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TOP Women Lawyers 2022

Nina Marino

KAPLAN MARINO, PC
LOS ANGELES | WHITE COLLAR CRIMINAL DEFENSE

White-collar criminal defense attorney Nina Marino began 2022 with a rare victory: a U.S. district judge fully dismissed a federal criminal case granting a motion filed by the government. Accordingly to Marino, the basis for the government motion was a technical issue identified by Marino and Kaplan Marino, PC partner Jennifer Lieser.

In the case, two California women were accused of smuggling Hermès designer handbags valued at more than a half-million dollars from Europe and Asia. *United States v. Ackerman*, 18-cr-00118. (N.D. Cal., filed March 16, 2018). The pair allegedly made false customs declarations to avoid significant duties.

Marino, who co-founded her Los Angeles with husband Richard Kaplan, said the twist in the nearly six-year-old case came when filing a motion to dismiss. It challenged the materiality requirement for the false statement regarding the bags' actual values to U.S. Customs.

"I think we raised some very significant legal issues founded in the factual problems of the case," Marino said. "We were not going to back down."

Marino said her client was ecstatic with the January 2022 dismissal by U.S. District Judge Jeffrey S. White, especially since a federal criminal conviction would have hindered the defendant's ability to travel internationally for business.

Marino said her defense clients are often entertainers, business executives and politicians. "Someone who has something on the line," she said.

Marino's practice of over 30 years relies on a team approach, she said, in which forensic accountants, psychologists, and other legal professionals are brought in to examine a matter.

"A fair resolution can usually be achieved by thoroughly investigating a case and then presenting those findings in a cohesive and coherent and logical manner to the prosecution," Marino said.

Marino has been a champion for women lawyers throughout her career. She founded the criminal defense law section of the Women Lawyers Association of Los Angeles, and also the Los Angeles chapter of the Women's White Collar Defense Association.

– JENNIFER MCENTEE

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