SANDBERG PHOENIX

Bhavik Patel

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Bhavik R. Patel joined Sandberg Phoenix & von Gontard in 2004. He currently serves as the firm's CEO and Chairman of the Executive Committee. Bhavik oversees the strategy and direction of the firm, manages growth and expansion opportunities and coaches the firm leaders. Under his direction, the firm developed and implemented a strategic communications plan and rebranded to better reflect the firm's values, culture and commitment to service. He has fostered and led the firm to grow to nearly 350 employees and approximately doubled the firm's revenue in the last three years.

In addition to his work as CEO, he is the Chair of the firm's Wealth Planning Group and Special Needs Planning Group and focuses in the following areas:

- Wealth/Tax Planning and Administration
- Business/Corporate Planning
- Special Needs Planning
- Probate and Trust Litigation
- FINRA Litigation
- Trademarks

Bhavik's work with the special needs community extends outside of the firm. He is the founder and chairman of Families at Ease, a local not-for-profit entity focused on delivering information about programs, services and resources available for special needs children and their families. He is also committed to civic and philanthropic causes. Bhavik serves as a Board Member for the St. Louis Zoo, the Membership Co-Chair for Young Presidents' Organization (YPO), a global leadership community, as a Member of the Board of Directors for St. Louis ARC, Starkloff Disability Institute, Emeritus Board Member of the Foster and Adoptive Coalition, founded the Sandberg Phoenix Charitable Foundation and is this year's Co-Chair for this Strategy Across the Board Gala.

SERVICES

Class Actions

Fiduciary & Trust Litigation

Tax Advice & Controversies

Copyrights & Copyright Litigation

Wealth Planning & Individual Services

INDUSTRIES

Brokers / Dealers & Financial Advisors

Entrepreneurs, Closely Held & Family Owned Business

Minority & Women-Owned Businesses

Manufacturing & Distribution

Nonprofits & Foundations

Restaurants

Transportation

Wholesale & Retail Services

Wealth/Tax Planning and Administration
Bhavik brings his technical and practical perspective to his clients. He devises and implements a personal and customized plan specific to each client and their family. To that end, Bhavik works closely with accountants and financial advisors to ensure a comprehensive plan that helps his clients recognize their objectives in light of individual circumstances and values. Bhavik works with them to chart a financial and legal course so they can effectively direct and secure the future for themselves, their families and beneficiaries. Bhavik counsels individuals and families of all levels of wealth and at nearly every stage of life. Bhavik has experience drafting revocable and irrevocable trusts, qualified spousal trusts, life insurance trusts, gift trusts, family trusts, dynasty trusts, qualified personal residence trusts, discretionary trusts, blind trusts, GST trusts, asset protection trusts, voting trusts, and much more. In addition to estate planning, Bhavik has extensive experience with complex and unique estate and trust administrations, as well as, prenuptial and postnuptial agreements.

Business/Corporate Planning
Bhavik utilizes his LL.M. in Tax Law and his M.B.A. to provide his business clients with the advice and knowledge of an outside general counsel. Bhavik offers a unique perspective to his clients by understanding how to keep a company's goals in focus while working to prevent or resolve issues. Bhavik's business planning expertise ranges from creating or forming entities to developing and structuring exit strategies that maximize the client's goals and objectives. Bhavik has extensive experience in negotiating and closing a variety of asset and stock purchase agreements. Bhavik is also uniquely positioned to advise his business clients in obtaining and optimizing a variety of minority certifications, such as women owned and minority owned business enterprises (WBEs/MBEs) and disadvantaged business enterprises (DBEs). Bhavik combines his knowledge in business and estate planning to advise clients on effectively and practically devising a business succession plan. Bhavik has prepared numerous buy-sell agreements, stock restriction agreements and family business plans.

Special Needs Planning
Bhavik helps families plan for the future of their dependents with special needs, to achieve the best possible quality of life. He possesses in-depth knowledge of the laws pertaining to government benefit eligibility and advises his clients on the use of special needs trusts and guardianships and conservatorships. Bhavik is considered an expert in special needs planning and is often approached to speak to families that care for loved ones with special needs. Bhavik has presented on a plethora of special needs topics for St. Louis Arc, Life Skills, Albert Pujols Foundation, Edwardsville Special School District, St. Lukes, National Convention for Williams Syndrome, Men's Health Conference in Southern Illinois, and many more. Bhavik has prepared numerous Stand Alone Special Needs Trusts, Testamentary Special Needs Trusts, Medicaid Payback Trusts and other Discretionary Trusts. He understands and plans for his client's unique and customized goals to effectively implement an appropriate special needs plan.

Probate and Trust Litigation
Bhavik utilizes his substantive knowledge in business and estate planning to effectively litigate contested probate, trust and business matters. He represents businesses, individuals, personal representatives, beneficiaries and omitted or potential heirs in the following areas:

- Will Contests and Litigation
- Breach of Fiduciary Duty
- Fraud and Forgery
- Beneficiary’s Rights
- Elective Share Claims
- Abuse of Power of Attorney
- Joint Bank Account Litigation
- Pay on Death Disputes
- Estate Litigation and Settlements
    - Undue Influence Claims
- Lack of Mental Capacity Claims
- Contested and Uncontested Guardianship and Conservatorship
- Removal of Fiduciaries
- Trust Contests and Litigation
- Trust Modification, Termination and Construction
- Trustee Removal
- Business Owner Disputes

FINRA Litigation

FINRA Litigation Practice is an integral part of Bhavik's legal practice. His practice specializes in the representation and defense of broker-dealers, registered representatives, and other financial professionals nationwide in actions initiated by former and current clients, as well as other entities and individuals. Bhavik's FINRA litigation practice concentrates in the defense of broker-dealers, registered representatives and other financial professionals before the FINRA in litigation involving securities and consumer fraud litigation, punitive damage litigation, violations of state and federal securities laws, common law claims, and violations of FINRA Rules. Bhavik utilizes his general representation of several financial advisor firms to provide legal counseling in every facet of professional liability and FINRA litigation.

Trademarks

Bhavik provides services that enable businesses to establish, protect, and profit from a distinct, recognizable identity of a product or service. He works with clients at every step of the trademark development process, including creation, identification and protection. Additionally, Bhavik negotiates and prepares trademark licenses, assignments, and other business agreements, and when disputes arise will litigate trademark, trade secret and unfair competition disputes. Bhavik has handled several highly publicized trademark disputes.