

GUZMAN LAW GROUP, PC

Denise M. Guzman, Founder/Principal Attorney

A Manhattan Beach-based legal firm, Guzman Law Group represents clients throughout the U.S. in a variety of business law and estate planning matters. Clients include high net worth individuals, manufacturers, distributors, content creators, production companies, business owners and internet pioneers.

Founder Denise M. Guzman is a noted business, estate planning and trust attorney who has served the South Bay for more than 30 years. She earned her bachelor's degree from USC and her law degree from UCLA and is a frequent guest lecturer on business, estate planning and trust administration issues. She functions as virtual in-house corporate counsel for many clients and is an integral part of their key decision-making and ongoing operational activities.

DID YOU HAVE A VIRTUAL PRACTICE IN PLACE BEFORE THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC BEGAN?

Denise M. Guzman, Business and Estate Planning Attorney: "Yes, we did, but we used it when one or two people were out of the office. We never envisioned that we would have to implement its use for a crisis like the one we are in now. We left the office on a Tuesday evening, and our virtual office was up and running the next morning. We are grateful that we had the tools in place to continue to serve our clients from the safety of our homes."

WHAT IS UNIQUE ABOUT YOUR TEAM?

Drew Hallett, Business and Litigation Attorney: "Our culture. When clients retain the Guzman Law Group, they are not just retaining one attorney at our firm. They are getting the whole team. We promote a collaborative environment that emphasizes and encourages teamwork, communication and transparency. Our team mentality is a large part of why the transition to a virtual office has been so smooth."

WHY DO YOUR CLIENTS CONSIDER YOU THEIR TRUSTED ADVISOR?

Edward Powell, Business Attorney: "A good lawyer listens to his clients and understands not only their business goals but their personal goals as well. Economically challenging times may require flexibility in strategy to achieve those goals. By listening closely, we can help guide them to a solution that they may not have considered previously but which ultimately achieves their goals even in times of great uncertainty."

Denise M. Guzman: "My clients consider me their trusted advisor because of my years of experience and because I go above and beyond the business at hand. I establish a personal relationship with them—extending myself and listening to what is happening in their lives. Whether it's a business client going through a difficult time or a successor trustee dealing with the death of a parent, I take a personal interest in what they are going through. I care about my clients' personal well-being."

WHAT HAVE BEEN YOUR PROUDEST MOMENTS DURING THE RECENT CRISIS?

Marcus Chang, Business and Estate Planning Attorney: "My proudest moments that I have experienced during these uncertain times are when clients tell me how relieved they are to have my assistance—whether it is providing them with a plan to manage and care for their families, which eases their worries, or guiding them through the recent tragedies that have affected them due to the passing of their loved ones."

Adnan Karama, Business Attorney: "My proudest moment has been helping a client successfully navigate a sale transaction that was nearly upended by the pandemic. By remaining flexible and working closely with opposing counsel, we were able to restructure the deal, revise the transaction

documents and close in a timely manner. In doing so, the client maintained sufficient liquidity to weather the economic crisis and gained a strategic partner for the future."

Drew Hallett: "As a business and trust litigator, I assist clients who often feel anxiety and uncertainty due to legal disputes that arise in their lives. The pandemic has only created more anxiety and uncertainty for many people in many areas of their lives, and there will continue to be legal disputes. I am proud that we have been able to comfort our clients and help them conclude their legal disputes in a favorable manner that gives them some certainty in what has been an uncertain world."

WHAT IS YOUR #1 PIECE OF ADVICE DURING THIS TIME OF UNCERTAINTY?

Carol T. Contes, Entertainment, Copyright and Trademark Attorney: "During this difficult time, I try to advise clients not to allow fear or uncertainty to derail their efforts. While the forced isolation is not ideal, it also gives us time to carefully consider what we are doing and focus on those things of importance to us all. And I try to take my own advice! A little laughter helps."

WHAT IS UNIQUE ABOUT YOUR TEAM?

Charles Shelton, Litigation Attorney: "Two things: First, we have real depth of experience in the area of trusts, estates and business. Second, we leverage the expertise of the other lawyers within our firm. When I was in business school, I noticed that a small group of people working together could inevitably produce better results than even the smartest person could working alone. Guzman Law Group understands the value of teamwork."



PHOTOGRAPHED BY MARISA GUZMAN-ALOIA

Attorneys, L to R, top: Charles Shelton, Marcus Chang, Carol T. Contes
Middle: Adnan Karama, Denise M. Guzman, Stephanie Whitfield
Bottom: Edward Powell, Jane Lee, Drew C. Hallett