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Kevin Crockett, Crockett Law Group, Irvine

Finding the "Hollywood Ending"

FINDING THE HOLLYWOOD



ENDING

Focus on People Earns Applause for Personal Injury Attorney Kevin Crockett

“As a kid, I wanted to go into the theater as a career and I even dabbled in some productions early on. My attraction was simple—nothing is more fascinating than people’s lives and the struggles they face. That’s why movies are so popular all across the world. As humans, we’re naturally attracted to stories and we’re always rooting for a Hollywood ending,” says Kevin Crockett, Founding Partner of Crockett Law Group.

Although he didn’t become an actor, his work in personal injury has provided many “Hollywood endings” to individual people and their families.

Crockett explains his approach to personal injury in terms of a theatrical script. “The ‘set-up’ for the plot begins with what the client’s life was like before being injured. One day their life takes a dramatic turn when they’re injured in an accident; that’s the middle of the story where all seems lost. I became a plaintiff’s attorney because I root for a Hollywood ending. I want to be a part of my client’s journey of rising up from the suffering, confronting recovery, and then kicking butt by being fairly compensated. It’s deeply satisfying to play a role in my client’s happy ending.”

Crockett’s approach is more than theatrics. Whether in an office or the courtroom, the art of effectively telling a client’s story with the proper amount of passion and persuasiveness is key to an attorney’s success. “I wanted to become an attorney because I’m a problem solver and storyteller by nature. My clients entrust me to bring about a resolution during a moment in time

when they’re facing a struggle, and I get to do it by leveraging the ways in which stories touch audiences. It’s incredibly rewarding,” he says.

Although managing his own firm only since November 2020, he and his team have already earned rave reviews:

Life is better now! It’s going to be tough to thank Kevin enough! His guidance, support and optimism from day one helped me get through the arduous process of appointments and treatments required to recover from my injuries and pay the bills. My calls were returned promptly, and I always felt that he truly cared about me, my case, and the outcome. I know he fought hard and brought my case to a very successful conclusion. Oh, and I can’t forget, his support team gets five stars as well. Thank you, Kevin, thank you!—Rob

MAKING A LOT FROM A LITTLE

Crockett says, “Early in my career, I learned to make a lot with very little. When I began working for my previous employer, I went office to office soliciting my coworkers for their lower value cases since I didn’t have many to start. As you might expect, attorneys gave up cases to me they thought were dogs—gaps in treatment, liability issues, injuries that appeared unrelated on the surface and so on. But I learned how to monetize those cases through creativity and hard work, and I became known for that within my firm.”

Crockett says that he is in a unique position in that he is new in business on his own, so most of his cases currently come from referrals.

Approximately 95% of his business is from referrals. Those referrals may not be considered the “best cases” as attorneys define them because referring firms obviously keep the straightforward, higher value cases for themselves. The remaining source of cases often come from clients who have contacted other law firms only to be rejected because their case involved too many complications or wasn’t high enough value on its face.

But working with these more challenging cases has proven not only to be a personal bonus for Crockett, but also for the clients who benefit from his considerable experience, which was earned early on in his career.

He cites as an example a client he recently represented in a traffic injury. Although the client wasn’t at fault, it also wasn’t a straightforward rear-ender case either. The victim contacted a prominent law firm and was told that unless the police report placed the other party at fault, the firm would not take the case. Bigger firms can afford to be selective, so an injured person in that situation may end up feeling rejected and hopeless.

Crockett says clients like this are just looking for a glimpse of hope that somebody will fight for them and be their voice even knowing there is no guarantee for a monetary recovery. “Quite frankly, I have a lot of fun working on those cases; they tend to be more interesting than the day-to-day type cases. I get to dig in and be a little more creative in my approach. Luckily, the fun I have with it also benefits my clients.”

LEGAL PRECEDENTS

Crockett comes from a family of several attorneys. His eldest sister started the trend you could say with her own personal injury law firm on the east coast. Overall, his family has practiced a wide range of different areas of law—intellectual property, environmental, employment, family, workers compensation, construction defect, etc. “You name it, we’ve probably practiced it,” he says.

Crockett moved to Orange County almost 30 years ago and has loved every minute of it. From elementary school to opening his firm, all of his personal milestones took place in Orange County, and his first legal job was in Newport Beach.

Before applying the law, he had wanted to enforce it as a police officer. He had completed the exams and background check. But with the financial crisis of 2007-2008, government agencies enacted hiring freezes. It turns out this was fortunate for his future clients. Crockett went on to major in Criminology, Law and Society, before attending law school.

His first job out of law school was for a large personal injury firm, but he later answered his call to form his own firm. He says his edge is something some might consider a disadvantage—his age. Being 33 years old, he is relatively young for a business owner. However, he’s already

accumulated a slew of accolades and substantial experience commonly seen by older attorneys while maintaining a hunger and drive commonly found in younger attorneys.

For example, about six months into his career Crockett handled a case involving a boyfriend/girlfriend who were involved in a car wreck. When the couple split shortly after finishing their medical treatment, the girlfriend hired another attorney while the boyfriend stayed with Crockett. Although handling a case based on the same set of facts involving the same injuries and treatment, the two attorneys had starkly different outcomes. Crockett settled his client’s case for two times the amount that the other attorney did, an attorney who had been practicing for more than 30 years.


“Starting out my career working for such an established and reputable law firm gave me access to many resources that most of my peers did not have—from our relationships with some of the greatest legal minds in personal injury to the opportunity to handle a high volume of serious injuries cases right out of the gate. I’ve already represented as many clients, and settled as much in money, as some other accident attorneys who have been practicing 20-plus years.”

“DOGGING” THE OPPOSITION

An attorney known for welcoming cases some define as “dogs” has earned a reputation for persistence. A former partner at a previous firm likened him to a dog that incessantly nips at your heels until you give up. “That’s still my strategy to this day because it continues to yield results—to keep at defense relentlessly. I’ve handled countless cases where others saw little-to-no value, but through persistence and telling my client’s story, I was able to obtain a satisfactory recovery for my client,” he says.

Crockett cites a case where that attitude of persistence earned a victory for his client and simultaneously influenced his development as an attorney.

“An elderly man who had been suffering from cancer traveled from Oregon to California in search of employment when he was suddenly rear-ended at a high rate of speed on the freeway. When he awoke at the hospital, his clothes had been cut away and removed; he was so embarrassed. He also felt scared and alone because he couldn’t remember his own wife’s telephone number to tell her where he was. After we made a settlement demand to his insurance company, they delayed, denied, and defended in stereotypical fashion.” Crockett calls that behavior shameful. “This was an honest, elderly man who had been looking for work so he could feed his wife and young daughter when he was tragically injured at the hands of a stranger, and his own insurance company was apathetic. In fact, not only did they simply not care about his circumstances, but they also saw an opportunity to take advantage of a vulnerable man.”

A man with short brown hair and a light beard is smiling at the camera. He is wearing a tan-colored quarter-zip sweater over a light-colored collared shirt and blue jeans. He is leaning against a large, textured tree trunk on the right side of the frame. His right hand is in his pocket. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with trees and a sidewalk.

*We personal injury attorneys
are what stand between innocent
accident victims and unscrupulous
insurance carriers, and I don't take
that responsibility lightly.*

—Kevin Crockett

Before retaining Crockett, the client already told his insurance carrier he was dying of cancer, which prompted them to delay moving forward. Once brought in as counsel, Crockett made a demand to his client's insurance carrier under Oregon law so he could stack insurance limits. The carrier unsurprisingly responded that California law applied. When Crockett agreed to apply California law so he could pursue bad faith, the carrier reversed course and argued instead that Oregon law applied.

Fed up with the run-around, Crockett called the insurance company and tripped up the claims adjuster, catching her in lie after lie. The carrier subsequently handed off the file to their in-house counsel who proceeded to call Crockett and almost congratulate him for how he made the adjuster look like a "fool" and how he had "gotten" them.

Crockett says the adjuster's lies were essentially admissions of bad faith that resulted in a settlement for more than the policy limits. He wonders, however, if he had not 'caught' the adjuster. "It became clear to me in that moment that insurance carriers will push the envelope to see how much they can get away with, which is why our job as plaintiffs' attorneys is so important. This experience has without a doubt become my motivator. I saw behind the curtain, and it was ugly. We personal injury attorneys are what stands between innocent accident victims and unscrupulous insurance carriers, and I don't take that responsibility lightly."

The experience he gained in working at a larger firm and the success he found while there; his focus on building new relationships and maintaining old ones; and his commitment to writing the perfect "Hollywood ending" for each of his clients have been the essential ingredients that culminated in him being able to successfully launch his own personal injury law firm.

"We're trusted by so many reputable personal injury firms throughout this state. I feel confident in saying that I have a reputation for being able to make money off cases that other people might view as challenging or difficult, and thus unattractive. But of course, I don't view them as bad. I welcome the challenge. Although I'm marching forward with my career, I still welcome those cases because they demand savvy and it's where I'm able to effectuate the most impact" Crockett says. ■

Contact

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EXPERIENCE



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» **EDUCATION**

- University of California at Irvine, J.D. (2015), B.A. (2012), Criminology, Law & Society, summa cum laude, Dean's List

» **HONORS AND AWARDS**

- Lifetime Member—Multi-Million Dollar Advocates Forum
- Ones to Watch for Personal Injury Litigation—Plaintiffs—Best Lawyers, 2021
- Rising Star—Super Lawyers Magazine, 2019 – 2021
- Top 40 Under 40—National Trial Lawyers, 2020, 2021
- Top 10 Attorneys in CA for Personal Injury Law—Attorney and Practice Magazine, 2020
- Top 50 Settlements for Personal Injury in California—Top Verdict, 2019
- Top 50 Settlements for Car Accidents in California—Top Verdict, 2018
- Top 20 Settlements for Pedestrian Accidents in California—Top Verdict, 2017

» **PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS AND MEMBERSHIPS**

- Orange County Trial Lawyers Association
- Orange County Bar Association
- Consumer Attorneys Association of Los Angeles

» **BAR ADMISSIONS**

- California