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Top 100 Lawyers AND DISTINGUISHED COUNSEL



JOSEPH R. SAVERI

SAVERI LAW FIRM, LLP
LITIGATION
SAN FRANCISCO

Joseph Saveri stood before a courtroom in March 2024, 10 years after filing suit. His firm and co-counsel had sued the UFC in 2014 on behalf of fighters Cung Le, Nathan Quarry, Jon Fitch and others, alleging the promotion had pushed out competitors and suppressed fighter pay. The case reached a \$335 million settlement just before trial, then grew to \$375 million with preliminary approval that October and final approval in February 2025. *Cung Le v. Zuffa, LLC*, 2:15-cv-01045 (D. Nev., filed June 3, 2015).

"This case is a good example of how the threat of a trial can force a resolution to a case," Saveri said. Three more suits against the UFC remain pending, covering different periods of fighters' careers.

The UFC litigation moved without a roadmap. "In UFC, there was relatively little established case law on which to rely," Saveri said. "Labor-side section 2 claims of the type in this case are rare." The Federal Trade Commission had twice opened and closed inquiries into the UFC's conduct without acting, leaving Saveri's team to build the case without a government proceeding behind it. The sport itself had expanded from a fringe promotion into a global business over the years plaintiffs litigated, and the UFC argued that growth reflected its own skill rather than any restraint on competition. The suit also unfolded in Las Vegas, home turf for the defendant.

Saveri founded Saveri Law Firm, LLP, following relatives who preceded him into the profession. His paternal grandparents left Italy around 1918 and settled in San Francisco, where his father was born in 1923 and his uncle Guido in 1925. Both became lawyers and opened Saveri & Saveri. "On childhood visits to their office, I saw that they were all dressed like lawyers — three-piece suits, vests, clothes like that," Saveri said. "They smoked cigars

and wrote briefs in longhand pencil." Watching them work on antitrust cases set him on his own path.

Other matters have followed a similar pattern of scale and duration. A 2019 suit against Jackson Hewitt and Tax Services of America over anti-poaching policies closed with a \$10.8 million settlement in November 2024. An \$82.5 million settlement with Varsity Brands, on behalf of cheerleaders' parents, received final approval that December.

Saveri's newer docket centers on generative artificial intelligence, representing artists, coders and authors who allege their work was used to train AI systems without consent or compensation. The matters drew a Senate Judiciary Committee subcommittee hearing in July 2023. "These cases are incredibly active right now and are ones of first impression that will define this type of law for a generation," Saveri said.

Saveri also sits on the plaintiffs' steering committee in *In re: RealPage, Inc. Rental Software Antitrust Litigation*, which alleges RealPage's pricing algorithm let apartment management companies coordinate rents using shared, non-public data. The court has preliminarily approved more than \$350 million in settlements, with litigation continuing against remaining defendants.