



RELATED PRACTICES

Public Law
Litigation
Law Enforcement Defense

RELATED PEOPLE

Caylin W. Jones
Nathan A. Oyster

Burke Litigation Team Secures Daily Journal ‘Top Verdict’ Honor

Los Angeles, CA – A Burke, Williams & Sorensen, LLP Law Enforcement Defense Litigation team has been distinguished in the 2024 edition of the Daily Journal’s ‘Top Verdicts’ supplement for securing a high-profile defense verdict in *Rusanovskaya et al. v City of Los Angeles et al.*, 20STCV46024 (L.A. Super. Ct., filed Dec. 2, 2020). The DJ ‘Top Verdicts’ supplement annually distinguishes the top trial outcomes in California, including the top 20 defense victories. *Rusanovskaya* entailed a \$20 million claim against the City of Los Angeles and a Los Angeles Police Department officer for alleged excessive force as a result of the fatal officer-involved shooting of a knife-wielding man. Burke partner [Nathan A. Oyster](#) and associate [Caylin W. Jones](#) persuaded jurors to return a defense verdict following an emotionally-charged trial.

Oyster’s litigation strategy keyed-in on leveraging deposition testimony and evidence to advance a jury-convincing ‘suicide-by-cop’ argument. Anticipating the emotional tension that the facts of the case could raise with some jurors, Oyster tactfully integrated his narrative with comforting statements to the jury about appropriately balancing any potential empathies for the decedent’s parents on the loss of their son, with a finding that the actions of the police were “reasonable and necessary”. Jones supported Oyster in managing complex pretrial motions and issue briefing.

Burke’s Managing Partner, John J. Welsh, noted, “Burke is honored that our defense verdict in *Rusanovskaya* was selected as one of the top defense verdicts in California in 2023. As Burke approaches our centennial year in 2027, this result demonstrates that our Litigation Practice Group is well-positioned to serve our public entity and private sector clients throughout California.”