



## The Quattro Firm About Town

Page **4**



## Contents

**Welcome to The  
Quattro Firm**  
Page 1

**Meet The Quattro  
Firm** Page 2-3

**The Quattro Firm  
About Town**  
Page 4-6

**Can you Disinherit in a  
Florida Will?**  
By: Monique L'Italien  
Page 7-9

**A Note From The  
Quattro Firm**  
Page 10



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## Welcome to The Quattro Firm

At the Quattro firm, we believe in viewing our client as a whole person as opposed to just a set of legal issues. We believe that in order to be a successful advocate, we must be able to understand the full needs of our clients, not just the legal needs. By using this full understanding, we advocate with compassion.

more on **2**

## Meet The Quattro Firm



**Nicole McNamara Quattrocchi** is the founding member of the Quattro Firm. She is a 2008 Southern Methodist University Law School graduate and a 2004 Wake Forest University Graduate. Nicole is a licensed Texas attorney where her practice involved mostly civil and commercial litigation. Nicole has been licensed in Florida since 2014 and has centered most of her practice on domestic relations law.

Nicole has spent a lot of time volunteering in her legal career whether it be through pro bono cases or through assisting at the Hurricane Katrina Relief Clinic in law school. Nicole believes in viewing the client as a whole person and not just a specific legal issue and therefore has, thus far, taken every case that the firm can handle, regardless of inability to pay. She is a passionate and compassionate attorney who looks forward to working with people across the spectrum of life with all of their legal needs.



**Robert J. Fraxedas** specializes in Estate and Tax Planning, as well as Estate Administration and Litigation. He is a 2015 University of Miami graduate (LL.M. – Estate Planning) and a 2005 University of Florida graduate (J.D.). Robert has been licensed in Florida since 2006, and currently lives in Boca Raton.

Robert regularly presents seminars on estate planning and probate matters throughout the state of Florida. A former president of Citrus Civitan, Robert believes in donating time and hands-on effort to the less fortunate. He has organized fundraising events for people with congenital disabilities, mentors underprivileged school-age children, and volunteers at homeless shelters. He strongly believes in providing all clients the best legal counsel possible, from highly compensated executives to impoverished individuals.



**Melanie Bruchet** is a 2012 graduate of Mercer University's Walter F. George School of Law in Macon, Georgia, where she received her J.D. and a Certificate in Advanced Legal Writing, Research, and Drafting from Mercer's top rated legal writing program. Melanie served on the Board of Directors for the Stonewall Bar Association of Georgia as well as completed internships at CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) for Children and the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of New Jersey.

Melanie has presented nationally on the subjects of human trafficking and LGBT youth in the juvenile court system. She also co-authored an amicus brief to the Georgia Supreme Court on the issue of post-separation custodial rights and the emotional effect on children of divorced parents. Melanie maintains an active bar license in Georgia and is sworn in to both the Georgia Court of Appeals and the Georgia Supreme Court. A South Florida native, she currently lives in Asheville, North Carolina.



**Monique L'Italien** is a civil and commercial litigator and appellate attorney who has practiced in Florida since 2001. She has broad experience at the trial and appellate levels in federal and state court. Her practice areas include bankruptcy, contract disputes, family law, real property and some criminal. Prior to entering private practice, Ms. L'Italien was an Assistant Attorney General for the State of Florida, handling criminal appeals and civil litigation matters.

Ms. L'Italien earned her B.A., cum laude, from Trinity College in Washington D.C and her J.D. from Vermont Law School. Ms. L'Italien enjoys traveling, running, spending time with her animals including her horse Dancer, an off track thoroughbred rescue, and doing other animal welfare work.

Read more about The Quattro Firm at [www.thequattrofirm.com](http://www.thequattrofirm.com)

## Meet The Quattro Firm



**Maria Kontos** obtained her Bachelor of Arts from Florida Atlantic University in 1995. Ms. Kontos has over 16 years of experience working on complex and voluminous civil, criminal and family law cases which involve organizing thousands of documents, discovery and file organization.

Ms. Kontos is intricately involved in the defense of all of the firm's clients' cases and takes great pride in assisting and working toward a favorable outcome in each case.



**Jennifer Mondone** is the office manager of the Quattro Firm. Jennifer grew up in upstate New York. She is a graduate of the Ohio State University where she studied financial management and business administration. Since graduating she's lived in North Carolina and settled in Florida for the last 13 years. This is her first job at a law firm but has previously dabbled in the insurance and mortgage industry, most recently in management for restaurants, from start ups to corporate chains and sales.

Jennifer also assisted in co-creating 2 humans which for the last 6 years has been her main focus and accomplishment. She enjoys spending her time with the family, paddle boarding, volunteering at the kids school, movie nights and anything involving wine or mimosas.



**Sarah Kontos** has been working professionally in accounting since 2005. Her experience includes conducting, supervising, and reviewing annual audits, bookkeeping and payroll, and compilations and examinations of the financial records of a wide range of businesses including non-profits, law firms, restaurants, 401(k) plans, and other service industries.

Sarah attended Florida Atlantic University earning her degree in Mathematics and attending an additional two years of studies in Accounting and Business Administration. She is originally from West Palm Beach, FL. She is a supporting member of Compass Lake Worth, United Way and Farm Sanctuary, and she volunteers at various fundraising events for local charities.



**Alexandrea Perez** is a twenty year old who just completed her junior year as an undergraduate at the University of Central Florida. She attended Suncoast High School in Rivera Beach where she graduated with her International Baccalaureate Degree. Throughout her college years Alexandra has gained a passion for international human rights law through her active participation in International Medical Outreach and Phi Alpha Delta pre-law society.

After her undergraduate graduation, Alexandra plans to participate in the Peace Corps for two years until she attends law school in either Washington D.C. or New York. After law school, Alexandra hopes to practice human rights law domestically or internationally.

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## The Quattro Firm About Town



Left: Jennifer Mondone, Michelle Hayes and Nicole Quattrocchi enjoy a working lunch at Buffalo Wild Wings.



Above: Angie McNamara and Nicole Quattrocchi attend a meeting with the St. Edward's Women's Guild.

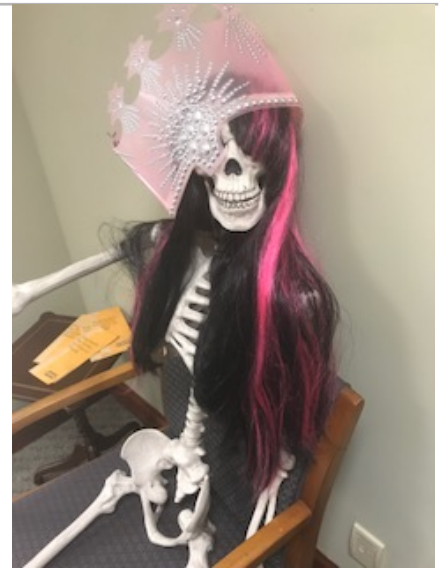
### + Our Practice Areas

- Bankruptcy
- Business Formation
- Civil Litigation
- Commercial Litigation
- Contract Drafting & Review
- Corporate Matters
- Estate Planning
- Family Law & Domestic Relations
- Family Law Mediation
- General Litigation
- Immigration
- LGBT Issues & Custody
- Marital Contracts
- Probate Litigation
- Probate Administration
- Wills & Trusts



Monique L'Italien, Ellen Pincus and Nicole Quattrocchi meet up at a networking event at Banko Cantina





At the Quattro Firm, we enjoy holidays and Halloween is one of our favorites. Above you will see the various antics of “Seymore Bones,” who is a frequent visitor to our office and our office Facebook page.



As a family friendly firm, we often take our children out to support local industries, including the Palm Beach Zoo. Above and to the right you will see our families enjoying some fun at Boo at the Zoo.



## The Quattro Firm About Town

Right: Nicole Quattrocchi took a meeting with Life Coach, Laura Aiello. We look forward to a wonderful working relationship for the future.



## November Promotion:

**This Thanksgiving, we are thanking our clients. If you've been a prior client of ours and you were happy with our representation, we would like to offer you 15% off of any new case or matter on which you re-hire us. This will apply for flat-rate cases as well as litigation cases. We appreciate your loyalty and your business.**

**As always, please follow us on social media. If you'd like to submit a review either on Facebook or through our website, please get in touch with us.**

Below: To celebrate a visit from our college intern, Alexa Perez, Jennifer Mondone and Nicole Quattrocchi took Alexa to our favorite lunch location, the Grilled Cheese Gallery.



## Can you Disinherit in a Florida Will?

By Monique L'Italien

Chances are at one time or another you saw that scene in a movie referred to as the “reading of the will”.



Individuals gathered in a lawyer's office waiting with baited breath to hear what they have inherited from the recently deceased. There is always that one person who is outraged to hear he will receive NOTHING or even more insulting, one dollar!

People often wonder if they are obligated to leave assets to their children or surviving spouse or if they can disinherit them completely. In Florida, you *can* disinherit your heirs and spouse. However, you need to be aware there are laws in place to protect minor children as well as surviving spouses should you choose to do so.

### Minor Children

There are situations where a parent may wish to disinherit a child, such as when the parent has been estranged from that child for years. Some parents may wish to “send a message” to a child by disinheriting him or her.

In Florida, if you wish to intentionally disinherit a child, it is typically better to leave the child nothing; do not state in the will why you are leaving the child nothing and do not leave some nominal amount like one dollar. The reason being, under Florida law, any person included as a beneficiary in a will becomes an interested party and therefore is entitled to notice of the probate. This means that person must sign all consents, receipts and waivers regarding the estate.

**"I think the best role models for women are people ."**

**—Melinda Gates**



## Can you Disinherit in a Florida Will?

By Monique L'Italien

Although minor children may be disinherited, Florida law otherwise protects their rights. Specifically, this homestead law prohibits the head of the household from leaving his or her residence to anyone other than a spouse or minor child. Under this law, a surviving spouse is given use of the property for the remainder of his or her life, commonly referred to as a life estate, and then the home passes to the minor children. This homestead law only applies to children who were minors at the time of the parent's death.

There are alternatives to disinheritance. One such alternative would be to establish a trust for the child, which would allow a trustee to control the trust property and give the heir an allowance or other stipulations. For instance, a decedent could create a trust that requires the heir to attend a drug rehab program and be regularly drug tested.



### Surviving Spouse

Florida law doesn't allow for the complete disinheritance of a spouse if the will was made while the couple was already married (If however the will was made *before* the marriage, the surviving spouse may be disinherited). Should an individual desire to disinherit the surviving spouse, the surviving spouse can inherit through other means. The surviving spouse is entitled to part of the deceased spouse's estate in most cases, even if the will fails to provide for him/her.

First, a surviving spouse may take what is called an elective share of the deceased spouse's estate. Florida's elective share law is intended to protect a surviving spouse who has been disinherited or left only a small portion of the estate. A surviving spouse may elect to receive 30% of the estate, regardless of the terms of the will. However, a surviving spouse who waived his/her right to an elective share in a prenuptial or postnuptial agreement can't take the elective share after her spouse dies.



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## Can you Disinherit in a Florida Will?

By Monique L'Italien



Additionally, a surviving spouse is entitled to a life interest in the real estate that served as the couple's main home. As stated previously, the remaining interest belongs to the deceased spouse's descendants, such as his/her children. This means that even if the deceased spouse's will left the home to someone other than his/her spouse, his/her spouse is still entitled to live in the home after his/her death so long as his/her will was made *after* the two married. This allows the surviving spouse to live in the home, rent-free, until he/she dies, at which time the remaining interest passes to the deceased spouse's heirs. As with an elective share, if the surviving spouse waived his/her homestead rights in a prenuptial or postnuptial agreement, he/she can't claim this entitlement after his/her spouse's death.

Finally, the surviving spouse is entitled to a family allowance, regardless of his/her share in the will, so long as the will was made after the two married. This allowance is a cash amount, not to exceed \$18,000, and *is in addition to* an elective share and his/her interest in the marital home. The allowance is paid out of the estate's assets during the probate process and is meant to support the spouse during the probate proceedings. If the deceased has minor children who are not living with the surviving spouse, the allowance is divided between the surviving spouse and these minor children. The surviving spouse is not entitled to the money during the estate proceedings. And again, this family allowance is subject to a waiver in a pre or post marital agreement.

In sum, if you intend to disinherit an heir or a surviving spouse, it should be expressly stated in your will. Otherwise, a court could interpret the omission to be a mistake or a failure to update the will. Also, be aware the Florida law otherwise provides for minor children and surviving spouses with only a few exceptions. Wills should be drafted by an estate-planning attorney who can discuss your objectives and make recommendations as to the options available to convey property to the ones who matter most.



## A Note From The Quattro Firm

We appreciate your continuing support. We hope that you have enjoyed our newsletter and hope that we may serve your present and future legal needs.

Thank you.



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## The Quattro Firm

580 Village Blvd. Suite 300  
West Palm Beach, FL 33401