

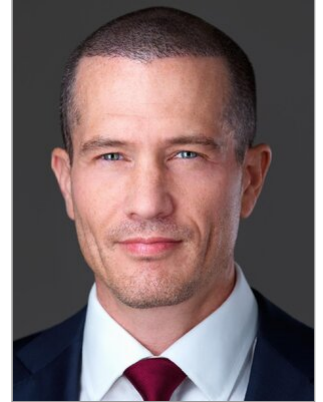
## Sorrels Adds Litigation Muscle In Houston With Ex-Prosecutor

By **Khadrice Rollins**

Law360 (April 20, 2023, 3:14 PM EDT) -- A former Manhattan prosecutor and assistant U.S. attorney in Florida is bringing the lessons from his "unconventional path" — which included a year of method-acting training — to Houston as the first new partner of Sorrels Law.

Eric Gerard told Law360 he is bringing an "intensity" and desire to compete in the courtroom, along with a passion for helping plaintiffs get justice, as he helps share their stories with juries.

"I love to compete," Gerard said in an interview, "and the opportunity to do that with stakes so high where I can truly affect people's lives, and make them better. I wake up sometimes and I just feel so grateful for having the opportunity to do that for a living and I get paid to do what I love."



Eric Gerard

Gerard started as a state prosecutor fresh out of Virginia Law in 2009. He left in 2012, but returned to government in 2015 for four years in the Middle District of Florida as a federal prosecutor.

His love of trials is at the heart of many of his career decisions, and he said he's looking forward to getting more opportunities in the courtroom with Sorrels.

"That is a really remarkable thing that not all that many people can say," Gerard said about loving his work. "And so I feel a bit of an obligation to give everything I have back to the practice of law. And that means there are no days off. I'm working seven days a week. I'm of the very strong opinion that that is the only way that you get the best results for your client."

Gerard got started at Sorrels earlier this month, joining firm co-founders and married couple Randy Sorrels and Alex Farias-Sorrels.

Gerard's success in trials ranges from prosecuting "one of the first foreign 'sex tourism' cases to go to trial" involving a Florida man who was sentenced to more than 330 years in prison "for making trips to the Philippines to record sex acts with underage Filipina girls" to a \$105 million international corporate merger settlement involving a pharmaceutical company and a European chain. While his competitiveness stands out as a reason for his victories, he also cites his desire to achieve justice for people who have been devastated by the situation that led to the trial.

Gerard explained that Sorrels has taken on "high-profile cases," including the \$353 million verdict in *Cruz v. Allied Aviation Fueling Co.*, and that is an aspect of working there he is excited about. He said Sorrels is the type of firm to take on plaintiffs in situations where insurance companies may be playing hardball.

"We're a firm that other lawyers call when a case needs to go to trial," Gerard said.

As a colleague of Randy Sorrels at what is now Abraham Watkins Nichols Agosto Aziz Stogner, formerly Abraham Watkins Nichols Sorrels Agosto & Aziz, Gerard received guidance and built a strong relationship with a man he said is "one of the best trial lawyers in the country."

"Eric brings all-star caliber experience to our team of lawyers that is second to none," Sorrels said in a statement to Law360. "His trial experience and commitment to excellence is something that we all appreciate here at the firm."

Gerard was most recently with Gerger Hennessy & Martin, also as a partner after spending time as a partner at Kessler Topaz Meltzer & Check in Philadelphia. With Sorrels, his practice responsibilities will be catastrophic injury, products liability and other complex litigation for injured plaintiffs, according to a statement the firm released earlier this month.

He is working on a handful of cases, including a wrongful death involving a worker at a sand and gravel company who lost their life on the job, a 17-vehicle pile-up on an icy Iowa highway that led to a trucker's death, and two instances of invasion of privacy "in which a Bank of America employee [allegedly] stole highly personal, sensitive photos from customers' phones on pretext of 'helping' them with their online accounts."

When trials come around, Gerard sees it as a time to function as a "storyteller" for his client with the goal of creating the proper "emotional connection with the jury."

"I actually left college after my freshman year to study method acting at a famous conservatory in New York," Gerard said. "I've taken that with me. As a trial lawyer, I'm in the business of competitive storytelling. And I've carried that fascination with realism and emotional connection in storytelling into my practice as a trial lawyer."

Gerard said he's taken "an unconventional path," but it appears to have set him up for success, or at the very least, given him the opportunity to keep doing something he loves.

"It's because I love the courtroom, I love trying cases," Gerard said. "And I have a particular style. I'm not Cicero. I'm not some silver-tongued lawyer. I'm not flamboyant in the courtroom. None of that would work even if I tried. What I try to do as a trial lawyer, what I bring to the fight are intensity and authenticity. I can't control whether I'm the smartest lawyer in the room, or the most talented, but I can control whether I'm the hardest working, and so I will never be outworked. Ever."

--Editing by John C. Davenport.