BIRD MARELLA LLP

BIRD • MARELLA • RHOW • LINCENBERG • DROOKS • NESSIM

Tom Freeman and David Chao Win Appeal in Pro Bono Matter Against LAUSD

One of the nation's largest pro bono law firms asked Bird Marella attorneys Tom Freeman and David Chao to handle an appeal on behalf of client Nina Austin, who filed employment discrimination claims against the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD).

Her claims were initially dismissed after Ms. Austin's trial counsel withdrew from the case, and as a result she was unable to overcome LAUSD's motion for summary judgment. The trial court denied Ms. Austin's motion to vacate the judgment.

Due to the compelling evidence that Ms. Austin, an LAUSD campus aid, was harassed and fired based on her race, age, and gender, and retaliated against for her efforts to call out misconduct on campus, Bird Marella agreed to handle the appeal on a pro bono basis. Freeman and Chao persuaded the court of appeal that the judgment against Ms. Austin should be reversed because the trial court based its denial of Ms. Austin's motion to vacate the judgment on an improper ground.

Mr. Chao argued the case to the court of appeal on January 7th, and on January 25th, the court of appeal filed its opinion, ruling in favor of Ms. Austin and reversing the trial court's judgment.