

Mark Joseph Kenney

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Mark Joseph Kenney 1952-2022

On March 26, 2022, we lost our partner Mark Kenney. He left a rich legacy both personally and professionally.

Mark was devoted to Severson & Werson, its clients and the financial services industry that he represented for his entire 42 years in civil practice. Mark was a leader, mentor, scholar and friend who enriched the lives of all of us who practice with him. He was an exceptional advocate who represented some of the world's largest corporations as well as the neediest of individuals, showing all of them the same care, zeal and enthusiasm. His practice ranged from the simplest courts in rural America to the California Supreme Court. Mark also served Severson in many capacities including as a managing partner for many years. And through it all, Mark never lost his love of the law.

Mark was raised in Colorado, but was equally at home in San Francisco where he attended USF and New York where he excelled at NYU Law School. After law school, Mark became the favorite law clerk of one of the top federal district court judges in the country, Judge Paul Matsch of Denver. On completion of his clerkship, Mark joined Severson where he specialized in the representation of financial institutions of all varieties, including banks, mortgage originators and auto finance companies. He was active in the American Financial Services Association where he served for many years as the Secretary of its Law Committee. Mark was a superb trial lawyer with victories in numerous high visibility cases, e.g. AFSA v. City of Oakland, 34 Cal.4th 1239 (2005). Mark also had a range of pro bono clients, including organizations such as the ACLU and simple individuals with extraordinary needs.

Over the years, Mark was responsible for a score of young attorneys whom he mentored and have become leaders both in our firm, the State Bar and our community. His greatest legacy is his family. He is survived by his wife, Sheila, and four sons, Austin (a Member in Severson's Irvine office), O'Bryan, Zachary and Mark Gabriel. We are all blessed and privileged to have had Mark as a friend and colleague.

Education

- New York University, Root-Tilden Scholar/Moot Court Champion, J.D., 1978
- University of San Francisco, Valedictorian, B.A., Philosophy, 1975