



MONTEFORTE LAW, P.C.

March 2025

LEGACY LEDGER: Where Law Meets Life

(978) 653-4092 | www.MonteforteLaw.com

Mikey's Success

TURNING LEMONS INTO HOME RUNS

People say to make lemonade out of lemons. As a full-blooded Italian, I prefer to make limoncello. But my son Mikey, a lifelong baseball player, would rather turn life's curveballs into home runs.

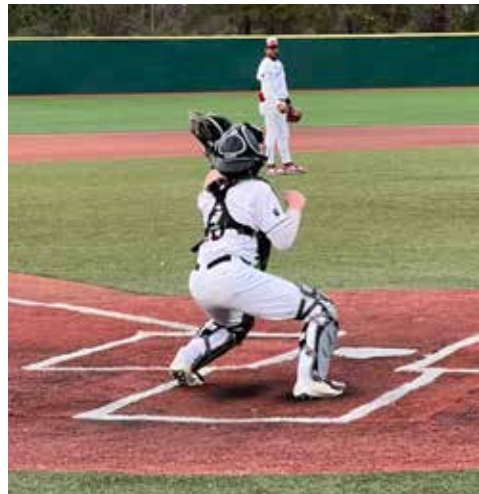
Mikey has been passionate about baseball since he was 6 years old, playing club ball starting at age 9 and honing his skills year-round. By the time he graduated in 2023, he had achieved what every young player dreams of — becoming a captain of his varsity baseball team and earning the team MVP award. His dedication and leadership on the field caught the attention of college coaches, and he was recruited to play baseball at Eastern Nazarene College in Boston.

As a freshman, Mikey exceeded expectations, starting many games and catching for the team's ace pitcher. Playing catcher requires a unique combination of leadership, intelligence, grit, and toughness — qualities Mikey embodies completely. His strong first year culminated in academic all-conference honors, showing that his work ethic shines both on and off the field.

Then, last July, life threw him the ultimate curveball. We received an unexpected email announcing that his college was closing immediately. It was a shocking moment for

all of us, but for Mikey, it was especially gut-wrenching. Baseball is more than just a sport to him — it's his way of life. The news raised big questions about his education and whether he'd even be able to continue playing the game he loves so much.

Mikey's not a tall guy, and as a catcher, he's had to prove himself to doubters time and time again. After a stellar first year, he was excited to continue growing with coaches who already appreciated his talent and dedication. But the closure of his college threw all those plans into question.



recognized his talent and dedication and wanted him on their teams.

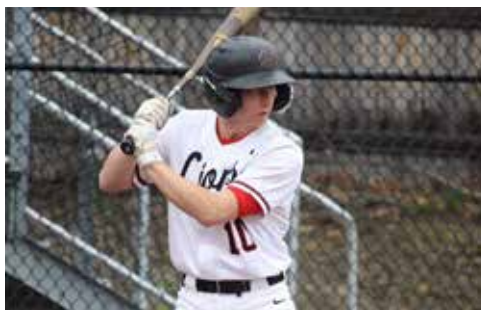
After a short courtship, Mikey committed to New England College in New Hampshire. He'll not only continue playing the game he loves, but he'll also be joined by a few of his former teammates. The transition was tough, but he's landed in a great place where he's poised to impact his new team this year significantly.

With baseball season just around the corner, we can't wait to watch him take the field this year. Whether it's behind the plate calling pitches, throwing out runners (no one steals on Mikey), or leading from the dugout, Mikey's determination and love for the game will undoubtedly shine through.

Mikey, your perseverance and positive attitude are truly inspiring. You've shown once again that when life hands you lemons, you turn them into the sweetest lemonade. Here's to new beginnings and making the most of every opportunity.

True to form, Mikey didn't let the lemons get him down. Within an hour of receiving the news, his college coaches were already on the phone, advocating for him. Remarkably, Mikey had two offers from other colleges within the first two hours, and several more came in over the next few days. Suddenly, what seemed like a setback turned into an opportunity. Multiple coaches

—Mike Monteforte Jr.



COUNSELOR'S CORNER

EXTRAORDINARY MENTORSHIP: Supporting the Orlando Cepeda Foundation

At Monteforte Law, we take pride in supporting our community by offering pro bono services to a selected nonprofit each year. For 2024, we were honored to assist the Orlando Cepeda Foundation, led by Malcom Cepeda, son of Major League Baseball Hall of Famer Orlando Cepeda.

The Orlando Cepeda Foundation is dedicated to empowering underprivileged communities and aspiring baseball players, honoring Orlando Cepeda's legacy of excellence. Their mission is to create and support programs that motivate underrepresented youth to achieve academic success, hone athletic skills, and develop leadership abilities.

Malcom Cepeda, Mikey's baseball coach, has been a significant influence in our lives. He embodies the foundation's core values of collaboration, empowerment, perseverance, excellence, discipline, and achievement. His commitment to fostering positive change is evident in his dedication to mentoring young athletes and providing them with opportunities to succeed both on and off the field.

Through strategic fundraising initiatives, the foundation aims to break down socioeconomic barriers and ensure every child, regardless of background, has the chance to experience the joys of baseball.

By investing in underprivileged areas, they not only introduce the sport but also instill values that extend beyond the diamond, such as teamwork, discipline, and determination.

We are proud to support the Orlando Cepeda Foundation in its mission to uplift communities and nurture the dreams of young athletes. By providing pro bono legal services for its nonprofit filing, we hope to contribute to its continued success and the positive impact it has on countless lives.

To learn more about the Orlando Cepeda Foundation and how you can get involved, visit their website at OrlandoCepedaFoundation.com.

Malcom, we commend your unwavering dedication and are grateful for the opportunity to support such a worthy cause. Here's to a successful partnership in 2024 and beyond.

If you'd like to be considered for our 2025 nonprofit, please email us at MonteforteTeam@montefortelaw.com.



FORBIDDEN FRUIT

When Pilfering a Pineapple Was Britain's Juiciest Crime

Most criminals sentenced to seven years have committed a serious crime, such as armed robbery or multiple burglaries. In 1807, however, a British man named John Godding was sentenced to seven years in an Australian penal colony for an entirely different offense: stealing seven pineapples.

The prickly-skinned golden fruit was so prized in 16th, 17th, and 18th-century Britain that pineapples commanded exorbitant prices and were even available to rent to prosperous Brits who featured them as centerpieces at parties. The pineapple craze drove prices for the fruit so high that they became a prized target among petty thieves.

Pineapples are native to the Caribbean and South America, and Christopher Columbus is credited with introducing them to Europe after finding them in Guadeloupe in 1493. The fruit quickly became *de rigueur* among

the wealthy as an exotic delicacy. Importing pineapples was difficult, however, because they usually spoiled en route. In the 1770s, pineapples were selling in England for the equivalent of \$17,000–\$23,000 apiece in 2025 U.S. dollars.

Europeans went wild over the sweet, fragrant fruit, which became a symbol of warmth and hospitality incorporated into Renaissance architecture. Kings and queens clamored for pineapple, including Catherine the Great and King Ferdinand of Spain. King Charles II of England even commissioned a portrait of himself being presented with one.

Initial attempts to cultivate pineapples in Britain's cool climate failed. Transplanting and propagating plant stock and nurturing young plants to maturity was a painstaking process made more difficult by the fruit's long maturation cycle, which requires as



long as 2 1/2 years or more from planting to mature pineapples. British farmers tried for centuries before finally succeeding at producing pineapples in "hot houses" or "pineries" heated by furnaces placed within glass-walled enclosures.

Advancements in global trade eventually made pineapples more readily available in Europe. Had the unfortunate Mr. Godding, the pineapple thief, committed his crime in modern times, he would probably have gotten off with a mere \$100 fine.

CELEBRATING BRIANNA QUINN

Our Employee of the Year

As we usher in the new year, we're delighted to celebrate a significant milestone for one of our team members. In January, Brianna Quinn marked her one-year anniversary with Monteforte Law, P.C., and we're proud to announce that she has been named our 2024 Employee of the Year.

Brianna joined us in early 2023, bringing a blend of professionalism, enthusiasm, and a genuine passion for client service. Her role as Legal Assistant and Receptionist is pivotal to the seamless operation of our estate planning and elder law firm. From managing administrative tasks and coordinating schedules to handling client communications, Brianna ensures our office functions efficiently, allowing our legal team to concentrate on delivering top-notch services.

What distinguishes Brianna is her unwavering commitment to our clients. She thrives on engaging directly with them, listening to their stories, and

assisting in planning their futures. Her excellent communication skills and warm demeanor create a welcoming environment, making her a reliable point of contact for inquiries and appointments.

In 2024, Brianna embraced an expanded role within our firm, demonstrating remarkable adaptability and dedication. She seamlessly took on additional responsibilities, excelling in each and showcasing her ability to handle new challenges with grace. Her efforts have not gone unnoticed; clients have described her as "a gem to work with" and praised her for being "super sweet, wicked nice, and overall understanding."

Brianna's journey to Monteforte Law began during her college years at Gordon College, where she graduated summa cum laude in 2023 with a major in English and a concentration in professional writing, along with minors in political science and psychology. A few law classes sparked her interest in the



legal field, and upon graduation, she was drawn to our firm's reputation and the authenticity of our team.

Please join us in congratulating Brianna on her first anniversary and well-deserved recognition as Employee of the Year. We look forward to her continued contributions and are excited to see her grow further within our firm.

HAPPY MONTEFORTE CLIENTS



"We had a very nice experience with the team at Monteforte Law: very friendly, helpful, and knowledgeable! If you need a trust, please call them! Thank you again!"

– The Poole Family



Banana Pudding Cheesecake Mashup

Inspired by Delish.com

INGREDIENTS

- 1 (8-oz) block cream cheese, softened
- 1/3 cup granulated sugar
- 1 cup heavy cream
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 1 (3.4-oz) package instant vanilla pudding mix
- 1 cup whole milk
- 1 prepared graham cracker crust
- 3 bananas, sliced
- 20 Nilla Wafers
- Whipped topping and crushed Nilla Wafers, for garnish

DIRECTIONS

1. In a large bowl of a standing mixer, add softened cream cheese and beat until fluffy and free of clumps.
2. Add sugar and beat until combined, then add heavy cream and vanilla extract and beat until medium-stiff peaks form. Set aside.
3. In a medium bowl, whisk together milk and pudding mix and refrigerate for 3 minutes until thickened. Pour pudding mixture into cream cheese mixture and fold until combined.
4. Into the graham cracker crust, pour half the filling and spread evenly. Add a single layer of sliced bananas and Nilla Wafers, then pour remaining filling over and smooth the top.
5. Refrigerate until firm, at least 6 hours, or overnight. Top slices with whipped cream, crushed Nilla Wafers, and any additional banana slices as desired.



300 TRADECENTER, SUITE 6750
WOBURN, MA 01801

(978) 653-4092
WWW.MONTEFORTELAW.COM

PRST STD
US POSTAGE
PAID
BOISE, ID
PERMIT 411

MONTEFORTE LAW, P.C.

CHECK US OUT ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Facebook: www.facebook.com/mmlawoffice

TikTok: @montefortelaw

Instagram: @montefortelaw

INSIDE

- 1 Making the Most of Every Opportunity
- 2 Malcom Cepeda: Mentor Extraordinaire
Pineapple Theft Was Once Britain's Ultimate Crime
- 3 Celebrating Brianna's Stellar Contributions
Banana Pudding Cheesecake Mashup
- 4 How the DOL's Final Rule Protects Retirement Investors



A NEW ERA FOR ERISA

The Final Rule Transforms What It Means to Be a Fiduciary

For more than 14 years, the U.S. Department of Labor has been trying to determine a new definition of a "fiduciary" under the Employee Retirement Income Security Act (ERISA). A fiduciary provides investment advice for a fee to employee benefit plans. Under ERISA, someone is a fiduciary if they have control over managing or using a plan's assets, provide investment advice for a fee, and have responsibility for managing the plan.

Since 1975, these discussions were only considered "investment advice" if they adhered to a five-part test. However, this past September, the Department of Labor released new regulations called the Final Rule that redefines what it means to be an investment advice fiduciary.

With this recent change, the five-part test goes out the window. The Final Rule

expands the definition of who can be considered a fiduciary. Someone is a fiduciary if they regularly provide investment recommendations and advice to retirement investors for a fee. That advice must be based on the investor's needs and reflect expert judgment that serves the investor's best interests. They must also state that they are acting as a fiduciary when giving advice; however, if you've previously received one-time advice, that could now be considered fiduciary advice.

That's a lot of information to swallow, and by now, you're probably wondering how this will affect the average person. In most cases, these changes will only affect those acting as fiduciary advisors and retirement investors, including participants, beneficiaries, IR owners (Ingersoll Rand Inc.), and anyone else involved with an ERISA



plan. Through the Final Rule, you should receive better advice that puts your interests first, providing more transparency about recommendations and any fees involved. It should also create greater accountability for advisers, brokers, insurance agents, and anyone else acting as a fiduciary.

All in all, this is a great change for those who interact with fiduciaries. You can rest assured knowing the advice you receive will benefit you and your investments.