



# 2023 REVIEW

WATTS | GUERRA <sup>L</sup><sub>P</sub>

# A NOTE FROM MIKAL AND FRANK

*Hello Everyone!*

2023 was busier than ever for our firm. We found ourselves in our favorite place to be, trial, and also made time to open a new office space in San Antonio.

Our attorneys and staff worked tirelessly to ensure that our clients were taken care of and that they received the help they deserved. We expanded our staff to assist with our growing dockets to ensure that there would not be any delays for our cases. Our team was relentless in the pursuit of justice.

This year we remained stronger than ever. We were able to teach yet another new group of law clerks the "Watts Guerra Way". We gave back to our community, continued to work tirelessly for our clients, and bonded in ways we did not know were possible.

Here is a brief recap of our year and as you read about it, we hope that you found good to celebrate in 2023 like we did!

*Mikal & Frank*



# OUR TEAM

SAY *hello* TO OUR NEW GRASSHOPPERS

We had our largest group of summer law clerks to date, all eager and excited to learn more about the legal field.



**MIA ALVAREZ**

SMU DEDMAN  
SCHOOL OF LAW

**J.D. CANDIDATE, MAY 2025**



**KENDALL BALMER**

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

**MAY 2023**



**LONDON DELKS**

ST. MARY'S UNIVERSITY  
SCHOOL OF LAW

**J.D. CANDIDATE, MAY 2025**



**WILL HULSE**

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

**EXPECTED GRADUATION DATE  
MAY 2026**



**MATTHEW MARCINI**

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN  
LAW SCHOOL

**J.D. CANDIDATE, MAY 2024**



**ALEX PECINA**

UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS  
SAN ANTONIO

**EXPECTED GRADUATION DATE  
MAY 2025**



**RYLEE STANLEY**

ST. MARY'S UNIVERSITY  
SCHOOL OF LAW

**J.D. CANDIDATE, MAY 2024**



**DANYAL ZAKARIA**

UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON  
LAW CENTER

**J.D. CANDIDATE, MAY 2026**

OUR *returning* GRASSHOPPERS

OUR TEAM



**ROGER ALONZO**

UALR WILLIAM H. BOWEN  
SCHOOL OF LAW

J.D. CANDIDATE, MAY 2027



**ETHAN EREVIA**

UNIVERSITY OF THE  
INCARNATE WORD

MAY 2021



**ALBERTO LAUREL**

UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS  
AT SAN ANTONIO

MAY 2023



**SARAH MCFARLAND**

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

JAN 2024



**CATHERINE PEREZ**

UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT  
AUSTIN

J.D. CANDIDATE, MAY 2026



**AMANDA REYES**

LINCOLN MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY  
DUNCAN SCHOOL OF LAW

J.D. CANDIDATE, MAY 2026



**ALEX RIOS**

ST. MARY'S UNIVERSITY  
SCHOOL OF LAW

J.D. CANDIDATE, MAY 2025



**DENAE SCOTT**

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

MAY 2021



**LILY SHRODE**

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

EXPECTED GRADUATION DATE  
MAY 2024



**KAYLA SULTEMEIER**

SOUTHERN METHODIST UNIVERSITY  
SCHOOL OF LAW

J.D. CANDIDATE, MAY 2024



OUR *returning* GRASSHOPPERS



**MIA TOLIN**  
TULANE UNIVERSITY  
SCHOOL OF LAW  
**J.D. CANDIDATE, MAY 2026**



**FERNANDO UMPIERRE**  
UNIVERSITY OF PUERTO RICO,  
RÍO PIEDRAS  
**J.D. CANDIDATE, MAY 2026**

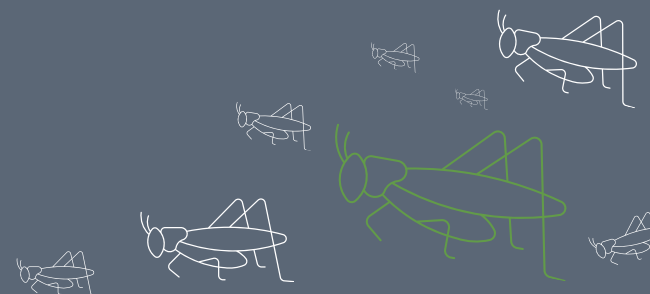


**COLE VESSELS**  
SOUTH TEXAS COLLEGE OF LAW  
**J.D. CANDIDATE, MAY 2026**



**KARLEIGH ZOLINSKI**  
ST. MARY'S UNIVERSITY  
SCHOOL OF LAW  
**J.D. CANDIDATE, MAY 2024**

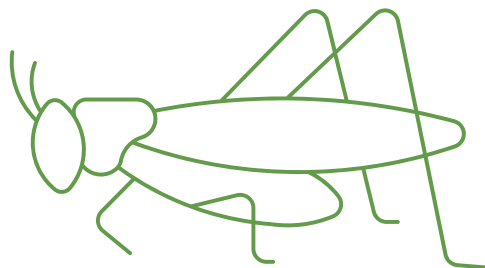
OUR TEAM



# OUR TEAM

## OUR *grasshoppers*

Affectionately known as "grasshoppers", our law clerks were exposed to as many aspects of the litigation process as possible. From preparing court documents, and watching depositions, hearings, and mediations all the way to attending trials, we do our best to prepare the clerks for law school or their careers upon graduation.



# OUR TEAM

# Welcome TO THE TEAM

Our team expanded in 2023 as several new attorneys joined our firm!



## **KYLE BATSON**

Born and raised in Houston, Texas, Kyle applied to law school and graduated from St. Mary's University School of Law in 2023, where he obtained his Doctor of Jurisprudence and graduated in the top 5% of his class. He was a former law clerk for us and is now one of our new Associate Attorneys.

## **ANA DIAZ**

Ana Victoria Diaz graduated in 2015 with a law degree from Universidad Santa Maria La Antigua in Panama City, Panama, where she was a two-time mock trial champion. She then attended Tulane University and received an LLM in Environmental and Energy Law in 2016. She was a former paralegal at our firm until she passed the bar in 2023. Ana is now one of our new Associate Attorneys.



## **VICTORIA FRAZIER**

Victoria was born in Oceanside, California but grew up in Bulverde, Texas. She completed her bachelor's degree in psychology and graduated from Texas A&M – San Antonio. After graduation, she took time off to focus on being a mom until ultimately deciding to pursue her life-long dream of becoming an attorney by attending law school at St. Mary's University in San Antonio. Once a former clerk for our firm, she is now one of our newest Associate Attorneys.



# OUR TEAM

# Welcome TO THE TEAM

Our team expanded in 2023 as several new attorneys joined our firm!



## **SOMMER HAZEL**

In 2020 Sommer began school at St. Mary's University School of Law. During her time there she involved herself extensively in extracurricular and academic pursuits. In addition to holding officer positions with several student organizations, Sommer served as President of the St. Mary's Black Law Students Association. Once a former clerk for our firm, she is now one of our newest Associate Attorneys.

## **JESSICA PEISEN**

Jessica is a South Texas native. She was born and raised in the Rio Grande Valley. She completed her Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science and Sociology with a minor in Legal Studies at Texas Tech University, graduating Cum Laude in 2018. In 2021 she completed her goal of becoming an attorney and obtained her Doctor of Jurisprudence from St. Mary's University. Jessica joined our firm as an Associate Attorney in 2023.



## **HAILEY WATTS**

Hailey is a native Texan. She was born in Corpus Christi before moving to San Antonio for the remainder of her childhood. She attended The University of Texas at Austin where she completed her Bachelor's degree in Psychology and a minor in Business. She ultimately went on to earn her law degree from The University of Texas School of Law in May 2022. She joined our firm as an Associate Attorney in 2023.

# OUR COMMUNITY

## WE *Love* OUR COMMUNITY

San Antonio is a one-of-a-kind community that never hesitates to lend one another a helping hand. Whether it be donating to the local food bank, children's programs, Special Olympics, or local schools and universities - we make it our mission to always give back.



We love our city and in 2023 we hope to continue giving back to our community so that San Antonio can maintain being the best city in the USA!

Want to know our employees' favorite spots around San Antonio?

[CLICK HERE!](#)

# BIG *moves*

This year we left our home at the Dominion and off of West Hausman in San Antonio and opened our new office at the Creamery in San Antonio. Located near The Pearl, we are happy to be back in the heart of San Antonio.



Our new building accommodates our growing firm allowing us to better serve our clients by hiring more attorneys and staff to meet the increasing needs we have experienced. Ultimately we want to help as many people as possible in a space that can house our entire San Antonio office. If you haven't had a chance to stop by, be sure to come and say, "hi"!

## OUR *new* PRACTICE AREA

Pioneered by Alicia O'Neill and Meredith Drukker Stratigopoulos, our attorneys blazed a new trail for our firm and entered into a new practice area this year.



ALICIA O'NEILL



MEREDITH DRUKKER  
STRATIGOPOULOS

We began taking cases from victims of sexual assault, rapidly grew our docket, and started cementing our position as a leader in this type of litigation. The year closed out with Meredith being selected to the Plaintiffs' Steering Committee for the new MDL against Uber Technologies Inc. representing passengers who have been victims of sexual assault.

We are proud of our attorneys who advocate for the voiceless, especially when victims' claims are disregarded. Attorneys like Alicia and Meredith are fighting the good fight and are establishing themselves as proponents of change.

We have a collection of blogs geared towards our new sexual assault practice area!

[CLICK HERE!](#)

# POPULAR POSTS

## Write ON!

Our blog is one of the most frequently visited pages on our website. Our attorneys and law clerks fill its pages with hot topic articles and legal information that is a valuable source of information for all who need it. Below are some of the most-read blogs on the site in 2023.



### THE TRAILBLAZING WOMEN OF WATTS GUERRA

March is Women's History month and each year we love to ask our female attorneys for tips and tricks.

### CAUSES OF PRESSURE COOKER EXPLOSIONS AND HOW TO AVOID THEM

Manufacturing defects and design defects are frequently the cause of pressure cooker explosions. Some common injuries from pressure cooker use are steam burns, contact burns, splashed/spilled hot liquids, and explosion.



### RIDE SHARE LIABILITY

Today, "Rideshare" companies like Uber and Lyft have become a primary mode of transportation for busy Americans. With people relying on the convenience of Rideshare transportation more than ever before, the industry is estimated to be valued at almost \$186 billion by 2026. However, the convenience of this type of modern transportation comes with a host of problems.



# MIKAL WATTS

AND *action!*

Capital Partner, Mikal Watts, traveled all over the world this year to assist our Mass Tort clients with their cases. He never stops when our clients' legal rights and quality of life are at stake!



One favorite thing Mikal likes doing is informative videos or, “A Minute with Mikal” videos for social media. To catch up on any you might have missed, click the link below.

[CLICK HERE](#)

# FRANK GUERRA

## WORDS OF *wisdom*

Capital Partner, Frank Guerra, had the opportunity to be a guest speaker for many organizations this year. He was able to share the wisdom he has gained through his years of being an attorney and operating a law firm. He spoke on various topics like trial psychology, jury selection, opening statements, and closing arguments.



### PSYCHOLOGY IN LITIGATION

Frank was one of the speakers at during a presentation at the Hispanic National Bar Association. Frank's specific portion delved into the process of jury selection and the applicable psychological tools that can be utilized to assist.

### TRIAL PSYCHOLOGY

Capital Partner, Frank Guerra, had the opportunity to speak with a class at Texas A&M on trial psychology and the science of persuasion using logos, ethos, and pathos.

### THE JURY SELECTION PROCESS

Capital Partner, Frank Guerra, had the opportunity to speak with members of TTLA on the topic "Jury Selection". Attendees of the event were able to hear about the science behind picking a jury that Frank relies on and a sneak peek into his process.



## MOVERS & *shakers*

Our attorneys are the best (yes, we are biased), however, we are not the only ones who think so. This year many of our attorneys were independently recognized for being among the best in trial law and civil litigation.

### **2023 Texas Super Lawyers**

Mikal Watts, Frank Guerra, Ed Allred,  
Bob Brzezinski, Mike Murray, and Shalimar Wallis

### **2023 Super Lawyers - Rising Stars**

Jorge Mares

### **Best P.I. Lawyers - The Scene S.A.**

Mikal Watts, Frank Guerra, Alexis Garcia, Mike  
Murray, Jennifer Neal, Rebecca Page, Shalimar  
Wallis, Guy Watts, and Hailey Watts

### **Top Female Plaintiff Lawyers - The Scene S.A.**

Alexis Garcia, Jennifer Neal, Alicia O'Neill,  
Rebecca Page, Erin Rogiers, and Shalimar Wallis

### **2023 Best Lawyers in America Recognition**

Shalimar Wallis and Mikal Watts





# MASS TORTS

## DEMANDING *justice*

Our Mass Tort Offices had a very busy 2023! Here are some highlights of our (GROWING) Mass Tort Team's great work on behalf of our injured clients:



2023 was the year of settlements for our firm. We settled with 3M for the earplugs for our veterans in September and also settled Archie Creek Fire in November. These settlements were a result of years of hard work our attorneys and staff dedicated (and are still dedicating) to the clients who were adversely impacted by these large organizations.

On top of securing important victories for our clients, we served in leadership roles in several MDLs and actively represented clients who all entrusted us to hold large corporations accountable. As always, we were grateful to be able to work with many of our friends who referred cases to us and co-counseled with us, in representing these deserving clients across all of our Mass Tort dockets. To keep up with our fast-paced and expanding practice, our second Mass Tort office in Puerto Rico grew our total Mass Tort Team as well. We are looking forward to 2024 and further growth while we continue to work hard and efficiently for our clients!

# MASS TORTS

## LEADERSHIP

# DEMANDING *justice*

FROM THE TOP

Watts Guerra has proudly been named to many MDL Leadership roles in mass tort litigation over the years. We openly welcome the extra work that is associated with these roles and always stand at the forefront of fighting for those harmed by bad corporate conduct. In fact, currently, we have five of our powerhouse female attorneys in MDL Leadership as well as our Capital Partner, Mikal Watts.



**MIKAL WATTS**  
ACETAMINOPHEN CO-LEAD



**ALICIA O'NEILL**  
PARAQUAT PLAINTIFF  
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE  
DIXIE FIRE  
LIASION COUNSEL



**SHELLY SANFORD**  
ETHICON PHYSIOMESH  
PLAINTIFF STEERING COMMITTEE



**ERIN ROGIERS**  
3M EARLY VETTING  
SUBCOMMITTEE



**PAIGE BOLDT**  
ZANTAC LEADERSHIP  
DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE  
PLAINTIFF STEERING COMMITTEE  
SOCIAL MEDIA  
PLAINTIFF STEERING COMMITTEE



**MEREDITH DRUKKER  
STRATIGOPOULOS**  
UBER TECHNOLOGIES  
SEXUAL ASSAULT  
LITIGATION PLAINTIFFS'  
STEERING COMMITTEE



## FIGHTING THE *good* FIGHT

2023 was full of new cases for our civil litigation side of the business. Even amid the courts reopening and still navigating court proceedings by zoom, we were able to help our clients begin their road to recovery one settlement at a time.

Cases our attorneys and staff settled included:

- AUTO ACCIDENTS
- TRUCKING ACCIDENTS
- MOTORCYCLE ACCIDENTS
- CROSSWALK INJURIES
- PRODUCT LIABILITY
- PREMISES LIABILITY
- BREACH OF FIDUCIARY DUTY
- BREACH OF CONTRACT
- MASS TORT

Our fight for justice was not deterred when the pandemic hit and is still continuing to flourish as we traverse the new legal landscape. We always make sure that our clients and their needs come first so they could begin their road to recovery. We are going to continue to bring that passion and work ethic into the new year as we take on more complex cases for our clients!



# OUR CASES

WE'VE BEEN *busy*

In 2023 we worked harder than ever for our clients. We continued to learn and expand our team so that anyone who needed our services would receive one-on-one care and attention at the highest level. Among the countless personal injury cases we could settle outside the courtroom, we also took on new mass tort cases. It has always been our goal to help our clients enforce their rights to find justice. This goal will continue in 2024.



We hope that this was a fantastic year for everyone and look forward to making an impact in our community and with our clients in 2024!

Find us on:

 @wattsguerrallp

 @wattsguerra

 @wattsguerrallp

 @wattsguerra

[www.wattsguerra.com](http://www.wattsguerra.com)

WATTS | GUERRA <sup>L</sup><sub>LP</sub>