



Forensic Accounting Today

Newsletter of Ron J. Anfuso, CPA/ABV, An Accountancy Corp.



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Serving all of California

New Enhanced Website

We recently completed a redesign of our practice website (anfusocpa.com). Part of what inspired us to undertake this task were the results of the survey we conducted at the *LA County Bar Association 2016 Family Law Symposium*. Many of you who responded expressed it is sometimes challenging to justify to clients the need to hire a forensic accountant. As a result, we added a section for clients that explains when and why a forensic accountant is needed in a divorce matter, as well as the benefits.

Our new website is also more user friendly. It is optimized for any screen, including smart phones and tablets. Your client, for example, could review our website while in a meeting with you via a smart phone and easily navigate through the client section. I welcome you to visit our new website.

Financial Planning

As a Certified Divorce Financial Analyst (CDFA), I understand the advantage of family law attorneys having access to an experienced professional with both a CDFA credential and a certified financial planner (CFP) license. This combination allows such an analyst to enable divorce clients to thoroughly comprehend choices open to them concerning the division of their most valuable assets, as well as the ramifications of each option. Thus, clients are more apt to make decisions that will allow them the greatest possible financial security for many years following the finalization of their divorce. Moreover, a client's greater comfort and confidence usually translates to a higher level of satisfaction with his or her attorney.

Over the past few years, we have continually strengthened a strategic partnership with Evan Miller and Kathy Costas, his associate. What we routinely observe is that post-divorce clients who use their services tend to have a more confident, optimistic attitude concerning their futures. I am grateful for our dynamic relationship and welcome you to take advantage of their services.

Ron

Financial Planning: The Missing Ingredient in the Divorce Process

There is indeed a missing component in the divorce process. Although not always required, it is a service that can actually increase clients' level of satisfaction with their Family Law attorney. To have a clear picture of one's own financial outlook five, 10 or even 20 years down the road can serve as a blessing to the client, as the emotional pain and frustration of going through the divorce process comes to a close with increased hope for the future.

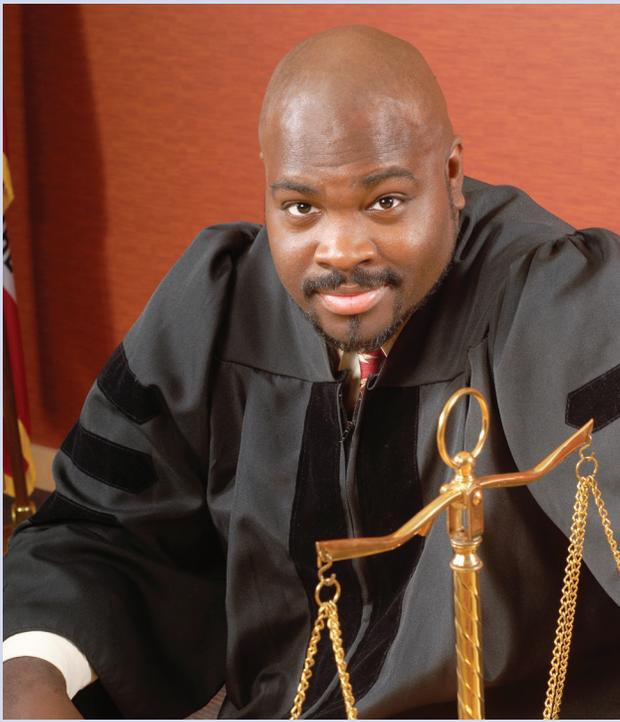
One of many of Ron Anfuso's credentials is as a Certified Divorce Financial Analyst® (CDFA). As a Forensic Accountant trained as a CDFA, Ron clearly envisioned the advantages of working with another CDFA who doubles as a Certified Financial Planner® (CFP). Part of a Forensic Accountant's job is to make certain the division of property is equitable at the time of divorce. On the other hand, a financial planner, who is also a CDFA, has the ability to study every property division scenario on behalf of a client to determine what the financial outlook for the individual would look like many years into the future when comparing alternatives to each other.

The dilemma for the Family Law attorney is that numerous clients see it as the attorney's responsibility to not just select a property division scenario that looks equitable at the time of divorce,



Evan Miller has been working in the investment advisory industry since 2003 managing assets of affluent individuals and pension plans. He earned his degree in Business and Economics at the University of California at Los Angeles. In 2008, Evan earned the professional credential, Certified Financial Planner (CFP). He is also a Certified Divorce Financial Analyst. As a CDFA, he specializes in helping people who have gone through or are going through divorce to coordinate their financial affairs and gain control of their financial lives using a highly consultative Wealth Management process. In addition to working with Ron J. Anfuso, An Accountancy Corporation, Evan is a partner in the firm FMB Wealth Management.

* For an explanation of these titles, please visit our website or request a copy of Issue 3 of *Forensic Accounting Today*.



Why Judges Have Appointed Ron J. Anfuso More Than 30 Times Pursuant to Evidence Code §730

Judges find Ron...

- Continually demonstrates integrity
- Diligently prepares for his testimony
- Demonstrates thorough knowledge of Forensic Accounting and California Family Law that relates to Forensic Accounting
- Provides clear, concise, impartial responses under testimony that help resolve Forensic Accounting matters
- Does not become flustered or thrown off course by tough questioning
- Consistently provides timely and succinctly written reports that fulfill judges' requests

When you need a proven Forensic Accountant to provide expert witness testimony, choose

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but to be able to project for the client what his or her financial situation would look like years later. The fact that this is not part of the attorney's function does not necessarily erase any client dissatisfaction should the client have doubts on which scenario the attorney should attempt to settle the case. The attorney can not only punt any potential dissatisfaction to the CDEA/CFP concerning property division, but can enhance the client's satisfaction with the attorney by making a referral to a professional who can provide valuable guidance concerning vital decisions.

Six years ago, Ron met Evan Miller, who is an experienced Certified Divorce Financial Analyst, as well as a Certified Financial Planner. Initially, Ron rarely brought Evan in on a case, as this was essentially new waters for a Forensic Accountant to dabble in, let alone attorneys. Over time, their relationship grew, as more attorneys grasped the advantages Evan brought to their clients. Now, Ron, Evan, and Kathy Costas, Evan's associate, routinely work together. (Kathy, who is also a CDEA, has been working in the financial services industry for nearly 30 years. She is adept at working with individuals in all phases of a divorce, including planning, settlements, and investment planning.)

Evan and Kathy use a sophisticated financial projection software program, which is more robust than programs other CDFAs employ since it encompasses a financial planning component. They have customized the software to enable them to provide a comprehensive wealth-management perspective that pieces together an individual's entire financial picture, and allows clients to visualize their alternative scenarios side by side. For example, if a party indicates she wants to keep the family home, they can present, given her expenses, what her financial situation will look like five, 10 or even 20 years into the future. It may work for her to keep the house, or hold onto it until the children are grown. On the other hand, it might be in her best interest to sell the home immediately. Regardless, it places the party in a position to make a better decision. Should the individual decide to choose an avenue that is not the most favorable financial option, at least she will know what she is getting into.

Evan and Kathy are quick to explain that what they provide is a two-way street. Some individuals come to them before they even hire an attorney. As it turned out, they found themselves as an excellent starting point because they are able to get to know their clients and their situations thoroughly, and help point them in the right direction. They have formed relationships with other divorce team professionals and can provide clients with contact information for accountants, therapists, and attorneys. Thus, we welcome you to contact Evan to establish a mutually beneficial relationship. Evan can be reached through our office.

In future issues of *Forensic Accounting Today*, we plan to provide case studies on financial planning. We anticipate you will find these narratives informative and helpful.

Do you need a superb speaker for your Bar's Family Law Section, or study group? If so, call Ron today!