

LOS ANGELES

## Daily Journal

### Three Trial Lawyers Will Start Boutique for High-End Tort Cases

By Kenneth Davis  
Daily Journal Staff Writer

**N**oted Los Angeles trial lawyer Jerry Ringler is forming a new firm, Ringler Kearney Alvarez.

Ringler is currently a partner with Robins, Kaplan, Miller & Ciresi, where he has practiced for the last two years. He joined Robins, Kaplan following the dissolution of Fogel, Feldman, Ostrov & Ringler, where he was a partner for 25 years.

#### Law Firms

Ringler is founding the new firm, which will open Feb. 1, with attorneys Tom Kearney and Paul Alvarez from Los Angeles-based Kearney Alvarez.

Ringler was most recently associated with the Burlington Northern consolidated collision cases, in which he tried the first of 150 lawsuits. The cases involved a head-on collision between a Metrolink commuter train and a Burlington Northern freight train in April 2002. Two people were killed and 160 were injured in the crash.

In December 2004, Ringler won a \$9 million dollar verdict for a woman who was injured in the crash. Ringler said the verdict was the largest award for post-traumatic stress disorder in the country.

Ringler, Kearney and Alvarez are scheduled to become co-lead plaintiffs' counsel in the consolidated Metrolink collision cases arising out of last year's Glendale crash. Eleven people were killed and 200 were injured after a suicidal man parked his sport utility vehicle



on the tracks in January 2005.

The new partners are also scheduled to be co-lead plaintiffs' counsel in the consolidated cases that came out of a 2003 Metrolink crash in Burbank. In that crash, a commuter train derailed after it slammed into a pickup truck at a railroad crossing. One person was killed, and 32 were injured.

**R**ingler, Kearney and Alvarez are representing a woman who was rendered a paraplegic as a result of the accident. The trial is scheduled for March.

"The reason I made the decision [to open a firm] was I wanted to operate a boutique law firm that concentrated only

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**Jerry Ringler,**  
Trial lawyer

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on the high-end cases in the areas of both business tort class action and catastrophic personal tort matters," Ringler said.

He said he wants to limit his practice to seven- to eight-figure cases.

"We are really trying to limit our inventory to effectively handle these type of cases," he said.

Ringler spoke highly of his new partners.

"I've known them for many years," he said. "And they are outstanding commercial litigators as well as class-action attorneys."

In the last year, Kearney and Alvarez negotiated several multimillion-dollar settlements in wage-and-hour class actions.

Kearney said he is excited about forming the new firm.

**'W**e have been working together already on a couple of cases and just decided that our talents complemented each other," Kearney said.

He added that he's looking forward to working with Ringler.

"Combining Mr. Ringler's pre-eminent trial skills with our experience ... would really present a wonderful opportunity, and we decided to capitalize on it," Kearney said.

Alvarez said he also is looking forward to the move.

"I think it's just a good fit and a good thing all around," Alvarez said. "It will give us more versatility."

Kearney said that he and Alvarez have been practicing together for more than 20 years.

The new firm will be in downtown Los Angeles' US Bank Tower, the same location of Kearney and Alvarez s' previous practice. Robins Kaplan associates Thomas Peters and Richard Rosett will also join the new firm.

Ringler said that he leaves Robins Kaplan with great respect for his colleagues at the firm.

"It has been an honor and a privilege to have worked at Robins Kaplan," he said. "My experience there was outstanding. They are great lawyers and very good friends."

No one from Robins Kaplan was available for comment. The firm has 266 lawyers in six offices nationwide.