

Daily Journal

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TOP 40 UNDER 40

California's leading lawyers of 2017

Moez M. Kaba

A 32-year-old Kaba had only just made partner at Irell & Manella LLP when he was approached about co-founding a stand-alone complex litigation boutique in 2014. Since then, the up-and-coming attorney has had a string of victories for high-profile clients, with several more matters of national importance on calendar for 2017.

"One of the things I'm proudest of is building up my trial *bona fides* while still being fairly fresh in my partnership years," Kaba said. "To have had five or six really meaty, substantive trials and appeals so far that have been successful for our clients, has been the real pleasure of my practice."

An early series of wins were on behalf of billionaire William I. Koch, who claimed he had been cheated out of millions on fake wine at auction. *Koch v. Kurniawan*, BC421581 (L.A. Super. Ct., Jan. 21, 2015).

Kaba got his client the full \$3 million back from a Los Angeles seller, making precedent twice in the process. He then secured a \$12.4 million verdict against a separate counterfeit purveyor that was upheld by the 2nd Circuit Court of Appeals. *Koch v. Greenberg*, CV 14-1712 (2nd Cir., Sept. 30, 2015).

This February Kaba obtained a preliminary injunction in a highly watched First Amendment case, allowing IMDb.com to continue publishing actors' ages in defiance of a new state law. *IMDb.com, Inc. v. Becerra*, CV 16-6535 (N.D. Cal., filed Nov. 10, 2016).

In March, Kaba helped defeat retaliation claims against the State Bar by former executive director Joseph L. Dunn, while significantly trimming claims in three



Hueston Hennigan LLP

Los Angeles

Practice: Litigation litigation

Age: 35

other State Bar cases. *Dunn v. State Bar*, BC563715 (L.A. Super. Ct., filed Nov. 13, 2014).

Kaba also represents T-Mobile Inc. in a trade secrets suit against Chinese smartphone maker Huawei Technologies Ltd. heading to trial in April.

But he is most proud of a \$160 million suit seeking remediation of the 2015 Gold King Mine wastewater spill site. "Our pursuit of that on behalf of the Navajo nation is particularly righteous," Kaba said.

— America Hernandez