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Questions and Comments

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Cosmetology students can sue beauty school for pay

By Laura Hautala

A federal judge ruled Wednesday that a group of cosmetology students can sue their school for unpaid wages.

The decision by U.S. District Judge Phillip S. Gutierrez of Los Angeles against the Milan Institute of Cosmetology is the first to consider the question of whether such students, who provide discount services to the public for no pay, are employees.

"[T]he Court concludes that the California Supreme Court would hold that Milan's students may be properly classified as its employees," Gutierrez wrote.

Gutierrez also dismissed three of the plaintiffs' claims but allowed them to amend their complaint to comply with his ruling.

Leon M. Greenberg of Las Vegas, Nevada represents the plaintiffs in the case with Bryan J. Schwartz of Bryan Schwartz Law and Chaya M. Mandelbaum of Rudy, Exelrod, Zieff & Lowe LLP serving as local counsel.

Julie A. Vogelzang of Duane Morris LLP represents the school.

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Education

Judge to hear ACLU suit seeking to compel English instruction to students

In its latest education suit, the American Civil Liberties Union is taking on what it says is the state's obligation to provide English language instruction to non-native speakers.

Government

Amid cutbacks, courts get aggressive about going online

Many courts in the state have long offered online programs to boost efficiency, but courts are become more aggressive in making the switch as they continue to reel from deep budget cuts, courthouse closures and service reductions.

Entertainment & Sports

Summer heat reveals NFL shortcomings

Both on and off the playing fields of professional and collegiate athletics, we are reminded once again this summer that there is a fine line between respecting and coddling talent. By **Robert L. Bastian Jr.**

Insurance

Insurance company no longer has to foot church's legal costs

The interpretation of an assault and battery exclusion in an insurance policy means the Roman Catholic Church Diocese of Phoenix can't recoup legal fees, the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals said in a published opinion Wednesday.

Real Estate

Real Estate Deals

A roundup of recent real estate activity and the lawyers involved.

Litigation

PG&E accused of lying to federal investigators in San Bruno explosion

In a fresh set of allegations, a grand jury has accused Pacific Gas & Electric Co. of lying to federal investigators during their examination of a 2010 gas pipeline explosion that killed eight people and destroyed 38 homes.

Labor/Employment

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The decision is the first to consider the question of whether such students, who provide discount services to the public for no pay, are employees.

Criminal

What a difference a day makes

Last week, Gov. Jerry Brown signed a law that reduces the maximum penalty for a California misdemeanor by one day, so that a misdemeanor will carry a potential sentence of 364 days rather than 365. By **Katherine Brady**

Judicial Profile

Nicole C. Bershon
Superior Court Judge
Los Angeles County (Inglewood)

Corporate Counsel
Michael A. Dillon
Senior Vice President, General Counsel and
Corporate Secretary of Adobe Systems Inc. San
Jose

Labor/Employment
**Regulator changes playing field for
McDonald's in labor relations fights**
Plaintiffs' attorneys cheered an announcement
that the general counsel of the National Labor
Relations Board will treat USA LLC an employer
to all its burger flippers, even the ones who work
in franchise restaurants.

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