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Casey Gerry's Gayle Blatt assumes a leadership role in Hydroxycut litigation

Gayle M. Blatt, a partner with San Diego-based Casey Gerry Schenk Francavilla Blatt & Penfield LLP, has been appointed by U.S. District Judge Barry Ted Moskowitz to serve on the Plaintiffs' Steering Committee as Liaison Counsel for the growing number of Hydroxycut personal injury cases in Multi-District Litigation (MDL 2087), now pending in the Southern District of California.

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products liability, trucking litigation and elder abuse, in the last 12 months the firm's attorneys obtained five jury verdicts in excess of \$1 million, including a jury verdict in excess of \$13 million. The willingness of the attorneys to go to trial, combined with their attention to detail, impeccable service and results-driven approach, have allowed the firm to obtain more than \$170 million in verdicts and settlements since 2000.

■ **Achieving work-life balance**

So you've been working at your law firm for a few years now, have mastered the art of document review and motion writing, have learned how to surpass your annual billable hour requirement and are becoming a good lawyer. The problem is that you're stressed out. You long for summer vacation, don't get enough exercise and lose sleep at night thinking about your upcoming deadlines and whether you've propounded the right discovery.

■ **New Chinese patent system: A stride toward better IP protection in China**

China's image in protecting intellectual property rights (IPR) is less than flattering. Seizures of China-originated IPR-infringing products at the U.S. border are about 80 percent of all such seizures. China remains the top IPR violator in the 2010 Annual Special 301 Report by U.S. Trade Representative. However, under external and internal pressures, China is rapidly improving its IPR systems. Its new Patent Law, effective Oct. 1, 2009, and other recent changes reflect China's efforts toward better IPR protection.

■ **Sex, violence, videogames and the Supreme Court**

In February 2009, the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals struck down California's Violent Video Games Act banning the sale or rental of "violent video games" to minors. While the holding is squarely in line with substantial U.S. Supreme Court precedent requiring parents -- not government censors -- to decide what is appropriate content for children, the U.S. Supreme Court just granted review. Mixed in with the legal issues are some of the most troublesome themes for free speech protection -- minors, sex and violence. The grant of review is therefore unsettling.

■ **Thomas Jefferson School of Law: Unveiling of new downtown campus begins**

Thomas Jefferson School of Law will welcome its spring 2011 entering class in January with the opening of a brand new, "green" and technology-focused campus in downtown San Diego's revitalized East Village, also home to the Padres' Petco Park, the city's future new central library and possibly a new Chargers' stadium.

■ **Q&A with Luanne Bas, senior VP and wealth market executive for Union Bank**

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