

Indicted Divorce Lawyer Turns to 'Ferocious Advocate'

Vanessa Blum

The Recorder | October 10, 2012

SAN FRANCISCO — A San Ramon divorce lawyer on the [wrong side](#) of a federal indictment is striking a battle stance against the U.S. attorney's office.

At least, that's what Mary Nolan's choice of defense counsel suggests.

Nolan appeared in Oakland federal court Wednesday for a routine hearing on charges of tax evasion and illegal wiretapping with a powerful advocate by her side: Berkeley defense lawyer Cristina Arguedas.

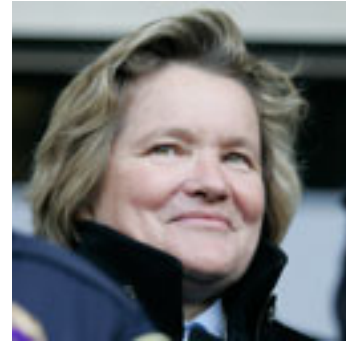
Arguedas and Ted Cassman of Arguedas, Cassman & Headley have replaced Jay Weill of Sideman & Bancroft, who argued for Nolan before the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals in a case related to her tax records. (Weill had appeared on Nolan's behalf earlier this month to enter a not guilty plea.)

Federal prosecutors allege that Nolan shirked taxes on \$1.8 million in earnings and also conspired with disgraced private investigator Christopher Butler to illegally eavesdrop on her clients' spouses. Butler, who pleaded guilty in May to multiple felonies, is cooperating with prosecutors. Assistant U.S. Attorney Hartley West is prosecuting Nolan.

Arguedas said in an interview after the hearing that Nolan, a practicing lawyer for 25 years, has an "excellent reputation."

There is little disagreement about Arguedas' own reputation as an aggressive and shrewd trial lawyer, which was most recently on display when she shredded some of the government's witnesses in their case against Barry Bonds. (A jury deadlocked on several counts against Bonds but convicted him of obstructing justice.)

What a client gets with Arguedas is "a ferocious advocate, who is very thoughtful and professional in everything she does, but fierce," said Allen Ruby of Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meager & Flom, co-lead defense counsel for Bonds at trial.



Cristina Arguedas, Arguedas, Cassman & Headley partner

Image: Jason Doiy/The Recorder