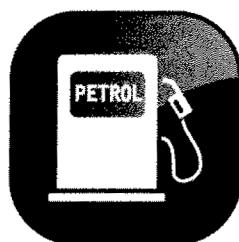
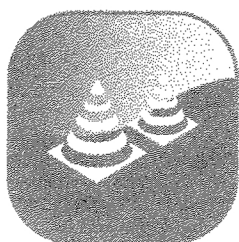
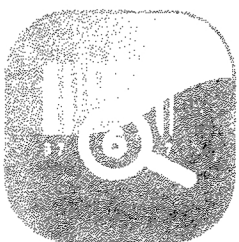
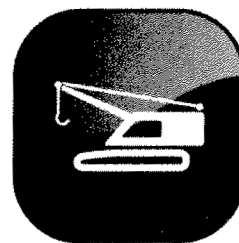
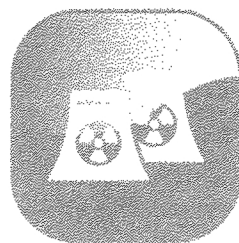
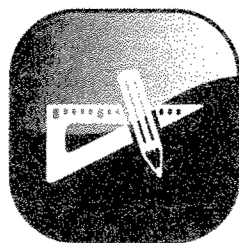
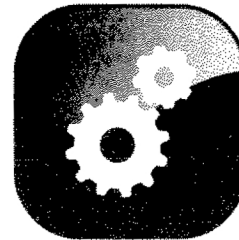
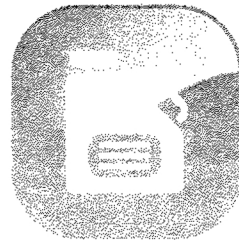
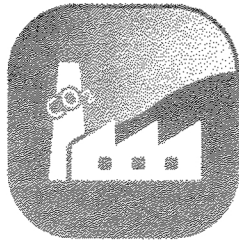


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Savitt loves trials. "I don't just win summary judgments," she said. "I really like trying cases. I know it's not the most efficient way to get a case resolved, but, in some cases, clients do not want to settle, or the demand is too high, the plaintiffs are overreaching, and they need to try the case. I'm the go-to person for that."

Indeed, she serves as lead counsel on about 50 cases a year.

Among her trials so far this year, Savitt won a defense verdict in a case involving claims of sexual harassment and termination of a board-certified female emergency room doctor. *Cheh v. Western Medical Center*, 30-2009-00119383, (O.C. Super. Ct.).

She also obtained a complete defense verdict in a national origin discrimination case brought by the vice president of U.S. sales at Biosense Webster, a Johnson & Johnson company. *Acevedo v. Biosense Webster Inc.*, KC 058790, (L.A. Super. Ct.).

Last year, Savitt received complete defense verdicts in a case involving accommodations, race and retaliation com-

plaints — *Bond v. Azusa Pacific University*, BC 408879, (L.A. Super. Ct.) — and in another case involving retaliation and overtime complaints. *Mendoza v. ABM Industries Inc.*, BC 406444, (L.A. Super. Ct.).

Savitt's getting more retaliation cases these days.

"Juries don't tend to like harassment cases as much as they used to," she said.

And, Savitt said, these days, employers are better educated in how to respond to grievances.

"If someone complains, they do something. There are very few employers who ignore it," she said, adding, "They don't want a lawsuit."

Juries, Savitt added, are more than willing to award monetary damages to those they believe to have been genuinely harmed.

"But a lot of time, people do get wind they're going to get terminated and come up with some complaint, or they complain, but there's no documentation," Savitt said. "Juries don't like to see what they perceive is unfairness, and they feel a lot of it is bogus. It lowers the bar. Everybody says, 'It's a hostile or abusive work envi-

ronment,' but no job is perfect. Everyone has a jerk in the workplace. It's why the plaintiffs' bar is going to retaliation. It's easier to prove than harassment."

Grievances aren't always what they appear to be on the surface, she said.

"I think what happens in employment cases is that the plaintiff's counsel puts the spotlight on the plaintiff, and says, 'Oh, the poor plaintiff,' and there is usually much more to the story than that," Savitt said. "The challenge is to find the rest of the story and take that spotlight and make it a floodlight, with everything that is going on with the company or division."

In other words, she said, "find the context and lay it out for the jury."

"Even though they don't work in that industry, they can see that more people can be impacted than just the plaintiff."

Savitt has a busy trial calendar set this year, with 15 cases set for trial and one for arbitration.

"I am the happiest when I'm in trial," she said. "You don't have to worry about anything else. It's fun, but it's not without stress."

— Pat Broderick



Linda Miller Savitt

**BALLARD ROSENBERG GOLPER
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