pricing software,” she said. “But there is no question that plaintiffs view algorithmic pricing issues as an ‘up and coming’ area of interest, and we are seeing more and more activity in this area.”

In the case of *LoneStar v. City of Austin, Texas*, a condemnation case involving the south terminal at the Austin airport, the city sought to take away the terminal belonging to Kristovich’s client, valuing it at \$1.8 million.

“We said, no, you have to value the real estate rights and the contractual rights,” she said, “and we prevailed in a trial before the special commissioner in Austin earlier this year and obtained a special commissioner’s award of \$90 million, which ... is widely believed to be the biggest condemnation award in Texas history.”

—Kathryn Stelmach Artuso