



Stability and consistency

THE CORE VALUES OF A 50-YEAR SUCCESS STORY

Greene, Broillet & Wheeler, and its predecessor firm has been around for 50 years. The Greene, Broillet & Wheeler firm is best known for its trial work and its longstanding commitment to the leadership of both the local and statewide plaintiffs' bar for those same 50 years. One of the noteworthy traits of GBW is the low rate of turnover among its staff and lawyers, many working here for 30-40-50 years.

Derek Tran asked me to write an article to help explain our 'secret sauce.' So, I interviewed Tim Wheeler, who has been the managing partner of this firm and its predecessor dating back to the 1980s. Turns out the secret sauce is not really a secret; it is more of a longstanding firm-wide philosophy of inclusion and fairness. Here is what Tim says:

The foundation of our firm has been built on the notions of inclusion and fairness. Treat your fellow employees the way you want to be treated. We strive to make sure GBW as a firm lives up to the level of commitment and sacrifice that we ask our lawyers and staff to pledge to our clients.

GBW is a family. Our lawyers and staff have built longstanding personal friendships with each other, our extended families, and our clients. Many times, that relationship lasts well beyond the case at hand. We have found over the years that people work harder and are more dedicated to the cause at hand when they have a bond with our clients and their families. Our cases are personal to each one of us. When we enjoy success on a case, it is a shared success with every GBW family member who touched the case.

Frequently we have verdict or settlement parties where we invite the client and their family to the office to share with attorneys and staff the joy and satisfaction of a job well done in achieving justice for a deserving client. This also gives clients a chance to say thank you to everyone who worked on their case. There are a lot more people than just the trial lawyers who make each case a success. These celebrations remind us of just how meaningful our firm's work is and how much we rely on each other's talents and expertise and how many shoulders we lean on to achieve success for our clients.

We always try to listen – a lost art these days – to what our GBW family has to say and promote an environment where their feelings are welcomed and heard. Listening leads to learning and keeping open the lines of communication that make our place of work rewarding, exciting and fun to be a part of.

Clients first

At GBW our clients come first. This commitment to our clients becomes contagious and creates the perfect situation where staff and attorneys work together for a single purpose... our clients' wellbeing and consequently, not only does it reward our clients but us as well. Our clients lean heavily on our GBW family, not only the attorneys but the staff as well. We welcome and promote that.

Family culture

Our management has always believed that it is our duty to put everyone in the best possible position to succeed. This



commitment is not limited to work alone, but also in our fellow employees' personal lives. We strive to create a family culture and let's face it, we spend more time with our coworkers each week than we do with our own spouses, significant others, families, and friends. We share our life experiences, both good and bad, with each other and often find a shoulder to cry on or a warm celebratory hug with our work family.

We encourage a work/life balance outside of the office. We encourage staff to attend their kids' school performances, spring sings and sporting events. We strive to allow people to be there for their kids and do not penalize anyone for having to leave early for events like back-to-school nights and the like. Someone is always ready to help, fill in, cover a court appearance, or get a motion filed. We all have each other's backs. Once again, treat others the way you would want them to treat you.

Collaboration, not competition

We believe that our success should be shared by all, and time has taught us that firmwide success is only accomplished when we work together as a collaborative team. We don't compete at GBW, we celebrate each other's success and consider one's victory for a client as a victory for us all and the firm.

Another big part of our firm is that we not only share in the joy of the firm's success but also in the firm's financial success. There are many ways to spread the wealth – financially, spiritually, and professionally and we strive to do that.

Management needs to walk the walk. We believe in promoting from within the GBW family, and many staff

members have been here their entire adult lives. We believe in making sure our clients, opponents and the legal community at large know that we give everyone in the GBW family kudos for any success we are fortunate enough to enjoy. We stand on each other's shoulders and are nothing without our staff's dedication and hard work on every case. Think about it, how important is the copy person, the person who puts binders and evidence together correctly without error? How important is the receptionist, who many times is the client's first connection with your firm?

In the end, we also support and promote our attorneys getting involved in the local and statewide plaintiff's bar associations, also other bar organizations and political causes that affect our clients' rights. We expect our lawyers to attend the

seminars and walk the precincts during election years. We gladly finance these endeavors and contribute to the fight for the preservation of the civil justice system for our clients!

Geoffrey Wells is a partner in the firm of Greene Broillet & Wheeler, LLP and joined the firm in 1992. Mr. Wells was president of the Consumer Attorneys Association of Los Angeles in 2014. He is an elected member of the American Board of Trial Advocates (ABOTA) and in 2019 he received the LA-ABOTA Lee Wenzel Civility Award. He is an elected member of the Executive Board for the Consumer Attorneys Association of California (2023 First Vice President). He is also a member of AAJ. He is a graduate of the University of Washington (B.A. 1981), where he was a pitcher for the college baseball team. He received his law degree from Pepperdine University School of Law (1985).