

Labor and Employment Firm Rao Tiliakos LLP

It was the eve of trial, and the attorneys of labor and employment firm Rao Tiliakos, LLP were gearing up for protracted litigation in state court. Their clients, a national logistics company and three individuals, were being sued by two employees (one male, one female) on 14 counts, including sexual and national origin harassment, failure to prevent harassment, wrongful termination, retaliation and defamation.

"We were confident we could get some claims dismissed on summary judgment, but given the venue, complete dismissal was too much to hope for," says Managing Partner Anthony J. Rao. "Still, based on the depositions, the client and I made a tactical decision to attack every claim."

"Rao Tiliakos offers the brainpower of a gigantic national law firm and the responsive customer service of a small firm. Plus, they've been extremely creative from an alternative billing perspective. We receive incredible value for our money."

– Aura Adams, Corporate Counsel, Chico's

Four days before the trial was set to begin, the attorneys and their client learned summary judgment had been granted. "It was one of those satisfying moments," Rao says. "With so many claims, victories like this are difficult to come by. Our client was so happy with the result, we were retained to perform an employment practices review. That's the beauty of a boutique firm."

Management Focused

When it comes to labor and employment law, Rao and partner Michael Tiliakos have seen it all – and won it all – from defeating wage-and-hour class and collective actions to obtaining summary judgment and defense verdicts on every employment issue imaginable.

Both are former big-firm attorneys with extensive experience in handling the most complicated matters and cases exclusively on behalf of management. Rao has 18 years of experience in all areas of employment law in New York, California and D.C. Tiliakos has represented private and municipal clients in a broad range of employment actions and civil rights cases in New York and New Jersey.

What prompted them to leave the large-firm world behind? Client demand. "Our clients told us they wanted our expertise, they wanted our undivided attention – but they were growing weary of ever increasing big-firm rates," Rao says.

Minority Owned

With offices in New York City and San Francisco, Rao Tiliakos represents a diverse group of corporate clients. As a minority-owned firm – Rao is a member of the Coeur d'Alene Tribe of Idaho – it is also focused on the advancement and retention of minority attorneys throughout the U.S.

While both partners love to try cases, Rao says, much of their practice is devoted to counseling employers on employee leaves, wage-and-hour compliance, exemption issues, independent contractors and various other hot-button topics. Workplace audits and training to help clients minimize their exposure to class or collective actions and federal or state investigations are another important focus.



Michael Tiliakos (left), Partner, and Anthony J. Rao, Managing Partner

"I've worked with Tony and Mike on many employment-related cases, including class actions and significant wage-and-hour issues, over the past seven years. They're very cost-efficient, and they're great at communicating with me and with others in the company and always give practical advice. Most importantly, they're very effective; they've won numerous cases on summary judgment and obtained very positive settlements on some very complex cases."

– Bradley Paskievitch, Senior Legal Counsel/Compliance & Employment, DHL Global Business Services

"We get it," Rao says. "Clients stay with us and make referrals because we understand their business. We care about their future. We understand the economic pressures affecting them. Because we are not overburdened with overhead, flat-fee arrangements are becoming the norm. Our goal is to become the 'go to' labor and employment boutique."