

# Daily Journal

SEPTEMBER 20, 2017

## TOP 100 LAWYERS IN CALIFORNIA 2017

### COMMERCIAL LITIGATION

## Arturo González

MORRISON & FOERSTER LLP | SAN FRANCISCO

SPECIALTY: INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY, BREACH OF CONTRACT

It would be tough to find a successful attorney who started out in life with fewer advantages than González.

Five of his siblings died in Mexico before he was born, due to a lack of doctors and money. His farmworker parents had one day of formal education between them, González said.

But his father made it to the United States through the bracero program, then later got a good job with a railroad and brought his family over.

More than two decades later, González was nearing graduation from Harvard Law School when he met Cesar Chavez after a talk. He asked the famed farmworker leader if he should take a job with a big firm or go work in the social justice movement.

“He said, ‘You should go to one of those big firms where there are no Latino lawyers and you should be the best lawyer in the firm,’” González said. These days, there are several Latino partners and dozens of associates at Morrison & Foerster. But when González started

there 33 years ago, he was the only Latino among 230 attorneys.

His career was aided by several white male mentors, he said, starting with Jim Garrett and including James J. Brosnahan, Melvin R. Goldman and Harold J. McElhinny. González said he tries to pay the favor forward, mentoring other attorneys and making sure there is always at least one woman on every trial team.

Today he’s a partner and the chair of the firm’s commercial litigation and trial practice group. González has won numerous cases over the years, for clients ranging from large corporations to a \$12.5 million verdict for the family of a farmworker mistakenly killed by a SWAT team.

In June, he helped a cloud computing company beat a \$110 million intellectual property lawsuit in *Phoenix Technologies Ltd. v. VMware Inc.*, 15-CV01414 (N.D. Cal., filed March 27, 2015).

“I’m just an old school trial lawyer,” González said. “I specialize in going



to court. If somebody wants to settle a case, they can find plenty of lawyers to do that. Clients come to me when they have a case they think is going to trial.”

— Malcolm MacLachlan