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Legal Eagle Uses Showbiz Ties to Save Lives

Variety's first Power of Law honoree Kenneth Kleinberg drives kidney research org

By Malina Saval

PHOTOGRAPHS BY **JESSICA CHOU**

DREAM TEAM *Kleinberg and UKRO doctors Nuria M. Pastor-Soler, Kenneth R. Hallows and Vito M. Campese*

In 1999, prominent Hollywood entertainment attorney Kenneth Kleinberg, founding partner at Kleinberg Lange Cuddy & Carlo, awoke in his hotel room in the South of France, where he was traveling on business, and noticed that his legs were badly swollen.

"I was there for four days and every day it seemed worse," says Kleinberg, who represents some of the most notable names in the biz, including Jack Nicholson, Mick Jagger and J.K. Rowling.

"I hopped on a plane and went to see my regular doctor at Cedars-Sinai, who then sent me to see a nephrologist. I called someone I knew at Keck Medicine of USC and he said, 'You have to go see Dr. Campese.' At that point I think I had 50 pounds of fluid on me. I was like one of those toys where you put the garden hose in and fill it up with water and punch it. Dr. Campese examined me and he said, 'I don't care where you go — you can go back to Cedars, you can go here — but you have to be in the hospital today.' "

Diagnosed with a kidney disorder called minimal change disease, Kleinberg, *Variety*'s 2016 Power of Law honoree, spent five weeks at Keck Medicine of USC under the care of Dr. Vito M. Campese, chief of the division of nephrology at Keck School of Medicine. There was no known cause of the disease and treatment — dialysis primarily — was less than ideal.

"They got my kidneys working again and I went about my life and it was all like this horrible dream," Kleinberg says.

But almost one year later, as often happens with kidney disease, Kleinberg was again stricken, this time with focal segmental glomerulosclerosis, a far more serious malady and a leading cause of renal failure in adults.

"I kept thinking, 'Oh my God, this is the year 2000 — medicine should have the answer to practically everything,' " says Kleinberg, who spent an additional 13 weeks clinging to life in the hospital and another six on dialysis before receiving a kidney transplant in 2007. "I started to talk to Dr. Campese about the state of research on kidney disease and, to my surprise, I came to learn that there was no significant research center in kidney disease in Los Angeles County."

According to Campese, about 10% of Americans — up to 26 million individuals — suffer from chronic kidney disease, and most of those people will remain asymptomatic until the disease progresses to the point of kidney failure.

"One out of nine or 10 people in this country that have kidney disease don't know that they have it," Campese says.

More alarming, the median survival of a patient on dialysis is approximately five years, which is comparable to the survival rate of patients with metastatic lung cancer.

And yet, despite its prevalence and

The Kidney Crisis in America

Kidney disease is a devastating malady that affects roughly 10% of Americans.

26m
Approximate number of Americans stricken with kidney disease

$80b
Approximate amount the U.S. Government spends on treating individuals with kidney disease

$3.5m
Amount UKRO has pledged thus far to support the establishment of the USC/UKRO Kidney Research Center

KLEINBERG'S STELLAR CAREER

Kenneth Kleinberg of Kleinberg Lange Cuddy & Carlo is one of the most renowned entertainment attorneys in Hollywood, working with long-time clients such as J.K. Rowling, Jack Nicholson, Mick Jagger, Keith Richards, Toby Keith, legendary animator Glen Keane, Douglas Trumbull and directors Alejandro Amenabar and Claude Lelouch. Following are some of his recent career highlights.

Harry Potter Theme Park Attractions
Together with J.K. Rowling's London agent Neil Blair, Kleinberg provided advice and counsel to Rowling regarding transactions in which some of the Harry Potter theme park attractions at Universal Studios Orlando were licensed via Warner Bros. for replication at Universal Studios Hollywood and at a new theme park being constructed by Universal in Beijing.

George Orwell's "1984"
Kleinberg is representing Gina Rosenblum in her deal to produce a remake of George Orwell's "1984."

Peter Cetera
Kleinberg has represented singer-songwriter Peter Cetera (former lead singer of Chicago) since 1973, and is handling a variety of active projects for him, including music publishing administration, recording and touring.

Jagged Films
Kleinberg represents Jagged Films, Mick Jagger and Victoria Pearman (producers) and negotiated their deal with HBO and Martin Scorsese for the TV series "Vinyl."

Thunder Agency
Kleinberg represents Thunder Agency LLC, which is producing a superhero franchise based on the comic series "Thunder."

"Regression"
Kleinberg represented Alejandro Amenabar and Fernando Bovaira in the development and production of their new independent film "Regression," a Canadian-Spanish co-production starring Ethan Hawke and Emma Watson that was released in the U.S. by the Weinstein Co. and worldwide through FilmNation.

BEWITCHED *Kleinberg repped Rowling in the Harry Potter Universal Studios deal.*

HARRY POTTER: MICHAEL BUCKNER/VARIETY/SHUTTERSTOCK