

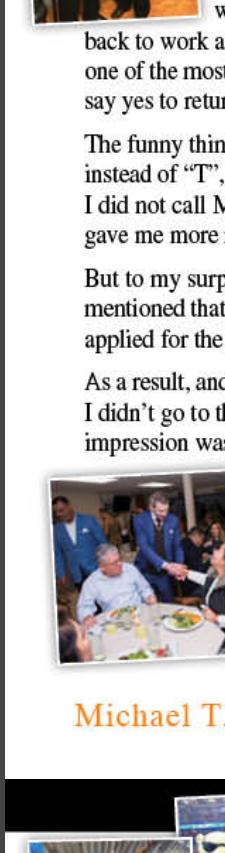
# The Road To Justice Starts Here

## SPECIAL EDITION

### Dedicated to Celebrating Juan Jose Rodriguez's 10 Year Anniversary with Our Firm

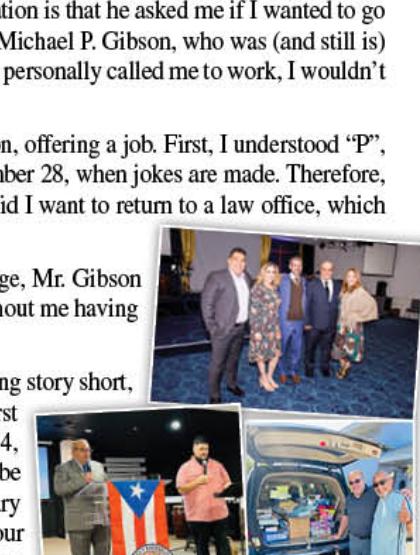
#### Introduction By Attorney Michael T. Gibson

This Spring is an important time of celebration for our firm, as the firm celebrates its 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary. I could not think of a more fitting way to celebrate this milestone other than saluting and dedicating this edition of our newsletter to one of our most important employees here. Juan Jose Rodriguez, our Marketing Director, is celebrating his 10-year work anniversary here at the firm. Juan has been amongst our most instrumental employees and hires ever, and simply, I do not think this firm would be where it is today without him. He authored an article about his time here, both in English and Spanish, and I could think of no better fitting a way to thank him then writing one back. This edition is dedicated to you Juan. Thank you for the best decade of my career, and for all you mean to both this firm and to me, personally. I hope that we are blessed with many, many more years collaborating together. It is a privilege and a blessing to have you here. ■



### 10 Years with Mr. Gibson

By Juan Jose Rodriguez, Attorney Liaison



On May 5 of this year, I will celebrate a decade of working for Michael T. Gibson. When I take a look back at how it started, I realized that this relationship would almost never have started due to certain circumstances I was going through in 2014.

First, the reason I had stepped away from the legal field was that I was frustrated. I've always loved working and helping others, but unfortunately, not all employees who work with you feel the same way. Among other things, one of the main reasons I stopped working at law firms was the lack of consideration and dealing with clients. My experience before I started working with Mr. Gibson is that I was frustrated because after you signed a client, some of the employees at the law firm didn't care about treating them well and with respect. What embarrassed me the most was that many of those clients were ministers or were referred by pastor friends, and I was the one who looked bad to them. After so many years of frustrations, I got tired of fighting employees and making them my enemies, simply by demanding that they be nice to customers.

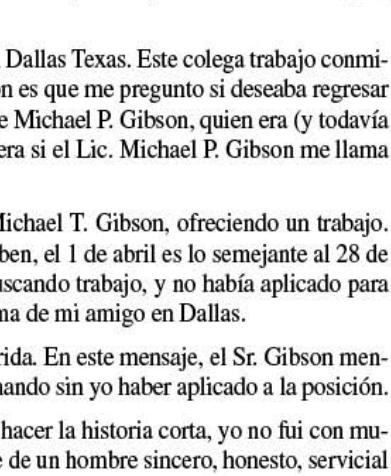
The circumstances of Mr. Gibson's first call are peculiar. I was on a business trip and went to lunch with a colleague in Dallas, Texas. This colleague worked with me at an East Texas law firm and was now working in downtown Dallas. The interesting thing about our conversation is that he asked me if I wanted to go back to work at a law firm, and I asked him who was one of the most recognized attorneys in Dallas and he mentioned the name of Michael P. Gibson, who was (and still is) one of the most recognized attorneys not only in Dallas but throughout the nation. I told my friend that even if Mr. Michael P. Gibson personally called me to work, I wouldn't say yes to return to work in the field of law.

The funny thing is that a few days after our conversation, exactly on April 1, 2014, I received a call from a certain Michael T. Gibson, offering a job. First, I understood "P", instead of "T", so I immediately assumed it was a joke from my friend. For Hispanics who don't know, April 1 is the same as December 28, when jokes are made. Therefore, I did not call Mr. Gibson back; I want to add, too, that I wasn't looking for a job, and I hadn't applied for any position, much less did I want to return to a law office, which gave me more reasons to think it was a joke from my friend in Dallas.

But to my surprise, days later, I received a second call and message from Mr. Michael T. Gibson of Orlando, Florida. In this message, Mr. Gibson mentioned that a colleague who had worked with me previously had given him my name, which clarified why he was calling me without me having applied for the position.

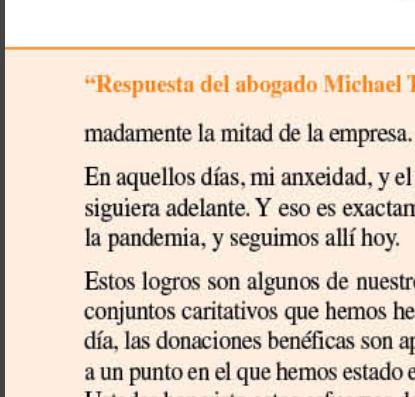
As a result, and seeing his insistence, we arranged to meet for an interview when I arrived from my work commitments. To make a long story short, I didn't go to the interview with much enthusiasm, due to the frustrations already mentioned. But Mr. Gibson impressed me. The first impression was of a sincere, honest, helpful man and above all a family man. About two weeks after that interview, on May 5, 2014,

I began what I now realize is the last secular job of my working life. Mr. Gibson has proven himself to be a man of his word, honest and with a compassionate heart. He, along with his wife Jenn, are exemplary parents, who always dedicate time to the family, as their TV commercials communicate. We have had our ups and downs as every single business does, especially during the pandemic, but together we have been able to move forward with God's help. His compassion for those in need is something that is admirable. So many families, both locally and in other countries we have visited on missions, have been blessed by the generosity of Mr. Gibson and his wife.



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### 10 años con el Sr. Gibson

Por Juan Jose Rodriguez, Abogado de Enlace



El 5 de mayo de este año, cumplí una década de estar trabajando para el Lic. Michael T. Gibson. Cuando le doy un vistazo a como comenzó, me di cuenta de que por poco esta relación nunca se hubiese emprendido debido a ciertas circunstancias por las cuales yo estaba pasando en el 2014.

Primero, la razón por la cual me había alejado del campo legal era que estaba frustrado. Siempre me ha gustado trabajar y ayudar al prójimo, pero desgraciadamente, todos los empleados que trabajan contigo tienen el mismo sentir. Entre otras cosas, unas de las razones principales que dejé de trabajar en bufetes de abogados fue la falta de consideración y el trato con los clientes. Mi experiencia antes de comenzar a trabajar con Mr. Gibson es que me sentía frustrado que después que uno firmaba un cliente, algunos de los empleados del bufete de abogados no importaban tratarlos bien y con respeto. Lo que más me avergonzaba es que muchos de esos clientes eran ministros o fueron referidos por amigos pastores, y yo era quien quedaba mal con ellos. Después de tantos años de frustraciones, me caíse de pelear con los empleados y hacerlos mis enemigos, simplemente por exigir que fueran amables con los clientes.

Es peculiar las circunstancias de la primera llamada del Lic. Gibson. Yo estaba en un viaje de negocios y fui a comer con un colega en Dallas Texas. Este colega trabajo conmigo en un bufete de abogados del estado de Texas y ahora estaba trabajando en downtown Dallas. Lo interesante de nuestra conversación es que me preguntó si deseaba regresar a trabajar a una firma legal, y yo le pregunté cuál era una de los abogados más reconocidos en Dallas y él me mencionó el nombre de Michael P. Gibson, quien era (y todavía es) uno de los abogados más reconocidos no solamente en Dallas sino a través de toda la nación. Yo le dije a mi amigo, que ni siquiera si el Lic. Michael P. Gibson me llama personalmente a trabajar diría que si para regresar a trabajar en el campo de los leyes.

Lo gracioso es que unos días después de nuestra conversación, exactamente el 1 de abril del 2014, recibí una llamada de un tal Michael T. Gibson, ofreciendo un trabajo. Primero, yo entendí "P", en vez de "T", así que inmediatamente asumí que era una broma de mi amigo. Para los hispanos que no saben, el 1 de abril es lo semejante al 28 de diciembre, en que se hacen bromas. Por lo tanto, no le devolví la llamada al Sr. Gibson. Deseo añadir también, que yo no estaba buscando trabajo, y no había aplicado para ninguna posición, mucho menos deseaba regresar a una oficina de abogados, lo que le dios más razones para pensar que era una broma de mi amigo en Dallas.

Pero cual fue mi sorpresa cuando días después, recibí una segunda llamada y un mensaje de Mr. Michael T. Gibson de Orlando Florida. En este mensaje, el Sr. Gibson mencionó que una colega que había trabajado conmigo anteriormente me había dado mi nombre, lo queclarificó el porque me estaba llamando sin yo haber aplicado a la posición.

Como resultado, y ver su insistencia, cuadramos vernos para una entrevista cuando yo llegara de mis compromisos laborales. Pero Mr. Gibson me impresionó. La primera impresión fue de un hombre sincero, honesto, servicial y sobre todo un hombre de familia. Mr. Gibson ha demostrado ser un hombre de palabra, honesto y con un corazón compasivo. El, juntamente con su esposa Jenn, son unos padres ejemplares, que siempre dedican tiempo para la familia, tal y como sus anuncios de TV comunican. Hemos tenido nuestras altas y bajas, como en todo trabajo, como lo fue el tiempo de la pandemia, pero juntos hemos podido ir hacia adelante con la ayuda de Dios. Su compasión por los necesitados es algo que es admirable. Tantas familias, tanto a nivel local, como en países que hemos visitado en misiones, han sido bendecidos por la generosidad del Lic. Gibson y su esposa.

Le doy gracias a Dios, por darme esta gratificante oportunidad de tener el honor de trabajar para un individuo con el gran calibre que tiene Mr. Gibson. Mis oraciones son para que Dios lo continue bendiciendo a Mr. Gibson y a su familia. Termina con esta bendición para Mr. Gibson y su familia:

"Así bendecirán ... Les dirán: El Señor (Dios) te bendiga y te guarde; El Señor (Dios) haga resplandecer Su rostro sobre ti,  
Y tenga de ti misericordia; 26 El Señor (Dios) alete sobre ti Su rostro, Y te dé paz."

Números 6:22-26 ■

"Respuesta del abogado Michael T. Gibson" continued from page 4.

madamente la mitad de la empresa. Además, sabía que la recuperación sería lenta y que llevaría algún tiempo volver a situar la empresa en sus niveles anteriores a la pandemia.

En aquellos días, mi ansiedad, y el no saber qué hacer, realmente se apoderaría de mí a veces. Juan, sin embargo, era la voz firme, en mi oído, diciéndome que tuvieras fe y que siguiera adelante. Y eso es exactamente lo que hice. Nos llevó alrededor de un año y medio, y un montón de trabajo y oración, pero volvimos a nuestros niveles anteriores a la pandemia, y seguimos allí hoy.

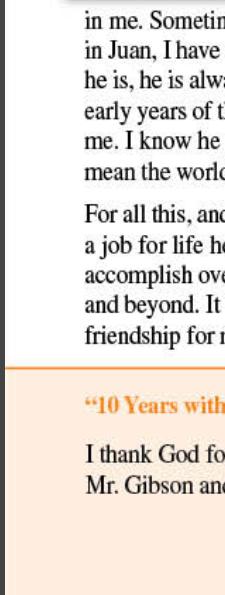
Estos logros son algunos de nuestros mayores triunfos juntos, pero de todo lo que hemos logrado en los últimos diez años, de lo que estoy más orgulloso es de los esfuerzos conjuntos caritativos que hemos hecho. Como digo anteriormente, discutimos la construcción de un aspecto benéfico de la empresa en nuestra primera reunión juntos. Hoy en día, las donaciones benéficas son aproximadamente un tercio de nuestro negocio. Es algo en lo que todos los miembros de mi equipo de marketing trabajan a diario. Ha llegado a un punto en el que hemos establecido la idea de formar una fundación y hacer que los aspectos benéficos de nuestra empresa sean un negocio propio a tiempo completo. Ustedes han visto estos esfuerzos documentados y destacados tanto en este boletín como en nuestros boletines semanales. Todos los días, los miembros de nuestro equipo están fuera, ayudando a los foráneos. Esto incluye la organización y dotación de personal a los bancos de alimentos en toda la Florida Central durante la pandemia. Lo seguimos haciendo hoy en día. Ha incluido viajes misioneros a Cuba, República Dominicana y alrededor del mundo. Recibí correos electrónicos a diario de personas al azar de Cuba, que han sido tocadas por nuestro ministerio allí; Y, por último, nuestros esfuerzos dan miles de dólares, semanalmente, a iglesias locales, ministerios religiosos y organizaciones caritativas.

Mi objetivo para este bufete era que no quería que fuera simplemente un bufete de abogados de lesiones personales, donde alguien va a lidiar con lo peor que le ha pasado. Quería que fuera una organización que, junto con nuestra práctica de lesiones personales, fuera realmente un buen servidor de la comunidad, que se esforzara por tocar y ayudar a las vidas de los más afortunados. Juan, me ayudo y me permitió construir este aspecto de la empresa. De todos mis logros profesionales, este es el que más me enorgullece.

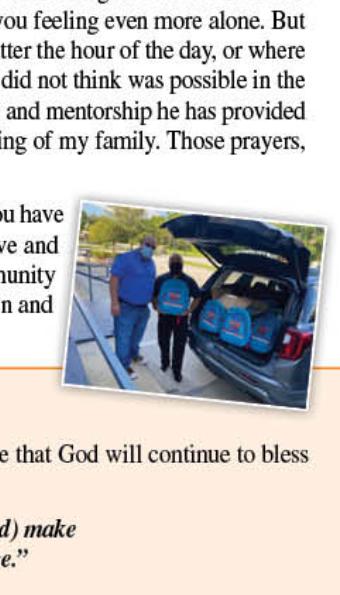
Sin la guía de Juan, no creo que hubiéramos alcanzado estos logros. Pero de todo esto, lo que más agradezco es su fe en mí. A veces, ser el líder de una organización es solitario. Hay que tomar decisiones impopulares y difíciles. Y eso pude hacer que se sintieran aún más solo. Pero en Juan, siempre he tenido a alguien en quien podía confiar, y alguien que cuando necesitaba un amigo que me escuchara, me escuchaba. No importa la hora del día, o dónde esté, siempre es alguien a quien podría llamar y examinar cualquier idea. Tener esa mano firme y orientación me ha ayudado a alcanzar un potencial que no creía posible en los primeros años de la empresa. Estoy agradecido, no solo por los logros profesionales que hemos alcanzado juntos, sino por la profunda amistad personal y la tutela que me ha brindado. Sé que el reza por mí todos los días. Y no solo por el éxito de la empresa, sino por mi propia paz y felicidad personal, y por el bienestar de mi familia. Esas oraciones, significan mucho para mí.

Por todo esto, y por tantas cosas más de las que podría hablar, le doy las gracias a Juan. Gracias por su fe y creencia en esta empresa y en mí. Aquí tienes un trabajo de por vida y, como digo, esta empresa siempre será parte de tu legado, como lo es el mío. Espero con ansiedad lo que podemos lograr y lograremos juntos en los próximos diez años. Siento que no hemos hecho más que empezar. Sé que juntos, continuaremos impactando vidas en nuestra comunidad y más allá. Es un privilegio y una bendición poder trabajar a tu lado y llamarlo mi amigo. Espero continuar esta colaboración y amistad durante muchos años más. ■

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### Response from Attorney Michael T. Gibson



Juan, thank you so much for your kind words. I don't know if anyone has ever written anything that nice about me. But mainly, I want to take an opportunity to thank you for all you have done over the last ten years, and to express my very sincere gratitude for the same.

I tell Juan all the time that this firm is as much his legacy, as it is mine. For me, the collaboration between us has been one of the greatest achievements in my professional career.

At the time I met Juan, the firm was five years old. That five years had felt like fifty years. In a lot of ways, we were just starting to emerge from the early years, and everything we did in those first five years to get the place off the ground, and to sustain its existence. Over the course of the two years prior, I had been re-designing, re-branding, and just basically rebuilding all of the firm's marketing. The marketing world was still something very new to me, and I was trying to compete with firms who had multi-million dollar budgets, on a very shoestring budget. At that point in time, I had already been through and fired two previous marketing managers, and I was beginning to feel like I would never find the right person to help me take my vision of the firm to the next level.

But then a lawyer who was working for me told me about Juan. And as she described him to me, I knew that was the 100 percent, correct person for the job.

I met Juan offsite, at an executive suite. It was just him and myself, in a tiny office. I had an entire notepad of questions and ideas ready to throw at him. And as soon as Juan set down, I started firing off the questions.

About two minutes into the interview, I asked Juan a question, somewhere along the lines of "Why are you the right guy for this job?" I will never forget his response. He looked me straight in the eye and told me, "Because my system of marketing cannot be duplicated." I have done more job interviews with prospective candidates for different positions, than I care to remember at this point in my career. To this date, that remains the single best answer I have ever received from a job candidate.

By the end of an hour, I knew that not only was Juan my guy for this job, but that he was someone that could help me elevate this firm to the level I wanted to take it. His mere presence would make us better. He was approachable and he was dependable. But even more than this, he was someone that I felt genuinely understood my vision for everything I thought this firm could be. We started discussing the charitable causes I wanted to get involved in because he had his own ideas of places and areas we could help. It was like we were on the exact same page, each knowing what the other wanted, and each willing to help each other get there.

With Juan onboard, our firm quickly grew. We went through a tremendous period of growth over the course of the next 5 years, doubling our size. We broke records for Client Intake and for overall revenue. Over the course of these years, Juan became not only my marketing manager, he became the voice I looked to when making difficult decisions. It was so helpful to me to have someone of his caliber and experience, that I could lean on or look to for advice. And his advice in that time period, not only made me a better lawyer and business owner, it made me a better father, better husband, and a better man. I am an emotional person at times, and sometimes frustration gets the better of me. But no matter the situation, when I talk to Juan, it has a calming effect on me.

This was never more clear to me than during the pandemic in 2020. In the early stages of the pandemic, I was really nervous how our firm was going to endure the same. Our business went down by about 80% in the first two months of the pandemic. I was really concerned that a prolonged downturn would force me to have to layoff about half of the firm. Furthermore, I knew the comeback would be slow, and that it would take some time to build the firm back up to its pre-pandemic levels.

In those days, my anxiety, and not knowing what to do, really got the best of me at times. Juan though was the steady voice, in my ear, telling me to have faith, and to keep going. And that is exactly what I did. It took us about a year and a half, and a ton of work and prayer, but we did get back to our pre-pandemic levels, and we remain there today.

These accomplishments are some of our greatest triumphs together. But of everything we have achieved over the past ten years, what I am most proud of is the charitable joint efforts we have made. Like I said previously, we discussed building a charitable aspect of the firm in our very first meeting together. Today, charitable giving is approximately a third of our business. It is something that everyone on my marketing team works in and on daily. It is to a point, where we have been exploring the idea of forming a foundation, and making the charitable aspects of our firm, its own, full-time business. You have seen these efforts documented and highlighted in both this newsletter, and in our weekly bulletins. Every day, members of our firm are out, helping the less fortunate. This included organizing and staffing food banks throughout Central Florida during the pandemic. We are still doing this today. It has included mission trips to Cuba, the Dominican Republic, and around the world. I receive emails on a daily basis from random folks from Cuba, who have been touched by our ministry down there. And lastly, our efforts give thousands of dollars, weekly, to local churches, faith-based Ministries and charitable organizations.

My goal for this firm, was that I did not want it to simply be a personal injury law firm, where someone goes to deal with the worst thing that has happened to me. Sometimes, being the leader of an organization is lonely. There are unpopular and difficult decisions to be made. And those can leave you feeling even more alone. But in Juan, I have always had someone who I could confide in, and someone who when I just needed a friend to listen, would hear me out. No after the hour of the day, or where he is, he is always someone that I could call and talk to any time with. Having that steady hand and guidance has helped me to reach a potential that I did not think possible in the early years of the firm. I am grateful, not only for the professional achievements we have reached together, but for the deep, personal friendship and mentorship he has provided me. I know he prays for me daily. And not just for the success of the firm, but for my own personal peace and happiness, and for the well-being of my family. Those prayers, mean the world to me.

For all this, and so much more that I could go on about, I say thank you to Juan. Thank you for your faith and belief in this firm, and in me. You have a job for life here, and like I said, this firm will forever be as much a part of your legacy, as it is mine. I look forward to what we can achieve and accomplish over the next ten years together. I feel, we have only just begun. I know that together, we will continue to impact lives in our community and beyond. It is a privilege and a blessing to get to work beside you, and to call you my friend. I look forward to continuing this collaboration and friendship for many years to come. ■

"10 Years with Mr. Gibson" continued from page 1.

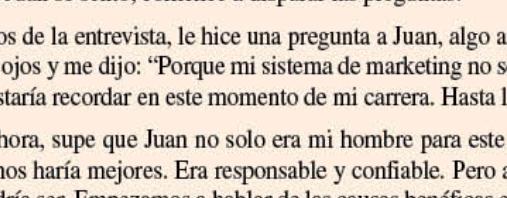
I thank God for giving me this gratifying opportunity to have the honor of working for an individual of Mr. Gibson's caliber. My prayers are that God will continue to bless Mr. Gibson and his family. I end this blessing upon Mr. Gibson and his family:

"Thus, shall they bless ... They will say to them, "May the Lord (God) bless you and keep you; May the Lord (God) make His face shine upon you and have mercy on you; May the Lord (God) lift up His face over you and give you peace."

Numbers 6:22-26 ■

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### DEDICATED TO CELEBRATING Juan Jose Rodriguez's 10 Year Anniversary with Our Firm



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### Respuesta del