

WOMEN IN LAW

CUSTOM CONTENT • August 30, 2021



2021 WOMEN IN LAW PROFILES



HALEY AANESTAD

MANLY, STEWART & FINALDI

Haley Aanestad is an associate attorney at Manly, Stewart & Finaldi. Raised on the West Coast in Dana Point, California, Aanestad embarked on her higher education journey at Chapman University in Orange County and graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration with an emphasis in Finance and a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science. She also played soccer for the Panthers for four years and was named the team captain her senior year. Her passion for the sport led to several awards, including the Jack Duddy Leadership Award in 2016 and a team record for the most minutes played—6,777. Studies continued at Chapman University's Dale E. Fowler School of Law where Aanestad competed as a Moot Court Board Member, received the esteemed Professor William Stallworth Award for Contract Law Course Excellence, and finally graduated magna cum laude in 2020.

After her first year of law school, Aanestad joined the Manly, Stewart & Finaldi team as a law clerk and remained a valued part of the day-to-day operations throughout the rest of her education. In January 2021, Aanestad was admitted into the State Bar of California and returned to the firm as an associate attorney.

Since joining Manly, Stewart & Finaldi, Aanestad has worked exclusively in the personal injury division, representing survivors of sexual abuse, harassment, and molestation, against public and private schools, entertainment entities, and more.



TONI AGAJANIAN

RUTAN & TUCKER

Toni Agajanian provides strategic counsel to property owners, lenders and tenants on all aspects of commercial real estate transactions. She works with landlords and tenants to manage all facets of their leasing portfolios and has expertise with office, retail and industrial leasing. Her practice also includes representation of buyers and sellers in connection with the purchase and sale of industrial buildings, multi-family projects, shopping centers and other commercial real property, advising clients through the entire transaction from the negotiation of the term sheet and purchase agreement to guiding the clients through a smooth closing process, and everything in between. She advises property owners and developers with the preparation of covenants, conditions and restrictions, reciprocal easement agreements and construction contracts. Additionally, Agajanian represents lenders and borrowers in the origination of acquisition, construction and permanent financing secured by various types of real property, including office buildings, retail centers, hotels, mixed-use and multi-family properties.

When she is not practicing law, she enjoys spending time with her daughter, Natalia, and giving back to her community, sitting on the board for the CHOC Glass Slipper Guild, supporting Girls, Inc., and volunteering with her church, Harvest Christian Fellowship. Agajanian takes pride in mentoring and supporting women attorneys within the firm and the greater legal community, and striving for diversity, equity and inclusion in the legal field.



KAY ANDERLE

KELLER/ ANDERLE LLP

With over two decades of experience and 100 cases to jury verdict, Managing Partner Kay Anderle is among the region's leading trial attorneys. Her areas of practice include commercial litigation and white collar criminal defense. Anderle began her legal career over 26 years ago in the OC District Attorney's Office, where she spent 12 years prosecuting criminal cases. As was one of its most respected prosecutors, she was assigned to several of its most prestigious trial units.

Anderle's negotiation and trial skills have made her one of the most effective defense lawyers in Southern California. Her versatility as a trial attorney and skilled negotiator gives her clients a multi-dimensional advocate who can quickly assess their case and devise a winning strategy.

In 2009, Anderle worked with Jennifer Keller in a business fraud trial in which the jury awarded \$350 million, the largest jury verdict in California that year. In 2011, she worked with Ms. Keller in the retrial of the epic doll battle Mattel v. MGA, in which MGA was defending against copyright infringement and trade secret misappropriation claims and prosecuting its own trade secret misappropriation action against Mattel. Other matters have included: shareholder oppression; allegations of human trafficking against a Saudi princess; successful defense of a claim her client breached a \$1 billion oral partnership for real estate investment; a multi-million dollar medical insurance fraud case; and a white collar criminal case alleging bribery of public officials, called "the largest corruption case in the history of San Bernardino County, and possibly California."



TRAM-ANH NGUYEN

MICROVENTION, INC.

Tram-Anh Nguyen is the Associate General Counsel and Sr. Director of Legal Affairs of MicroVention, Inc., a medical device company committed to developing innovative neurovascular solutions to improve patient lives. Under her leadership, she built the new Legal Affairs function to align with company strategy and dynamic business needs, focusing her practice on commercial transactions, FDA regulatory, corporate governance, litigation, employment, and privacy matters. Over the past four years, the Legal Affairs team has grown to include four attorneys and two staff members. A recent highlight of her work includes leading the legal review and successfully closing the MicroVention Costa Rica Phase III Expansion Project to support the Company's growing operations.

Nguyen is passionate about DEI initiatives and has served on the board of Vietnamese American Bar Association of Southern California (VABA-SC) as well as with the Orange County Asian American Bar Association (OCAABA), where she cofounded the In-House Counsel (IHC) Committee which developed the "Must Know GCs in OC" program to help connect IHCs practicing in Orange County. In 2021, she was appointed to the VABA-SC Advisory Board. Nguyen received a B.A. in Foreign Affairs from the University of Virginia and J.D. from Western State University College of Law.



CHRISTINE BARAN

FISHER & PHILLIPS LLP

Christine Baran is a partner in the firm's Irvine office where her practice is devoted to litigating employment related disputes. Baran's diverse practice includes litigating cases involving discrimination, sexual harassment, wage and hour claims (both individual and collective actions), unfair business practices, whistleblower claims, workplace violence and wrongful discharge. She represents employers in both state and federal court as well as before state and federal agencies, such as the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), the California Department of Fair Employment and Housing, and the Division of Labor Standards Enforcement (DLSE).

Along with her litigation work, Baran counsels clients regarding appropriate handling of disciplinary matters, employee terminations, internal investigations, the development of preventive policies and procedures, compliance with state and federal laws relating to wages, leaves of absences, harassment and discrimination. In addition, she regularly conducts compliance and management training and frequently lectures on employment issues for trade groups and associations as well as private employers.

In addition to employment litigation, Baran represents commercial property owners and property management companies in the defense of housing discrimination claims under the Fair Employment and Housing Act (FEHA), the Unruh Act, and the federal Fair Housing Act as well as disability discrimination claims under Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Baran is actively involved with the California Fuels & Convenience Alliance (CFCA), the Orange County Apartment Association and the Apartment Association of California Southern Cities.



ANTOINETTE BALTA

VETERANS LEGAL INSTITUTE

Antoinette Balta is the executive director and co-founder of the Veterans Legal Institute (VLI), a 501(c)(3) legal aid that provides free legal services to local Veterans, active service members and reservists that are homeless and low income. VLI has served over 8,000 low-income Veterans to date, free of charge.

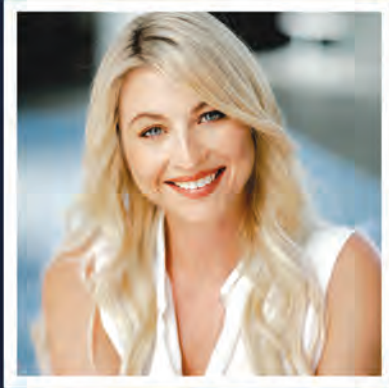
Balta was an officer with the California State Guard for over six years. She served in the rank of Major both as a Marketing Officer assigned to Strategic Communications as well as a reserve JAG Officer assigned to Legal Support Command. She presently serves on the board of the California State Guard Foundation.

Balta is a graduate of the 2018 Presidential Leadership Scholars Class, a prestigious program that serves as a catalyst for a diverse network of leaders brought together to collaborate and make a difference in the world as they learn about leadership through the lens of the presidential experiences of George W. Bush, Bill Clinton, George H.W. Bush, and Lyndon B. Johnson.

Balta is a two term director at large with the Orange County Bar Association, a member of the Outreach and Pro Bono Committees and a board member of the Orange County Women's Lawyers Association.

She holds a degree in Business Administration with an emphasis in Marketing and Management from Chapman University School of Business as well as a Juris Doctor with a special certificate in Alternative Dispute Resolution and an LLM emphasized in Business and Economics from Chapman University Fowler School of Law.

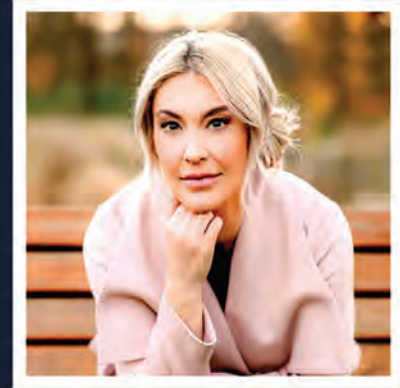
THE **HEART** OF OUR FIRM



TAYLOR RAYFIELD
PARTNER



HALEY AANESTAD
ATTORNEY



SARAH KLEIN
ATTORNEY



CRISTINA NOLAN
ATTORNEY



COURTNEY PENDRY
ATTORNEY



JANE REILLEY
ATTORNEY



COURTNEY THOM
ATTORNEY

FIGHTERS FOR JUSTICE

The women of Manly, Stewart & Finaldi go to work every day with one mission - to seek justice for victims of sexual abuse and demand reform from the institutions who have violated their trust. We are proud to honor their contributions to our firm and the legal profession.

2021 WOMEN IN LAW PROFILES

FERRUZZO



CHERYL BARRETT

FERRUZZO & FERRUZZO, LLP

What differentiates an attorney who does estate planning from an excellent estate planning attorney? Two words: Experience and Empathy. Cheryl Barrett's long time practice is people oriented and she is highly sensitive to the

fact that estate planning deals with the two subjects dreaded by most people, death and taxation. The gift that Cheryl brings to her clients is her ability to break down complex issues and move past the attorney and IRS lexicons in a manner that people can understand and apply to their personal goals and needs. When the need arises, Cheryl's trust administration skills can be relied upon to carry out her clients' wishes, and in cases where probate is required, Cheryl is able to guide clients through the rigors of the process.

Highly visible in the charitable community, Ms. Barrett has served on the Board of Directors for Goodwill Industries of Orange County for 17 years and was Chair of the Board. The association supports her affinity for the needs of the disabled and she has developed a niche with special needs trusts.

Ms. Barrett has been quoted by financial editors at the Orange County Register, Los Angeles Times, Huffington Post, and Business Insider. She has been a guest on KABC and KCAA radio talk shows.

When clients refer family members, there is no greater symbol of their confidence. Cheryl has been helping families for years. Ferruzzo & Ferruzzo is rooted in relationships and Cheryl is emblematic of that ethic.



KATIE BINKLEY

VETERANS LEGAL INSTITUTE

Katie Binkley is a lead staff attorney at Veterans Legal Institute where she predominantly practices family law litigation. She brings a trauma-informed approach to her cases to successfully empower her clients, many of whom suffer from conditions like Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) or Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI). She has successfully reunited Veteran families by prioritizing children-focused solutions, rather than unnecessarily punitive or litigious strategies.

Public interest is the guiding value of Binkley's practice. Before joining Veterans Legal Institute, she staffed various committees and member offices ranging from the Arizona State Legislature to the U.S. House of Representatives. She also volunteered with the Homeless Legal Assistance Program during all three years of law school, leading bi-weekly legal aid clinics at the most populous homeless shelter in Maricopa County, Arizona. In 2018, she received the Judge Mary M. Schroeder Award for donating the most pro bono legal aid hours of all second-year students.

Binkley graduated with honors from Arizona State University with a concurrent degree in Political Science and Women's Studies, as well as earning a certificate in Political Entrepreneurship. She went on to earn her Juris Doctor from Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law. Most recently, she was recognized as one of Congressman Lou Correa's Women of the Year for 2021. She is admitted to practice in Arizona and California and accredited to practice before the Department of Veterans Affairs.



ANDREA BIRD-STEINER

VETERANS LEGAL INSTITUTE

Andrea Ruth Bird-Steiner is the founding attorney at Bird Law Group in Newport Beach. She provides outside general counsel, advice, and advocacy, including business formation, contract review, negotiations, white collar criminal defense and corporate investigations, complex business litigation, and appeals. Prior to starting BLG, Bird-Steiner was an attorney at Manatt, Phelps & Phillips and Bingham McCutchen, and served as a law clerk for the Honorable Andrew J. Guilford in the U.S. District Court, C.D. Cal.

Bird-Steiner is a Veteran of the United States Marine Corps, where she was an intelligence analyst. She presently sits on the military committee that advises Supervisor Katrina Foley about local Veterans' issues.

Bird-Steiner argued pro bono at the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit on behalf of Carey Avendano-Hernandez, a transgender woman from Mexico who was tortured by police and military officials, resulting in a published Ninth Circuit opinion granting relief under the Convention Against Torture.

Bird-Steiner sits on the board at Veterans Legal Institute and has increased her pro bono practice to serve her fellow Veterans. She has established strong rapport with female Veterans through Veterans Legal Institute (VLI), often giving them advice and counsel and representing them when they would otherwise not be able to access justice. Given her contributions to the US military and the veteran and legal communities, Bird-Steiner is being recognized as the 2021 VLI Veteran of the Year.

Stuart Kane LLP



EVE A. BRACKMANN

STUART KANE LLP

Eve Brackmann is an equity partner at Stuart Kane LLP, a Real Estate, Employment and Litigation law firm based in Newport Beach. Brackmann litigates business disputes, including

both regular and complex cases. She has established a winning record on both the plaintiff and defense sides as lead counsel in jury and bench trials in both state and federal court, as well as private arbitrations.

Brackmann currently serves as a Director at Large on the Board of Directors for the Orange County Bar Association (OCBA). Previously, she served two terms as president of the Foundation Board of the Project Hope School in Orange, serving homeless and at-risk students in Orange County. She also serves as a Director on the Board of the USD Law School Alumni Association's Orange County Chapter, as co-chair of the OCBA Mentoring Committee, and as an arbitrator on the OCBA's Mandatory Fee Arbitration Panel.

Brackmann has been selected to the 2018-2021 Best Lawyers® list for Real Estate Litigation. She was also recognized in 2016 – 2021 on the Southern California Super Lawyers list and previously to the 2013 and 2014 Super Lawyers "Rising Stars" list. She was also Stuart Kane's lead contributing attorney for the 2014-2020 World Bank "Doing Business" report on Real Property around the globe, and served for three years as a director on the statewide Board of the Conference of California Bar Associations.

LATHAM LATHAM & WATKINS



NIKKI BUFFA

LATHAM & WATKINS

Nikki Buffa is counsel in the Orange County and Washington, D.C. offices of Latham & Watkins and a member of the Environment, Land & Resources Department, and brings two decades of experience working on energy and environmental policy. Buffa focuses her practice on land use, energy and infrastructure, and environmental matters. A recent highlight of Buffa's work includes leading the Latham team working with the Mississippi Center for Justice (MCJ) and the Emmett Till Interpretive Center to advocate for national recognition and protection of historical sites connected to the murder of Till to provide future generations a place to learn about this critical part of civil rights history. Buffa also received the California Lawyer Attorney of the Year (CLAY) award in 2019 by The Daily Journal, for advising on The Ocean Cleanup.

Buffa rejoined Latham after serving in the Obama Administration. As deputy chief of staff at the United States Department of the Interior, she managed a diverse set of Department missions. Nikki Buffa was an associate at Latham (2006-2008) prior to joining the White House Council on Environmental Quality at the start of the Obama administration (2009-2011). She also served as the deputy director of cabinet affairs at the White House (2011-2013), and worked closely with senior White House staff and agency leadership at the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Departments of the Interior, Agriculture, Energy, and Transportation.

Buffa advises developers, utilities, other clients on all aspects of project development from initial permitting and entitlement strategy through governmental approvals incorporating legal, political, community and public relations issues. She currently serves on the boards of the Irvine Ranch Conservancy, National Parks Conservation Association, and the Advisory Board of the University at Berkeley Institute for Parks, People, and Biodiversity.

shulman bastian friedman & bui LLP



LYNDA T. BUI

SHULMAN BASTIAN
FRIEDMAN & BUI LLP

Lynda T. Bui is a partner in Shulman Bastian Friedman & Bui LLP's bankruptcy department and works in both the Orange County and Riverside offices. Ms. Bui's practice focuses on all aspects of bankruptcy, including representing trustees, debtors, creditors, plaintiffs and defendants in adversary proceedings. Her clients are in a variety of industries including real estate, retail, manufacturing, logistics, banking, food services, non-profit, and professional services. Ms. Bui is also a Bankruptcy Panel Trustee in the Central District of California, having been appointed by the U.S. Trustee in 2010. Some of her notable appointments (Chapter 11 and 7) include In re Robert Manufacturing Co, In re Metropolitan Automotive Warehouse, In re Cosmedx Science, all of which have been successfully administered. Recently, she was appointed as Trustee in the Banner Mattress bankruptcy and successfully concluded a going-out-of-business sale for all the retail locations. Further, Ms. Bui also represents other trustees in complicated cases involving tens of millions of dollars in administration.

Active in her professional community, Ms. Bui is currently serving a three-year elected term as a Director of the National Association of Bankruptcy Trustees. Locally, she is also serving as a board member of the Vietnamese American Bar Association of Southern California. Ms. Bui recently completed her service on the 2020 Small Business Reorganization Task Force, chaired by Chief Bankruptcy Judge Maureen Tighe.

She enjoys spending time with her family, taking morning beach walks and reading.

Defining Leadership



MICHELE D. JOHNSON

Partner, Securities Litigation
& Professional Liability



HILARY A. SHALLA

Partner, Real Estate



MICHELLE L.C. CARPENTER

Partner, Benefits & Compensation



NIKKI BUFFA

Counsel, Project Siting & Approvals



KRISTIN N. MURPHY

Counsel, Securities Litigation
& Professional Liability

Experience. Commitment. Talent.

We are proud of our lawyers and grateful for their contributions to the legal profession, our firm, and our communities. Each of them has made outstanding contributions to the practice, has been recognized for her dedication to excellence, and embodies the talent and culture of Latham & Watkins. We commend them for their hard work, innovation, and commitment to the practice of law.

2021 WOMEN IN LAW PROFILES

**ALLISON BURNS**STRADLING Yocca
CARLSON & RAUTH

Allison Burns has particular experience in local agency governance matters, civil rights litigation, eminent domain, general real estate litigation, contract disputes, and construction disputes.

Her experience also includes economic development; affordable housing litigation; land use and planning litigation and representation; relocation and acquisition disputes; conflicts of interest; Public Records Act and Brown Act challenges, compliance and litigation; environmental contamination and remediation cost-recovery actions; water rights; and the dissolution of redevelopment.

Burns serves as city attorney to the city of Lancaster and general counsel to the Chino Basin Desalter Authority, Emerald Bay Service District, Spalding Community Services District, San Juan Basin Authority, Antelope Valley Transit Authority, Antelope Valley Air Quality Management District and Santiago Aqueduct Commission.

Her litigation experience includes Constitutional and civil rights challenges to governmental programs and actions; Development agreement disputes; Eminent domain representing both condemnees and condemnors; Breaches of covenants, conditions and restrictions; Foreclosure of taxes, special assessments, and liens; Construction disputes; Contamination and remediation cost-recovery actions; Evictions; Challenges to bond issuances; Affordable housing disputes, including challenges to expenditures from low-and-moderate-income housing funds.

**MICHELLE L.C. CARPENTER**

LATHAM & WATKINS



Michelle Carpenter is a partner in the tax department of Latham & Watkins' Los Angeles and Orange County offices and a member of the firm's executive committee. She advises

clients on a broad range of executive compensation arrangements and employee-related matters across a variety of industries, with extensive experience working with both public and private companies, as well as private equity and venture capital firms.

In particular, Carpenter advises clients on the executive compensation and employee benefits aspects of their most complex and important transactions, from initial public offerings, to spin-offs, to mergers and acquisitions. Carpenter has deep experience advising public companies, and those going public, on a regular basis regarding ongoing executive compensation matters (including governance, as well as securities law reporting and compliance).

Carpenter is known in the marketplace for her thought leadership on clawback provisions in compensation packages, and she regularly presents on this topic at conferences and in client trainings. She is a recommended lawyer for Employee Benefits and Executive Compensation by *The Legal 500 US*, and was selected as "Southern California Rising Star" by *Super Lawyers* for Tax. Carpenter is a Board Member of Bet Tezdek, a nonprofit organization that provides free, comprehensive legal services for low-income residents in Los Angeles.

**KATHLEEN CARTER**

MESSNER REEVES LLP



Kathleen Carter has more than 28 years of experience as a trial lawyer in complex litigation and case management. With a range of expertise spanning employment law to complex commercial disputes, Carter has helped clients implement strategic best

practices while creating processes and policies to reduce risk. An active member of ABOTA, a membership that is hand-selected by existing members of the organization based on her successful trial record, character and reputation among the trial bar, Carter is highly sought after by clients in California, Nevada, Washington, Delaware, Indiana and Georgia.

A known expert in her field, Carter's illustrious track record includes winning an eight-figure damage award for clients involved in personal injury cases and successfully defending an international firm in a high-stakes class action matter.

Apart from her legal triumphs, Carter is a core member of the Orange County Bar Association and the Los Angeles County Bar Association, one of the largest voluntary metropolitan bar associations in the country that provides its members with access to various leadership opportunities, and BUZZ, An Executive Women's Think Tank. She was previously a member of the National Association of Minority & Women Owned Law Firms.

She is also supporter of Best Friends Animal Society, a LA-based animal welfare organization devoted to promoting a no-kill movement and encouraging the adoption of cats and dogs.

Carter is a graduate of Vermont Law School and earned her undergraduate degree from Saint Anselm College. She went on to receive her MBA from Pepperdine University.

**KYMBERLEIGH
DAMRON-HSIAO**

KADING BRIGGS LLP



Kymberleigh Damron-Hsiao is a partner at Kading Briggs LLP, a boutique employment law firm exclusively representing employers. With her

partner Theresa Kading, Damron-Hsiao proudly has led Kading Briggs LLP to become a majority-owned female business. Damron-Hsiao specializes in employment litigation and counseling, focusing on wrongful termination, harassment, retaliation, discrimination, and complex wage and hour laws.

Prior to attending law school, Damron-Hsiao spent several years in Human Resources where she gained valuable insight into the day-to-day operations and challenges that Human Resources professionals and corporate executives face. Leveraging this insight and experience, Damron-Hsiao secures the trust of her clients and has become the go-to counsel to provide practical advice and navigate clients through difficult employee-related issues. When Damron-Hsiao is not providing advice, she represents her clients in both class-based and single-plaintiff litigation, whether in court or arbitration, where she has experienced many successes. Her clients, which range from Fortune 100 to small private businesses, include national retailers, one of the world's largest commercial real estate firms, an international medical device company and more.

Damron-Hsiao prides herself on being a double-Bruin, having attended UCLA for both undergraduate and law school. She is a member of the California Minority Counsel Program, and enjoys mentoring junior attorneys. When she is not practicing law, Damron-Hsiao devotes her time to raising her three sons, ages 10 to 16. She previously served many years on the board of Concept 7, a non-profit adoption and foster agency, and is involved with the Irvine Public Schools Foundation.

**SAMANTHA DOREY**

EVERETT DOREY LLP



Samantha Dorey is a founding partner of Everett Dorey LLP, a full-service civil litigation firm that represents multi-national corporations, non-profits, cities, public agencies and school districts in all aspects of

litigation. She specializes in complex civil litigation with an emphasis in catastrophic injury, public entity defense, employment law, mass tort, asbestos litigation and environmental law. She also regularly advises clients on non-litigated matters, including development of risk management protocols and procedures related to property management and environmental issues.

As a leading litigation firm in California routinely retained as trial counsel in complex and challenging cases throughout the state, Ms. Dorey has shaped a firm of exceptionally talented litigators with diverse cultural and personal backgrounds, with particular focus on creating an environment that empowers female attorneys. She has received numerous industry awards, including the 2020 Woman Entrepreneur under 40 Award by the National Association of Women Business Owners. Orange County Business Journal recognized the firm as a "Best Places to Work" in 2020 and 2021 and a "2020 Company that Cares."

Ms. Dorey is an adjunct professor at Chapman University where she teaches a course on litigation strategy and civil procedure in state and federal courts. She serves on the Board of Directors for the Public Law Center, a nonprofit providing free legal services to low-income residents and other nonprofits in Orange County, and is former board member of the Orange County Lavender Bar.

**CAITLIN EMMONS**

VETERANS LEGAL INSTITUTE



Caitlin Emmons has established herself as a powerhouse at Veterans Legal Institute (VLI) as a Lead Staff Attorney and Discharge Upgrade Unit Team Lead. VLI provides pro bono legal assistance to homeless, at-risk,

disabled and low income current and former service members to eradicate barriers to housing, healthcare, education, and employment and foster self-sufficiency. Emmons focuses on cases involving Military Sexual Trauma, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, Traumatic Brain Injury, and discrimination. She is an advocate for Veterans unjustly separated from the military. Emmons has presented at Harvard Law School, University of California Irvine, and to several national law firms about discharge upgrades and Veterans benefits. Under her supervision, the discharge upgrade unit has achieved a success rate 5.5 times higher than the national Board average. Through her client-centered empowering approach, survivors become thrivers.

Emmons is a graduate of the University of California, Irvine School of Law, class of 2015. She is a military spouse. Her partner is an active-duty Marine. She served as a UCI Public Interest Fellow at the Hawaii Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice. When her family received orders to North Carolina, she worked as the Trial Court Coordinator for a four-county judicial district. Her work in North Carolina focused on legal research, writing, and supporting the civil and criminal dockets in one of the largest judicial districts in the state. Ms. Emmons returned to California in 2020 and joined the team at VLI. She and her partner have two young children.

shulman bastian friedman & bui LLP

WOMEN IN LAW



Lynda T. Bui
Partner



Melissa Davis Lowe
Partner



Kiara W. Gebhart
Partner



Rika M. Kido
Partner

Strong • Confident • Leaders

The Firm would like to acknowledge these extraordinary attorneys who continue to challenge and raise standards in the legal community and elsewhere. We are proud and extremely fortunate to have them at the Firm.

BUSINESS ATTORNEYS

www.shulmanbastian.com

2021 WOMEN IN LAW PROFILES



LISA EYANSON

VETERANS LEGAL INSTITUTE

Lisa Eyanson is an accomplished criminal defense attorney with over thirty years of litigation experience. Eyanson has dedicated her career to representing indigent clients, including more than two decades with the Orange

County Public Defender's Office. She is currently a Senior Staff Attorney with the Veterans Legal Institute where she now uses her legal experience to advocate on behalf of Veterans and their families in need. Eyanson focuses primarily on keeping Veterans and their families housed by collaborating with other nonprofits so the Veteran can access all resources available to stay safe and secure. To date, VLI has prevented over 200 Veteran families from becoming homeless.

Eyanson received her Bachelor of Arts from Loyola Marymount University and her Juris Doctor from Western State University College of Law. Upon receiving her Juris Doctor, she was an associate with the Law Offices of William J. Kopeny, handling pre-trial motions and appeals, including capital case appeals, at both the state and federal court levels.

In 1994, Eyanson joined the Orange County Public Defender's Office eventually serving as a Senior Deputy Public Defender, where the majority of her litigation experience was in the handling of serious, violent, and complex felony matters, including special circumstance and capital murder cases.

In her free time, she serves as the Volunteer Coordinator with Bob Hope USO of Orange County and as a Soldier and Family Readiness Group Leader for the 358th Military Police Company of the United States Army Reserve.



SIMA FARDE

LAW OFFICES OF SIMA FARDE

Sima Farde is a passionate advocate for early resolution knowing the realities of litigation based on her own experience of 24 years which includes jury trials in Orange and Los Angeles counties. Thus far she has had close to 100% success rate in private mediation, while working part time. Farde has been described by her mediation clients as a hardworking spirited mediator who can provide a fresh and creative perspective. She has now emerged to be considered a competent neutral by both sides.

Farde is able to settle complex class action matters as well as simple contract and business disputes. Having lived and studies in three diverse continents Farde relates to most people of all walks of life. She completed elementary school in Iran, high school and college in England (University College London and Imperial College of Science and Technology) and left for O.C. in 1992 to join her family and start law school in O.C. She has also worked in the City of London (like Wall Street) as a financial consultant and understands business as well as application of statistical science to data.

Her interests are international issues, travel, politics, the arts, tennis league and still learning surfing. Recently, Farde has started a blog to discuss environmental and labor issues which can lead to corporate rating based on green and labor friendly issues as well as inspiring young leaders.



ANETA FERGUSON, J.D.

AVANIR
PHARMACEUTICALS, INC.

Aneta Ferguson, J.D., is vice president, general counsel and corporate secretary of Avanir Pharmaceuticals, Inc., an Aliso Viejo-based pharmaceutical company committed to delivering innovative central nervous system solutions to improve the lives of patients and their caregivers. Under her leadership and guidance, the Law Department is responsible for counseling Avanir on a wide range of matters, from drug research and development to commercialization, business development, strategic planning, commercial and supply chain matters, investigations, privacy, and labor and employment matters.

Ferguson has extensive experience advising and consulting with all levels of an organization, including senior leadership and boards of directors, with a focus on finding solutions that satisfy business objectives while protecting the company's interests. Prior to joining Avanir in 2015, Ferguson was an associate attorney at an Orange County firm where she served as corporate counsel to a variety of public and private companies with a focus on mergers and acquisitions, capital market transactions, securities matters, and general corporate advice.

She earned a Master of Law from University of Silesia in Poland, and a Juris Doctorate from the University of California Los Angeles. She is a member of the Association of Corporate Counsel, the American Bar Association, the Orange County Bar Association, and the Healthcare Businesswomen's Association. Ferguson also serves as an ambassador for the UCLA LL.M. Ambassadors Program which connects prospective members with alumni and current students.



SHEILA-MARIE FINKELSTEIN

VETERANS LEGAL INSTITUTE

Sheila-Marie Finkelstein, Esq., LL.M., is a California State Bar Board Certified Specialist in Estate Planning, Trust and Probate Law and the Principal at AHAVA Law, P.C.. Finkelstein's

experiences as an elementary school teacher and as a Law Clerk for the U.S. Air Force JAG Corps honed her passion for Veterans and education. She has been selected as a Super Lawyers rising star from 2018 – 2020 and has an AVVO top attorney rating of 10.0.

Finkelstein is the Veterans Legal Institute ("VLI"), Lawyers for Warriors 2021 Veterans Advocate of the Year. She has been volunteering with VLI since 2014 and pioneered the monthly pro bono estate clinic in 2017. Through the clinic she serves over 100 Veterans and their families each year. She has served on the VLI Board of Directors since 2016 and the Executive Board since 2020. Finkelstein also chairs the Orange County Bar Association Veterans and Military Committee which leads programing to educate the legal community about the issues, laws, and protections specifically applicable to Veterans and military members. She is married to a Veteran, and all four of her grandparents served in the United States Military.

Finkelstein is the President of the Orange County Jewish Bar Association and served the Orange County Women Lawyers Association as a Director and Executive Director for almost a decade. She is accredited by the Department of Veterans Affairs and has published multiple articles about estate planning, pro bono legal practice, and more. She has offices in Lakewood and Newport Beach.



MICHELLE FONSECA-KAMANA

WEST COAST LEMONS

Michelle Fonseca-Kamana is a California lemon law lawyer who is passionate about consumer advocacy, education, and an unparalleled client experience. She is the founder and principal attorney at West Coast Lemons, the law firm she began in February 2020 just weeks before the coronavirus pandemic spread across the globe. Determined not to let anything, not even a global pandemic, get in her way, she has persevered and not only built a six-figure law firm in her first year out on her own, she was also named by Yahoo! Finance as one of thirteen women nationwide who are changing the game in the legal industry.

With over \$4.5 million recovered since 2017, Fonseca-Kamana has proven she is a force to be reckoned with. Handling lemon law cases involving everything from cars and trucks to motor homes and travel trailers, Fonseca-Kamana has unmatched insight into the automobile and recreational vehicle industry, and actively shares her knowledge via informational videos on Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube, and TikTok. Her emphasis on client experience is also clear: she is a two-time AVVO Client's Choice Award winner and her firm has over 17 five star Google reviews to date.

Fonseca-Kamana is a member of the consumer advocate group Justice HQ, ProVisors, Consumer Attorneys Association of Los Angeles, LA/OC Latino Professionals, and the Orange County Bar Association. In her spare time she enjoys traveling with her husband and their silver Labrador puppy named Pumbaa.



KIARA GEBHART

SHULMAN BASTIAN
FRIEDMAN & BUI LLP

Kiara Gebhart is a partner in Shulman Bastian Friedman & Bui LLP's Orange County office. She is a member of the firm's litigation department and focuses her practice on all manner of complex business issues and disputes, including breach of fiduciary duty, professional malpractice, insurance coverage, contractual disputes, labor and employment (including wrongful termination, harassment, discrimination, retaliation, wage and hour, PAGA, etc.), unfair competition, fraud, protection of trade secrets and confidential information and other business and general liability claims. Ms. Gebhart has broad experience representing clients in both state and federal court, bankruptcy court and arbitrations, from case inception through trial/hearing. Ms. Gebhart also regularly counsels clients on disputes with customers, partners and employees/employers.

Ms. Gebhart is a member of several community and professional groups. She is currently a member of the Orange County Chapter of the Federal Bar Association and the Business Litigation and Labor & Employment Law Sections of the Orange County Bar Association. She is a past member of the board of directors of the Orange County Chapter of the Federal Bar Association and a past member of the American Heart Association's Executive Leadership Team for the American Heart Association / American Stroke Association Orange County Heart Run 2014.

THE GOAL OF HELPING PEOPLE HAS ALWAYS BEEN

The Driving Force



As a former nurse,

current lawyer and longtime advocate of social justice, Jennifer Johnson has dedicated both her personal and professional life to making a difference in her community. "Often, the people I represent wouldn't have a voice," she says, "and that's why it's such an incredible honor to represent them in the court of law."

In her legal practice, Ms. Johnson concentrates on catastrophic personal injury, wrongful death, medical malpractice and elder abuse, providing injured individuals with committed and compassionate representation in Southern California and many other parts of the country. "I focus on cases that cry out for justice, because I strongly believe that access to justice is not a privilege for the few, but a right for all," she says.

Prior to attending law school, Ms. Johnson served in one of the country's most trusted professions—nursing. And in establishing her own law firm, she drew on her experience in that field, as well as on her expertise from working first at two prestigious defense firms and then at a national powerhouse plaintiff firm. "People often ask why I became a lawyer after already being a successful ICU-nurse," says Ms. Johnson, who has practiced law since 1992. "As a nurse and a lawyer, my motivation has been the same: to make a difference in people's lives."

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**JENNIFER R.
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jrj@jenniferjohnsonlaw.com / JENNIFERJOHNSONLAW.COM

9210 IRVINE CENTER DRIVE / IRVINE, CALIFORNIA 92618 / (714) 884-4197 • F. (714) 884.4206

2021 WOMEN IN LAW PROFILES



BUSINESS & INVESTMENT
IMMIGRATION LAW

**EVELYN HAHN**

DAVID HIRSON &
PARTNERS, LLP

Evelyn Hahn is a managing partner of David Hirson & Partners, LLP, a full-service immigration based in Costa Mesa, California with branch offices in Seattle, Washington and New York City. Her passion in immigration law deeply ingrained in her because she was also an immigrant. Having a full understanding of the complex immigration process based on her personal experience, she prides herself in helping her clients navigate complex immigration system and ultimately achieve their immigration goals in the U.S.

Hahn particularly enjoys working with her clients, who make a positive social and economic impact on the U.S. by utilizing business and investment immigration. She has filed over a thousand employment-based immigration cases to date, representing both individual clients and small, mid-size and large Fortune 500 companies from over 20 different countries in various sectors including IT, chemical, e-commerce, import/export, healthcare, entertainment, and non-profit organizations. She also represents both foreign investors and regional centers/project developers on all aspects of the EB-5 investment visa program.

**GRACE HOROUPLAN**

FISHER & PHILLIPS LLP

Grace Horouplan is a partner in the Irvine office. Her practice is focused on representing employers in a variety of employment cases. Her diverse practice includes litigating claims involving discrimination, harassment, misappropriation of trade secrets, retaliation, wage and hour violations (both individual and collective actions), unfair business practices, whistleblower claims, workplace violence and wrongful discharge.

She represents employers in both state and federal courts as well as before state and federal agencies, such as the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), the California Department of Fair Employment and Housing, and the Division of Labor Standards Enforcement (DLSE). Horouplan also provides preventive counseling on subjects such as handling of disciplinary matters and employee terminations, internal investigations, the development of workplace policies and procedures, compliance with state and federal wage and hour laws and leaves of absence. Horouplan also frequently presents seminars, workshops and trainings on employment issues for industry groups and private employers.

Horouplan is currently a member of the Orange County and Armenian Bar Associations and is "AV" Peer Review Rated by Martindale-Hubbell. In addition, Horouplan formerly served as the vice chair and general counsel of the Huntington Beach Chamber of Commerce and is former chair of the firm's Associate Development Committee.

**SHANNON JENKINS**

TLD LAW



Shannon Jenkins is an employment defense attorney. Consistent with the TLD's legacy of excellence representing businesses, she works with all sizes of employers and executives in business litigation and employment-related disputes. She guides employers through individual and class action cases, administrative judicial forums including the Labor Commissioner, the Employment Development Department (EDD), the Department of Fair Employment and Housing (DFEH) and Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) and alternative dispute resolution. She successfully defends sexual and other harassment claims, alleged discrimination assertions, breach of employment, confidentiality unfair competition and trade-secret agreements (including prosecution to protect employer rights), wage and hour disputes, breach of confidentiality agreements, breach of fiduciary duty, wrongful termination and all manner of related tort and contract claims.

Ms. Jenkins pro-active representation includes preventive services such as required sexual harassment training, payroll practice auditing and drafting/review of employer documentation including all pre-hire/hire/post-hire forms. She offers seminars and trainings to keep business at the cutting edge of compliance.

Representative clients, industries and occupations include manufacturing, banking, software, construction, hospitality, staffing, medical and veterinary practices, trucking and all manner of professional services firms. Ms. Jenkins strives to solve employer problems utilizing an appropriately aggressive approach balanced with principles of fairness, diversity and inclusion both in the clients' workplace and in her practice.

**JENNIFER R. JOHNSON**

THE LAW OFFICES OF
JENNIFER R. JOHNSON

Jennifer R. Johnson has dedicated her life to helping others. She was raised in North Dakota and South Dakota, the daughter of a pastor. Ms. Johnson's firm

focuses on the representation of individuals injured due to the negligence of others.

Ms. Johnson earned a Bachelor's Degree in Psychology with a minor in Music Education from Evangel College in Springfield, Missouri. She then attended nursing school at Mesa Community College in Arizona after which she became a registered nurse.

Thereafter, Ms. Johnson enrolled in the James Rogers College of Law at the University of Arizona in Tucson. During law school, she worked as a nurse in intensive care units. After law school, Ms. Johnson relocated to California where has practiced law in California and other parts of the country ever since.

Ms. Johnson spent the first eight years of her career representing doctors and hospitals in medical malpractice cases. She then joined a Plaintiffs' firm dedicated to the representation of injured people where she worked for ten years on both medical malpractice and product liability pharmaceutical cases. Ms. Johnson is AV Preeminent rated by Martindale Hubbell, the organization's highest rating for legal ability and ethical standards. In 2020, the Orange County Trial Lawyers Association presented Ms. Johnson with their Top Gun Award for an eight figure settlement Ms. Johnson obtained for her clients.

**MICHELE D. JOHNSON**

LATHAM & WATKINS LLP

Michele Johnson, global chair of the litigation & trial department of Latham & Watkins, is one of the most renowned trial-minded litigators in the country. Her bet-the-company cases include securities fraud class actions, corporate governance challenges, insider trading claims, proxy contests, financial restatements, and other commercial disputes. In a rare and precedent-setting trial last month, Johnson won a complete defense jury verdict on behalf of NextGen Healthcare, Inc. in litigation brought by NextGen's second-largest shareholder, who sought \$400 million plus punitive damages for holding his shares in reliance on supposed fraud. This was the first holder's claim case to go to trial in the U.S. in nearly ninety years.

Ms. Johnson was recently profiled in The American Lawyer, both for her role as Global Chair and as a lead courtroom lawyer and part of Latham's broad team of elite first-chair trial attorneys. She was recognized among Benchmark Litigation 2021's Top 250 Women in Litigation and named Litigation Stars. She was ranked in Litigation: Securities-California by Chambers USA 2021, selected as a Top Rated Securities Litigation Attorney by Super Lawyers 2021, and honored as a Leading Lawyer for M&A Litigation by The Legal 500 US 2020. She was recognized by The Daily Journal for the California Lawyer Attorneys of the Year (CLAY) Award 2020, and named to the 25 Most Influential Women in Securities Law by Law360 and the Top Women Lawyers list in California by the Daily Journal. A former member of Latham's Executive Committee and former managing partner of the Orange County Office, Johnson serves on the boards of the Georgetown University Law Center, the Berkeley Center for Law and Business, the Public Law Center, and the Orange County Bar Foundation's Project Youth.

**NANCY JONES**

VETERANS LEGAL INSTITUTE

Nancy Jones is a Senior Staff Attorney at Veterans Legal Institute and leads its Veterans Benefits team. She represents hundreds of low-income and at-risk Veterans in proving their disability claims before the Veterans Administration at both the regional appeals level and before the Board of Veterans Appeals. Many Veterans come to her after numerous denials by the Department of Veterans Affairs that have left them feeling frustrated and marginalized by one of the largest bureaucracies in the nation.

Jones takes the time to thoroughly review every Veteran client's military service history, listen to the Veteran's story, and gather critical post-service medical evidence to build claims that have resulted in hundreds of thousands of dollars in life changing awards for Veterans who are often at risk of homelessness and suicide.

Jones also represents Veterans before the VA Debt Management Center and has successfully argued numerous hardship waivers for homeless and at-risk Veterans alleviating their financial burdens. These waivers ultimately lead to the Veteran getting back on track to becoming housed and improving their quality of life.

As a Marine Corps spouse of twenty-seven years, Jones connects with Veterans understanding and validating their struggles during and after their military service.

Jones is a graduate of the University of San Diego School of Law and is licensed to practice law in Virginia, Michigan, and California. She is accredited by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

2021 WOMEN IN LAW PROFILES

**THERESA KADING**

KADING BRIGGS LLP

Theresa Kading is a founding partner of Kading Briggs LLP, a boutique firm exclusively representing employers in employment law matters. She and her partners are proud of Kading Briggs' majority female-owned status

and certification by the Women's Business Enterprise National Council (WBENC), the preeminent certification organization. Kading Briggs LLP and Kading specialize in employment litigation, representing companies ranging in size from Fortune 100 to local private businesses.

Kading has practiced employment law exclusively for over 20 years and has extensive experience in both single plaintiff litigation, having tried several cases, and class-based litigation, having defended more than 150 class actions. She boasts a terrific record of notable certification and summary judgment victories and successful appeals. In early 2020 she obtained a complete defense verdict in a PAGA trial.

Kading is a native of Orange County and proud USC Trojan. She received her undergraduate degree summa cum laude from USC and then received her JD from USC's Gould School of Law, where she was Order of the Coif.

Kading is also active in the community. For many years, she served as Secretary on the board of the National Human Resources Association, Orange County affiliate, and she also served as an attorney coach for a local high school mock trial team. When not working, she and her husband Sean spend time with family and take frequent trips to Hawaii and the mountains where they enjoy paddleboarding and other water sports, hiking, snowboarding and more.

**NAHAL KAZEMI**

KELLER/ANDERLE LLP

Nahal Kazemi, senior counsel, combines a strong background in broad, high-stakes litigation with extensive experience as a diplomat.

Since joining Keller/Anderle, Kazemi has achieved outstanding results in major litigation, including successfully defending the City of Costa Mesa in a federal trial against sober living businesses. Kazemi and the Keller/Anderle team representing the city were honored with a "2019 California Lawyer Attorneys of the Year" award for their victory in that case, which was also named one of the top defense verdicts of 2018 by the Los Angeles and San Francisco Daily Journals. Kazemi was selected by Super Lawyers® as a Rising Star for Business Litigation in 2020.

For five years, Kazemi was an attorney with Davis Polk in New York, where she litigated against the Department of Justice and Securities and Exchange Commission; successfully defended a "Big Four" accounting firm in an investigation into derivatives and hedge accounting issues; and successfully represented a major European bank in litigation involving its acquisition of a U.S. Bank in the wake of the 2008 financial crisis.

Kazemi also served as a foreign service officer for the U.S. Department of State in Washington, D.C., Budapest, Hungary; Baghdad, Iraq; and Casablanca, Morocco.

Kazemi received her J.D. from Harvard Law School. She teaches civil practice foundations as an adjunct professor at Chapman University's Fowler School of Law, speaks at conferences locally and nationally, and has authored several articles in business and legal publications. Kazemi speaks fluent Farsi, Arabic and Hungarian, and conversational Spanish and French.

**JENNIFER L. KELLER**

KELLER/ANDERLE LLP

Jennifer Keller, a founding partner of Keller/Anderle, is one of America's most successful trial attorneys. She represents both plaintiffs and defendants in a broad range of high-stakes commercial litigation and

white collar cases.

Keller is a Fellow of the invitation-only American College of Trial Lawyers and a 2018 inductee into the California Lawyers Association Trial Lawyer Hall of Fame. She is also a fellow of the Litigation Counsel of America, an invitation-only organization limited to the top one-half of one percent of the nation's attorneys.

Chambers USA and Chambers Global rank her among the top commercial litigators in the nation, quoting sources who say Jennifer is "widely regarded as one of the best trial lawyers in California." The Legal 500, among the most prestigious international legal directories, recommends Keller as one of just 63 "leading trial lawyers" in the United States. Benchmark Litigation describes her as one of the "Top 100 Trial Attorneys in America." Keller is listed annually in "The Best Lawyers in America®" and is among the Lawdragon 500 Leading Lawyers in America.

In 2020 and 2021, Super Lawyers ranked Keller #1 in Southern California. In 2019, 2018 and 2012, California Lawyer Magazine named her a "California Attorney of the Year" for extraordinary achievements in litigation. "Revered for her versatility and ease in front of a jury ... the go-to trial attorney for difficult cases" is how Keller is described by The Los Angeles and San Francisco Daily Journals, ranking her as a "Top 100 Lawyer in California" 12 times.

FERRUZZO

FERRUZZO & FERRUZZO, LLP
CELEBRATING 40 YEARS**IT'S YOUR BUSINESS IT'S YOUR FAMILY**

For the past 40 years, Ferruzzo & Ferruzzo, LLP has known how important your legal issues are because we take a personal interest in you. Strong, lifetime relationships form the cornerstone of our practice. In celebration of our past 40 years, we thank all of our clients and trusted advisors who have contributed to our success. We look forward to the next 40 years, Rooted in Relationship.

BUSINESS TRANSACTIONS We work closely with you, your business, and your trusted advisors to set and achieve strategic plans. From start-ups to business operations, expansion to acquisition or sale, and devising an exit strategy, our transactional attorneys bring powerful expertise in the areas of tax planning, merger and acquisitions, deal structure planning, real estate transactions, and asset protection.

NEW DEALERSHIP REPRESENTATION Beginning in 1984, Ferruzzo has represented new vehicle dealerships. In addition to advising new motor vehicle dealerships, we have negotiated with all of the vehicle manufacturers, set up and reorganized dealership entities, and provided advice on the daily operations and laws governing the sale, rental, lease, financing, and repair of motor vehicles.

BUSINESS LITIGATION Our trial lawyers vigorously prosecute or defend your case and have brought to successful conclusion trials in state and federal civil court, appellate court, arbitration and before federal, state and local administrative boards and commissions. Our caseload regularly includes corporate and partnership disputes, real property disputes, and construction defect defense. Whatever litigation issue you may be facing, we'll walk you through it every step of the way.

REAL ESTATE Working alongside both owners and users of commercial real estate, our goal is to add significant value to the processes of property acquisition, due diligence, development, operations and disposition. Our depth of experience in real estate extends to construction, environmental conditions and sophisticated lease transactions and our approach is both efficient and practical. It's not about meeting your expectations, it's about exceeding them.

ESTATE PLANNING Our team of estate planning attorneys design and implement estate plans that accomplish your objectives, ever mindful of preserving family harmony and providing smooth asset transition with minimal opportunity for dispute or court interference. You want experience, knowledge, and specialization. That's why our attorneys include Certified Specialists in the areas of Estate Planning, Trust and Probate Law. Meticulous planning – it's what we do.

TRUST ADMINISTRATION & PROBATE Let our trust administration group guide you through the complex legal, tax and financial issues that require expert analysis, discussion, and decision when administering a trust. We assist clients with properly administering a trust in compliance with a trustee's fiduciary obligations. Our team is highly skilled in administering and advising clients for both taxable and non-taxable estates. Our practice group will guide you through this emotional and difficult process.

TRUST AND PROBATE LITIGATION Our highly skilled trust litigation trial lawyers will zealously prosecute or defend claims related to a trust, estate, conservatorship, or guardianship matter. Our trust and estate litigators regularly handle claims related to the formation of trust agreements, amendments, fraud, undue influence, coercion, lack of capacity issues, and breach of fiduciary duties. We will enforce and defend your rights.

EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES We work hard to safeguard your business by providing preventative counseling and sound practical advice regarding the complicated employment laws that impact your business. And we are there to defend your business when a claim is brought alleging any of the myriad of state and federal laws that affect you and your employees. Our team of employment attorneys regularly defend wage and hour claims, allegations of harassment and discrimination, and wrongful termination. Your business deserves the proactive approach that our Firm offers and our litigation team is ready.

2021 WOMEN IN LAW PROFILES

**BARBARA KLEIN**

KLEIN FAMILY LAW

Barbara Klein is an experienced Family Law attorney who focuses her practice exclusively on Family Law matters, with an emphasis on high value asset divorces, in Orange County. She is a Certified Family Law Specialist whose vast knowledge of the intricacies and fast changing laws, provides an advantage to her clients. Klein approaches each dissolution of marriage case as unique. First, identifying the issues and strategizing a plan for settlement or preparation for trial.

Klein started her practice with the goal to provide individual, personal representation to a small number of cases. Dissolution of Marriage matters involve personal relationships as well as the division of property. Klein tailors her representation of each client starting with a plan for resolution, by agreement or court intervention. Klein's experience results in the majority of her cases resolving by settlement. However, if resolution cannot be reached Barbara has extensive courtroom experience.

Klein's detail and taking initiative, in each and every case, to move the case along to resolution is what has supported Barbara's practice of client referrals and repeat clients. Barbara Klein's practice is unique and tailored to providing the best legal representation to steer a client through a dissolution of marriage which involves changes in personal relationships as well as financial.

**SARAH KLEIN**

MANLY, STEWART & FINALDI

Sarah Klein is an attorney, an advocate for victims of sexual abuse, and a former competitive gymnast. Sarah is also one of the first known victims of former Olympic Women's Gymnastics doctor Larry Nassar. July 2018, at the ESPY's, Klein accepted the Arthur Ashe Courage Award on behalf of herself and the hundreds of other survivors of Nassar's sexual abuse. Prior recipients of the Ashe award include Nelson Mandela, Eunice Kennedy Shriver, and Robin Roberts.

Today, Klein is a widely respected advocate for legal, cultural, and political change. She represents sexual abuse survivors in many high-profile cases including the Jerry Harris/US All Star Federation competitive cheerleading case.

Her op-ed in the Philadelphia Inquirer, I lobbied to change the law after I was abused by Larry Nassar caught the attention of Pennsylvania's Attorney General. She has worked in Pennsylvania, New York, Michigan, California and elsewhere for legal reform that will bring survivors healing and justice. Klein believes that the time has come for the law to impose upon abusers and their enablers, both institutions and individuals, the legal consequences they deserve.

Klein is a graduate of Columbia University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Global Entrepreneurship program. She sits on the Board of Directors of CHILD USA Advocacy, an organization committed to protecting children's civil liberties and keeping children safe from abuse. She also sits on the Board of the Montgomery County Advocacy Project (MCAP), preventing child abuse and neglect in Montgomery County.

**RIKA M. KIDO**SHULMAN BASTIAN
FRIEDMAN & BUI LLP

Rika M. Kido is a partner at Shulman Bastian Friedman & Bui LLP in Irvine where she has been practicing for almost 11 years. Ms. Kido is a member of the firm's bankruptcy and transactional departments. Ms. Kido's practice focuses on all aspects of bankruptcy, including representing trustees, debtors, creditors, plaintiffs and defendants in adversary proceedings, and focuses on providing advice to clients on corporate formation, governance and their ongoing business transactions. Ms. Kido was selected for inclusion in Rising Stars of Southern California Super Lawyers Magazine in 2018 and 2020.

Ms. Kido grew up in Orange County and attended Santa Margarita Catholic High School before she obtained her Bachelor of Arts in political science and Japanese from Middlebury College in Vermont in 2003. She then moved back to California, earning her masters degree in international affairs in 2007 from the School of Global Policy and Strategy at the University of California, San Diego and her Juris Doctorate from the University of San Francisco School of Law in 2010.

Ms. Kido is very active in the community. She is currently the secretary of the Orange County Bankruptcy Forum and the treasurer for the Southern California Network of the International Women's Insolvency & Restructuring Confederation. She is also a member of the Orange County Bar Association and the Inland Empire Bankruptcy Forum.

**KARLA KRAFT**STRADLING YOCCA
CARLSON & RAUTH

In a career marked by professional relationships that are both lasting and durable, Karla Kraft is frequently asked to litigate types of matters she has not previously encountered. This is a testament, not just to the trust placed in her by long-term clients, but also to her comfort level in facing new challenges. As a consequence, she represents clients across a broad range of complex commercial litigation matters.

Much of Kraft's work focuses on defending employment litigation, including both single plaintiff cases and wage-and-hour class actions. But she also tries trade secret disputes for technology companies, and defends class action suits against large consumer product companies and financial services providers.

Clients credit Kraft with an instinctive ability to balance the legal aspects of a lawsuit with the business considerations underlying them. She recognizes that the goals of each case are different, and that they don't necessarily fit within a standard win-or-lose scenario. Accordingly, she works with clients to define objectives up front, so that she can properly gauge the range of strategies available to achieve them. This approach leads to business-smart resolutions and ensures that matters are conducted efficiently, with small teams and reasonable amounts of research.

**ERICA KUNO**MEYER, OLSON, LOWY &
MEYERS LLP

Family law attorney Erica Kubo applies her legal experience and insights in her counsel to clients in disputes surrounding divorce, child support, visitation, custody and related issues.

Kubo's legal background includes serving as a corporate law intern at an international law firm and experience with depositions, discovery and lien negotiations. Kubo was introduced to family law matters while serving as a law clerk at the Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles, where she worked with domestic violence survivors and Japanese-speaking individuals getting divorced.

Kubo practices at Meyer Olson Lowy & Meyers LLP (MOLM), a California family law firm with a national reputation for tenacious representation. MOLM is a female-owned firm representing women and men in complex divorces. This high-visibility, high-stakes practice focuses on all aspects of family law, with particular success in high-asset marital estates, child custody matters and international move-away cases.

The firm's team of 20-plus goal-driven and experienced attorneys brings a combination of legal sophistication and empathy to clientele, which includes members of the entertainment, financial and alternative investment industries; business executives; and professional athletes and their spouses.

Fluent in Japanese, Kubo is an alumna of University of California, Santa Cruz, and a graduate of Loyola Law School in Los Angeles. While in law school, Kubo studied in Tokyo and served as a judicial extern for the Honorable Bruce G. Iwasaki of the Superior Court of California, County of Los Angeles. While working in the judge's chambers, Kubo gained early family law experience with child support, spousal support, custody and property division issues.

**VANESSA LEGBANDT**STRADLING YOCCA CARLSON
& RAUTH

Within California's complicated and heavily-regulated municipal debt framework, Vanessa Legbandt provides clarity for public agencies that seek to raise financing for public facilities. Whether Vanessa is acting as bond counsel or disclosure counsel to public agencies, or as underwriter's counsel to a financial institution, her honest, straightforward approach helps clients make informed decisions in matters involving lease revenue financings, utility revenue financings, land-secured financings and tax allocation bond refundings. She also represents public agencies and developers in financing and structuring economic development projects, including through public private partnership arrangements. She has advised numerous clients regarding the procedures and relative costs and benefits of forming and issuing debt through enhanced infrastructure financing districts.

Legbandt's experience as a public finance attorney gives her a firm grasp on her clients' goals and objectives and the perspective to explore alternative financing structures within the parameters of applicable legal restrictions. When her clients are faced with complicated or uncertain legal concerns, Legbandt thoroughly evaluates the factual circumstances against all applicable laws and regulations before presenting the options and approaches that best suit their needs. Clients appreciate her simple, straightforward approach and her ability to resolve any issues quickly. Undaunted by the fast pace of municipal financings, Legbandt meets all required timeframes and staffs transactions appropriately to ensure she obtains the most beneficial financing for her clients.

2021 WOMEN IN LAW PROFILES



CAROL LEW
STRADLING

For state and local governments and nonprofit organizations raising money for public infrastructure and other projects, Carol Lew’s proven tax advice is a critical piece of the complex financing puzzle. With more than 30 years of federal tax law experience, Lew is nationally recognized for her ability to apply her in-depth knowledge of the Internal Revenue Code to tax-advantaged debt financings. The complicated tax analyses she undertakes keep issuers and buyers in compliance with all federal tax laws and help communities thrive.

Lew’s sought-after tax advice helps states, highway authorities, water districts, housing authorities, hospitals, school districts and municipal agencies and nonprofits finance development projects through a variety of sources, including tax-advantaged and taxable bonds, and public/private partnerships. Many clients also rely on Lew for post-issuance compliance advice. If the IRS audits a bond issuer or buyer, she steps in to resolve any outstanding tax issues quickly. Lew also assists with voluntary closing agreements and private letter ruling requests.

When clients work with Lew, they get the full benefit of her cutting-edge insight and long-standing leadership in the organizations helping shape today’s U.S. tax laws. She currently serves on the IRS IRSAC advisory committee that provides advice directly to the IRS Commissioner on a broad range of tax matters. Lew has also served as President of the National Association of Bond Lawyers and as Chair of The American Bar Association Taxation Section’s Tax-Exempt Financing Committee.



STEPHANIE K. LIND
KELLER/ANDERLE LLP

Associate Stephanie K. Lind focuses her practice on complex commercial litigation and white collar criminal defense. She has been an essential part of trial teams for the defense of multiple bad faith insurance claims and a nine-month-long white collar jury trial resulting in acquittal of all charges. She is currently working on a nine-figure legal malpractice case. Lind is also a member of the Association of Certified E-Discovery Specialists.

Lind received her law degree from the University of California, Irvine School of Law. She was a member of the UC Irvine Law Review Executive Board from 2015-16, and was a lead article editor the previous year. Lind earned the law school’s Pro Bono Achievement Award three years running in recognition of her work for the Domestic Violence Assistance Program, Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (the Dreamers program), the Elder Abuse Clinic, and The New Way of Life Re-Entry Project (helping successful probationers gain expungement of criminal convictions).

Lind is an active member of the Orange County legal community. She led the firm to win a silver partnership award in the Food from the Bar campaign, which raises money and food for the hungry in Orange County. Lind also volunteers her time with the Orange County Bar Association at events such as the OCBA Super Pet Adoption.



MELISSA DAVIS LOWE
SHULMAN BASTIAN
FRIEDMAN & BUI LLP

Melissa Davis Lowe has a broad range of experience across all areas of insolvency and bankruptcy law. Ms. Lowe is a partner at Shulman Bastian

Friedman & Bui LLP in Irvine where she has been practicing for almost 15 years. Ms. Lowe has represented nearly every type of party in Chapter 7 or Chapter 11 bankruptcy proceeding but has focused most of her practice representing bankruptcy trustees. Ms. Lowe has prosecuted nearly 100 avoidance actions such as fraudulent transfer and preference actions for trustees, most of them settling before trial. She has also obtained multiple judgments denying the discharge of dishonest debtors for her trustee clients. Ms. Lowe also has extensive experience assisting clients in out of court workouts and restructurings in order for her clients, both companies and individuals, to avoid a bankruptcy filing.

Ms. Lowe grew up in Arizona, obtaining her Bachelor of Science in finance in 2003 from the University of Arizona. She then moved to Southern California and earned her Juris Doctor in 2006 from Loyola Law School in Los Angeles and then her Master of Law in taxation in 2008.

Ms. Lowe is also active in the community. She is a member of the OCBF, serving as its president in 2013, and of the OC Bar Association. She also sits on the board of directors and volunteers with The First Tee of Orange County and has served as its secretary since 2018.

Ms. Lowe especially enjoys hiking and golfing with her husband and two children.



Solutions at the speed of now

Stradling is proud to help companies across California meet the demands of today’s fast-changing business landscape.

We are a premier business law firm with 110+ lawyers in 12 Western U.S. locations. Top companies and municipalities count on us for the right team and skills to meet their toughest challenges 24/7, 365 days a year.

2021 WOMEN IN LAW PROFILES



KATHLEEN MARCUS

STRADLING YOCCA CARLSON & RAUTH

As a former attorney with the SEC's Division of Enforcement, Kathleen Marcus brings a deep understanding of the federal laws and government processes for clients facing regulatory and white collar investigations. Marcus has resolved over 30 SEC investigations without the government bringing an Enforcement action. Marcus has significant experience before a host of other agencies and regulators, including the DOJ, FINRA, FDA and the FCC, as well as number state agencies. Companies, funds, investment advisors, municipalities and executives rely on the trust she has built with regulators and her ability to interact with government agencies to negotiate a successful outcome. Using her streamlined, careful approach, she has defended clients against accusations of fraud, accounting and disclosure discrepancies, insider trading, breaches of the FCPA, and violations of the Federal Anti-Kickback statute. Marcus also assists clients facing cyber security incidents and defends regulatory investigations involving blockchain, cryptocurrency and token offerings.

Companies and funds often call on Marcus to lead internal investigations to fully assess risk and limit possible sanctions posed by looming government investigations. Her thorough, yet cost-efficient approach to fact-finding enables her to spot problems quickly, assess potential liability and offer solutions to navigate through challenging issues. Marcus also assists clients seeking to mitigate their future enforcement risks by conducting compliance assessments. Marcus works with stakeholders to develop robust compliance programs and offer training to meet the business and industry-specific needs of her clients



AMY MARTINEZ

RMO LLP

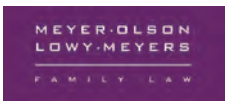
As a probate lawyer, Amy Martinez represents beneficiaries, and professional and corporate fiduciaries (administrators, executors, trustees, conservators, and guardians) in contested trust, estate and probate litigation.

For more than a decade, Martinez has worked tirelessly to build relationships with clients by maintaining personal one-on-one communication that allows her to guide clients through the litigation process, which often is a new and unfamiliar experience for them.

As an experienced litigator, Martinez understands the emotional and financial toll litigated disputes can take on clients. For that reason, Martinez strives to present all potential litigation alternatives to maximize results and reduce litigation time and spend, including early mediation and creative settlement options aimed at swiftly and economically securing favorable results for her clients.

Martinez is based in RMO LLP's Orange County office. The firm prides itself in litigating disputes effectively and treating clients as people—not a case or a number. The firm's mission is to provide a sense of relief to clients and their families through proactive advocacy, handling every facet of a client's case efficiently and cost-effectively, and getting clients the best result for the least amount of legal spend.

Martinez and the firm's attorneys are committed to using decades of experience, common sense, and integrity to put clients in a position where they can move on with their lives and put their probate, will, estate, trust or conservatorship behind them.



SANA MASHEDY

MEYER, OLSON, LOWY & MEYERS LLP

Sana Mashedy has experience with a wide range of issues that arise in the course of divorces, custody disputes, litigation and related financial agreements.

In her law practice, Mashedy adopts a client-centric approach throughout the process of marital separation, dissolution and its aftermath. Mashedy recognizes that each client has a different story, and she creates individualized strategies to meet the needs of each client and to tell their personal story.

Mashedy practices at Meyer Olson Lowy & Meyers LLP (MOLM), a California family law firm with a national reputation for tenacious representation. MOLM is a female-owned firm representing women and men in complex divorces. This high-visibility, high-stakes practice focuses on all aspects of family law, with particular success in high-asset marital estates, child custody matters and international move-away cases.

The firm's team of 20-plus goal-driven and experienced attorneys brings a combination of legal sophistication and empathy to clientele, which includes members of the entertainment, financial and alternative investment industries; business executives; and professional athletes and their spouses.

Mashedy earned her J.D. from Southwestern Law School following her undergraduate studies at University of California, Irvine. Prior to attending law school, Mashedy volunteered at domestic violence clinics and at the alternate public defender's office.



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COLLEEN MCCARTHY
FERRUZZO & FERRUZZO, LLP

Human Resources is in the DNA of Attorney Colleen McCarthy. The daughter of a Human Resources Professional and an Engineer, employment law and its impact on business was a regular topic at family dinners. McCarthy's recognition of the implications of her advice on a business gives her a unique approach to her practice.

As Chair of Ferruzzo's Employment Law Practice Group, McCarthy works hard to ensure her clients' immediate employment law needs are met, while identifying and remedying why the employer is facing a situation to reduce future risk. McCarthy finds that this is an important step that is often overlooked.

McCarthy has defended employers in litigation involving claims of discrimination, wrongful termination, wage and hour violations, harassment, unfair business practices, and violations of Title VII, the FEHA, FMLA, CFRA, ADA, and the ADEA. She has also represented employers in class action lawsuits and disputes with the U.S. Department of Labor, California's DLSE, Cal/OSHA, and before the Workers' Compensation Appeals Board in defense of Labor Code section 132a and serious and willful charges.

McCarthy teaches employers about the complicated employment laws that impact their businesses to reduce the chance of costly litigation. She regularly counsels clients on hiring/firing, employee discipline, leaves of absences, exempt classification, and independent contractor status. She conducts a variety of employer audits to identify and reduce risk, as well as policy development, employee handbooks, severance agreements, executive compensation, and commission and incentive agreements. McCarthy received her B.A. in English from USC and her J.D. from Pepperdine Law.



KRISTIN N. MURPHY
LATHAM & WATKINS

Kristin Murphy is counsel in the Orange County office, and currently serves on the Women Enriching Business (WEB) Committee and the Training & Career Enhancement (TACE) Committee. She has also served on the firm's Recruiting Committee and Equal Employment Opportunity Board.

Murphy advises clients on complex business litigation, with an emphasis on securities and commodities fraud, mergers and acquisitions, shareholder derivative actions, and class action litigation. She has represented early and late-stage pharmaceutical companies, technology companies, energy companies, real estate investment trusts, and special purpose acquisition companies. Murphy's recent representations include special committee engagements in controlling stockholder transactions, multijurisdictional litigation arising out of solicited and hostile takeover attempts, and investigations and litigation on behalf of special committees and boards of directors related to public company crises. She represented a biotech company in a rare Section 10(b) securities class action trial, defeating more than 95% of plaintiffs' claimed damages in a case named by the Daily Journal as one of the Top Verdicts of 2019 (Hsu v. Puma Biotechnology, Inc.) Murphy was named a Recommended Lawyer and Rising Star for M&A Litigation: Defense by the Legal 500 in 2020 and 2021. She recently obtained dismissals for two clients in Section 14(a) cases (Wesco Aircraft and GTX, Inc.), and received a shout out by The American Lawyer when the Second Circuit affirmed the Wesco dismissal. Murphy also currently represents a special committee of Dell Technologies, Inc. directors in a stockholder class action in Delaware.



CRISTINA J. NOLAN
MANLY, STEWART & FINALDI

Cristina J. Nolan is a Southern California native who attended California State University, Fullerton and obtained a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Political Science, with a minor in Spanish. Thereafter, Nolan attended Chapman University Dale E. Fowler School of Law.

While at Chapman Law, Nolan was a member of the Mock Trial Board, an ABA Arbitration Competition Regional Semifinalist, a member of the Minority Law Students Association, Vice President of the International Law Society, and became certified as a mediator. Nolan gained practical legal experience by serving as a judicial clerk to the Honorable Frederick Aguirre of the Central Justice Center Superior Court of California, and as an extern in the Anaheim City Attorney's Office.

Many of the survivors Nolan represents are children, adults victimized as children, or vulnerable adults. Nolan has been heavily involved some of the most significant sexual abuse cases in the nation, including those against Redlands Unified School District and Torrance Unified School District. As a result, Cristina has assisted in obtaining six-figures and multi-million-dollar settlements on behalf of her clients.

Nolan, along with the legal team at Manly, Stewart & Finaldi, strive to do what is best for their clients: fervently protect their clients' best interest by seeking justice to help their clients heal from the sexual abuse, harassment, and molestation they have suffered at the hands of individuals of authority. She is fluent in Spanish and helps our Spanish speaking clients navigate the legal process and get justice.

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and celebrates the advancement
of women both within the
firm and within the community.

Christine Baran
Partner, Irvine
cbaran@fisherphillips.com

Grace Horoupian
Partner, Irvine
ghoroupian@fisherphillips.com

Lizbeth Ochoa
Partner, Irvine
lochoa@fisherphillips.com

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2021 WOMEN IN LAW PROFILES





LIZBETH OCHOA
FISHER & PHILLIPS LLP

Lizbeth “Liz” Ochoa is a partner in the firm’s Irvine office. With over 18 years’ experience representing employers, Liz has experience litigating employment matters in state and federal courts, arbitration forums, as well as in state and federal administrative agencies such as the California Division of Labor Standards Enforcement (DLSE), the California Department of Fair Employment and Housing (DFEH), the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) and others.

She represents and counsels employers on various employment-related matters, including, but not limited to, discrimination, unlawful harassment, wrongful termination, unfair business practices, wage and hour class and PAGA actions and compliance with COVID-19 related laws and regulations. She also conducts anti-harassment supervisor trainings in Spanish and English.

Prior to joining Fisher Phillips, Liz gained invaluable experience working in a smaller firm where she represented employees and employers in various employment litigation matters. This experience has enabled Liz to have great success in defending employers because of her unique insight into employee claims.

In 2010, 2013 and 2014, Liz was selected for inclusion in Southern California Super Lawyers – Rising Stars. Liz is fluent in Spanish and sits on the firm’s Diversity Committee and is also an ambassador for the firm’s Women’s Initiative and Leadership Council. Liz is Co-Chair of the Diversity and Inclusion Committee for the National Association of Women Lawyers (NAWL) and is a member of the Orange County Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, the Los Angeles and Orange County Bar Associations, and the Women’s Business Development Initiative.







SHANNON C. PAPAZIS
FERRUZZO & FERRUZZO LLP

Shannon C. Papazis is a Partner at Ferruzzo & Ferruzzo LLP and the Chair of the firm’s Contested Probate and Trust Administration and Litigation Practice Group. Papazis represents clients in a wide variety of civil litigation matters, in both state and federal court. She primarily focuses in the areas of trust and probate litigation, inclusive of elder abuse, conservatorship, and guardianship matters.

Papazis represents corporate, private professional, and individual fiduciaries, as well as beneficiaries, in administrations involving claims such as breach of fiduciary duty, accounting disputes, estate distribution, will and trust contests, undue influence, and elder abuse. Her trial experience was initially grounded in criminal while externing at the District Attorney’s Office, expanded into family law and civil while in private practice, and now focuses on trusts and estates. Papazis is an experienced and effective litigator who applies her passion for the law and dedication to obtaining justice for her clients to achieve successful results. Her strength in the courtroom and compelling advocacy provides her clients with the fortitude and confidence necessary to withstand an intra-family dispute.

As a leading trust and probate litigation firm in Southern California, Papazis has shaped a team of exceptionally talented litigators with diverse and particularized skill sets designed to promote each client’s individual need, while gaining and maintaining their trust. Papazis understands the unique challenges that clients face while participating in estate litigation with their family members and strives to promote reunification and early case resolution wherever possible.





COURTNEY PENDRY
MANLY, STEWART & FINALDI

Courtney Pendry is an associate attorney with Manly, Stewart & Finaldi. Pendry is a Chicago native who attended Valparaiso University in Indiana, graduating with honors with a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration. Following college, Pendry went directly to Michigan State University College of Law where she worked with the MSU Chance at Child Childhood Legal Aid Clinic, both as a clinician and later as the student coordinator, earning her Child & Family Advocate Certificate. Pendry’s experience with the Clinic also provided her with the opportunity to work in conjunction with the School of Social Work, assisting children and families involved in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems.

Before MSF, Pendry focused her practice on personal injury litigation, representing both businesses and individuals in matters involving insurance defense, subrogation, general liability, personal injury, and construction defects. However, after a year of practice, Pendry’s passion for advocating on behalf of sexual abuse survivors led her to join the legal team at Manly, Stewart & Finaldi.

Since joining Manly, Stewart & Finaldi, Pendry has worked exclusively in the personal injury division, representing survivors of sexual abuse, harassment, and molestation, against public entities, private entities, the Catholic Church, and more. Pendry also has experience representing sexual abuse survivors in some of the nation’s most significant multi-plaintiff sexual abuse cases, including those against Dr. George Tyndall/USC and Dr. James Heaps/UCLA.

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V. THAI PHAN
RUTAN & TUCKER

Thai Phan is a municipal law attorney whose practice centers on providing advice and counsel to local agency clients throughout Southern California. In addition to helping her city clients with day-to-day legal operations, Phan is an advocate for her clients in civil litigation and transactional negotiations. She currently serves as the Assistant City Attorney for the Cities of Duarte and Menifee. She previously served as the Interim Assistant City Attorney for the City of Irvine.

As a municipal law attorney, Phan assists her public agency clients in all aspects of government. She interprets and helps her clients understand and implement state and federal laws, including the Public Records Act, the Brown Act, the California Environmental Quality Act, First Amendment and free speech rights, elections law, and land use and zoning laws. Providing advice related to the Political Reform Act and Fair Political Practices Commission regulations also comprises a large part of her practice, particularly as it relates to potential conflicts of interests for elected and appointed officials. Phan also prepares ordinances, resolutions, and staff reports on behalf of her clients.

Phan has litigation experience in municipal code enforcement, municipal defense and prosecution in section 1085 and section 1094.5 writ actions, Pitchess defense, the Government Claims Act, eminent domain, as well as general civil litigation. Some examples of litigation matters include assisting in the successful prosecution of a breach of contract by a member of a joint powers authority resulting in a major victory for the authority and assisting in eminent domain proceeding resulting in success for a city.



PRITI PHUKAN
UMBERG/ZIPSER

Priti Phukan is an attorney at Umberg/Zipser, a premier business litigation and intellectual property law firm in Irvine. She concentrates her practice on patent and trademark prosecution across various technology industries, including cancer therapy, immunotherapy, cell therapy, bioinformatics, chemistry diagnostics, and medical devices. Phukan received her Ph.D. in chemistry from the University of Washington. She began her career as a chemist and molecular biologist and then ultimately made the choice to start her career in patent law in 2012.

Phukan attended law school at the University of San Diego while working as a patent agent. During law school, she was a member of the San Diego Law Review and served as a judicial extern to the Honorable Anthony J. Battaglia of the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of California.

Phukan has published several legal and scientific articles and has won awards in multiple writing competitions. Her scientific background includes post-doctoral studies at the Scripps Research Institute, La Jolla, where she was a recipient of the Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA) Development Grant; a Ph.D. in Chemistry from the University of Washington, Seattle; and a B.S. in Chemistry from the Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay, India.

Phukan has been recognized as a Super Lawyers Rising Star for several years, and is a proud member of the following organizations: American Intellectual Property Law Association; Orange County Bar Association; and the Orange County Asian American Bar Association. She also regularly mentors STEM graduates who wish to pursue a legal career.



BROOKE POLLARD
TLD LAW

Ms. Pollard is a partner at TLD Law's Irvine office. Her practice focuses on mergers and acquisitions of closely-held businesses, real estate law, entity use in estate planning, and business succession planning.

Ms. Pollard handles all aspects of stock and asset purchases, including letters of intent, due diligence, purchase agreement preparation and review, closings and earn-out strategies. She has a particular emphasis on counseling and implementing business transition and succession strategies between family members. Ms. Pollard handles everyday matters for business owners including lease reviews, distribution agreements, trademark issues, employment agreements, tax saving strategies, corporate compliance, and asset protection. Her corporate law experience ranges widely and includes, among others, mergers and acquisitions, general corporate transactional, real estate purchase and leasing.

Ms. Pollard has exceptional knowledge in the area of property taxes, property tax appeals, and claim-for-reassessment exclusions during transfer of real property into and out of legal entities. She processes and reviews commercial lease and purchasing agreements, and works with publicly traded companies needing local representations for lease and purchase negotiations for developed and undeveloped properties.

Ms. Pollard practice includes experience working with construction firms in business succession planning. She is adept at gaining an understanding of the unique circumstances facing contractors, subcontractors, and residential contractors and then working with the owners and other advisors to craft a detailed succession plan that takes into account lending, bonding and licensing.



Toni Agajanian
Partner,
Real Estate



Thai Viet Phan
Associate,
Government & Regulatory



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2021 WOMEN IN LAW PROFILES



TAYLOR RAYFIELD
MANLY, STEWART & FINALDI

Taylor Rayfield is an experienced trial lawyer who has dedicated her practice to championing the rights of survivors and obtaining substantial trial verdicts and settlements in the process. Before joining Manly, Stewart & Finaldi, Rayfield made a name for herself by obtaining incredible results on behalf of victims across a wide range of areas, including sexual assault, many times in difficult cases against considerable adversaries. Her practice is focused on representation of victims' sexual abuse across a broad range of areas, including those abused by coaches, teachers, family members, mentors, and religious personnel.

Rayfield also demonstrated incredible tenacity and negotiation acumen by obtaining a \$1,650,000.00 settlement, on the verge of trial, for a student-athlete who was sexually abused by his Torrance High School wrestling coach. This resolution secured an important benchmark for nearly thirty other sex abuse victims who had lawsuits slated for trial against the same defendants. Rayfield represented the high school wrestler, who was molested by his coach—Thomas Snider—despite prior allegations that Snider had sexually assaulted an 11-year-old boy on a camping trip. The Consumer Attorneys of California (CAOC) awarded Ms. Rayfield with the 2018 “Street Fighter of the Year Award” for her achievements in this matter—an award given to attorneys who achieve significant results in difficult cases. She has been a member of the Board of Governors for the Consumer Attorneys Association of Los Angeles (CAALA) since 2014 and a member of the Board of Governors for the American Association for Justice since 2019.



CAROLE REAGAN
UMBERG/ZIPSER

Carole Reagan is a partner at Umberg/Zipser, a premier business litigation and intellectual property law firm in Irvine. Reagan's practice focuses on intellectual property and complex commercial litigation. She successfully represents business clients across a diverse array of industries, as well as prominent individual clients, in trademark, trade secret, and copyright litigation and unfair competition, breach of fiduciary duty, and other business tort matters. Reagan is experienced in all aspects of litigation, from pre-litigation counseling through appeal. She also has substantial experience in mediation and other forms of alternative dispute resolution. Reagan's representative clients have included the California State Controller's Office, Toshiba America, Bed, Bath & Beyond, Shea Homes, Mission Viejo Company, Target, Ralphs, El Torito Restaurants, and Playmates Toys. Carole has been named to the Best Lawyers in America® list for Intellectual Property Litigation and Commercial Litigation since 2013, and has been chosen as a “Super Lawyer” since 2019.

Reagan is a longtime supporter of and served for over 15 years on the Board of Directors of the Public Law Center, Orange County's provider of pro bono volunteer legal services, committed to providing access to justice for the County's low-income residents. She has handled several matters on a pro bono basis, including asylum, housing, and family law cases. She also provides pro bono trademark services for HomeAid America.



JANE REILLEY
MANLY, STEWART & FINALDI

Jane Reilley is an associate attorney with Manly, Stewart & Finaldi. As a dedicated California sexual abuse attorney her practice is focused exclusively on sexual abuse, assault, and harassment. She has litigated numerous sexual abuse cases against school districts, youth sports organizations, medical practices, and individual perpetrators.

Reilley also has experience representing sexual abuse survivors in some of the nation's most significant multi-plaintiff sexual abuse cases, including the cases against Dr. George Tyndall/USC, Dr. James Heaps/UCLA, and Dr. Larry Nassar/USA Gymnastics. She is passionate about seeking justice and healing on behalf of sexual abuse survivors and has assisted in obtaining multiple six and seven-figure recoveries on behalf of her clients.

Reilley is a double Bruin, having received both her Bachelor of Science degree in Neuroscience and her Juris Doctor degree from UCLA. While at UCLA Law, Reilley was the president of the Mock Trial Association, a Graduate Assistant Tutor, a Writing Advisor, and the chair of the Veterans Benefits Legal Clinic. She also gained practical legal experience by serving as a judicial clerk to the Hon. Kim McLane Wardlaw of the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, a summer clerk at Jones Day, and an extern in the Los Angeles Attorney General's office. Upon graduating law school, Reilley was admitted to the Order of the Barristers.

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2021 WOMEN IN LAW PROFILES





MICHELLE ROBINSON
VETERANS LEGAL INSTITUTE

Michelle Robinson is the Managing Attorney at Veterans Legal Institute (VLI), supporting close to 20 staff members who fight to provide pro bono access to justice to Veterans in need. As Managing Attorney, Michelle is dedicated to representing low income, disabled, homeless current and former military service members, in an array of practice areas, to foster client self-sufficiency. As the mother of 5, one of whom is currently an active-duty Marine, assigned as Alpha Co. Guidon and Guidon for the Battle Color Detachment at 8th & I in Washington D.C., she is deeply connected to the Veteran-focused mission of VLI.

Robinson has over 26 years of experience as an attorney at the Orange County Public Defender's Office and the District Attorney's Office. During her time at the Public Defender's Office, Robinson worked with clients from all backgrounds, representing them throughout the criminal court process under highly emotional, stressful, and intense circumstances. She has negotiated and resolved thousands of mental health, juvenile, misdemeanor, and felony cases. Her passion revolves around representing clients in collaborative courts, aiding them in rehabilitating themselves to become productive citizens.

Robinson obtained a B.S. degree from the University of Southern California in 1988 in Public Administration, and a Juris Doctor from Western State College of Law in 1995, graduating Summa Cum Laude and was a member of Law Review. She clerked for Justice Sheila Sonenshine prior to joining the OC Public Defender's Office in 1995.





BRITTNEY RODRIGUEZ
MEYER, OLSON, LOWY & MEYERS LLP

Brittney Rodriguez is a devoted family law practitioner. She is driven by her passion for human psychology and helping families transition throughout difficult times. She is a member of the Family Law section of the Orange County Bar Association and a member of the Young Lawyers Division of the Orange County Bar Association.

Rodriguez practices at Meyer Olson Lowy & Meyers LLP (MOLM), a California family law firm with a national reputation for tenacious representation. MOLM is a female-owned firm representing women and men in complex divorces. This high-visibility, high-stakes practice focuses on all aspects of family law, with particular success in high-asset marital estates, child custody matters and international move-away cases.

The firm's team of 20-plus goal-driven and experienced attorneys brings a combination of legal sophistication and empathy to clientele, which includes members of the entertainment, financial and alternative investment industries; business executives; and professional athletes and their spouses.

Rodriguez received her Juris Doctor, with an emphasis in Trial and Appellate Advocacy, from Western State College of Law where she graduated with Honors. She received her Bachelor of Arts degree in Communications, with an emphasis in Public Relations, from California State University, Fullerton. While attending law school, Rodriguez was the Honor's Moot Court Director of National Competitions, competing in various competitions across the nation, including the National Moot Court Competition in Child Welfare & Adoption Law in Columbus, Ohio and Appellate Lawyers Association Moot Court Competition in Chicago, Illinois.





HILARY A. SHALLA
LATHAM & WATKINS

Hilary Shalla is a partner in Latham's market-leading Real Estate Practice, representing REITs, private equity sponsors and other institutional clients and individuals in a range of sophisticated real estate transactions, including acquisitions, dispositions, joint ventures and financing of complex real estate portfolios, as well as the development of commercial real estate. She is a go-to real estate lawyer for companies in the storage, distribution, hospitality, office, healthcare and senior living spaces, and handles an impressive body of work for repeat clients, who appreciate her strong technical skills and attention to client service. Shalla's prior experience as in-house counsel for a prominent real estate investor and developer has made her particularly attuned to clients' needs and focus on deal execution.

Several recent notable deals include representation of the purchaser in connection with the acquisition of a four-building Class A life science and research campus, representation of the purchaser in connection with the acquisition of a portfolio of fourteen medical office properties, representation of the borrower/sponsor in connection with a \$2.35 billion commercial mortgage-backed securities (CMBS) loan, representation of the purchaser in connection with the acquisition of a portfolio of senior housing facilities, and representation of multiple contributors in connection with their formation of joint ventures with sovereign wealth funds. Shalla serves as Corporate Department Chair in Orange County, is a member of the Associates Committee, and is former chair of the firm's Mentoring Committee, and former co-chair of the Orange County office's Women Enriching Business (WEB) Committee.


CONGRATULATIONS

As TLD Law celebrates its 60th anniversary, we recognize our talented female partners: Monica Goel, Shannon Jenkins, Jennifer Lumsdaine, Brooke Pollard, and Jennifer Sawday






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**CELESTE STAHL BRADY**STRADLING YOCCA
CARLSON & RAUTH

Celeste Stahl Brady helps public and private entities revitalize and develop affordable housing units, commercial spaces, and infrastructure projects to spur economic growth and achieve community goals throughout California. She has

dedicated her legal career to planning, financing, structuring, and preparing contracts for development and revitalization projects often through public-private partnerships.

City attorneys, in-house counsel, and law firms consider Stahl Brady their go-to special counsel for their most challenging projects and other public law matters. Stahl Brady advises clients in multi-party real estate transactions, including affordable housing and commercial development; land use planning, zoning, and entitlements; infrastructure financing; open meeting and public records procedures; and conflict-of-interest laws.

Stahl Brady's expertise guides clients through the hurdles of complex business and legal issues, while attentive to technical federal, state and local laws and regulations. Stahl Brady achieves effective and efficient results while balancing the demands of lenders, investors, and regulators—who often impose tight deadlines and other demands.

Stahl Brady's transactional experience spans housing, commercial, and regulatory projects. For example, she skillfully assists clients in negotiating public-private partnerships to build, renovate, and operate affordable housing funded by local, county, regional, state, and federal programs. In addition, she frequently works with cities to structure economic development and revitalization programs for retail, entertainment, restaurant, and other businesses. Further, Stahl Brady continues to represent successor agencies in fulfilling their financial obligations and winding down their operations post-dissolution of redevelopment agencies.

**ADINA STOWELL**

UMBERG/ZIPSER

Adina Stowell is a partner at Umberg/Zipser, a premier business litigation and intellectual property law firm in Irvine. Her practice focuses on complex commercial litigation, consumer class actions, intellectual property, and real estate disputes in both federal and state courts. She represents businesses in the technology, consumer product, and financial services industries, as well as prominent individual clients, in contract and real estate disputes, and unfair competition, breach of fiduciary duty, and other business tort matters. Stowell has been recognized by Best Lawyers in America® for Intellectual Property and Real Estate Litigation.

Stowell is also very active in our local community. She currently serves on the Board of Directors of Pretend City Children's Museum, an educational nonprofit focused on healthy development and early childhood learning. She also serves on the Board of Directors and is a past president of the Constitutional Rights Foundation of Orange County, a nonprofit civic education organization focused on programs for teenagers, including a mock trial competition, peer court, and a career forum. She previously served on the Board of Governors of the Orange County Chapter of the Association of Business Trial Lawyers and the Board of Directors of the Federal Bar Association. In addition, Stowell is committed to pro bono legal work and has handled many pro bono matters throughout her career.

**ARDELLE ST. GEORGE**ST. GEORGE & CARNEGIE
NAUTILUS GLOBAL
SOLUTIONS, LLC

As managing partner of her Law Firm, St. George & Carnegie and Solutions & Licensing Company, Nautilus Global Solutions, LLC, Ardelle St. George

assists clients in transforming their businesses into the future economy. St. George completed her Executive Certification Program from Harvard in essential areas for businesses today — Cybersecurity, Experiential/Digital Transformation, Sustainability and Artificial Intelligence (including AR, VR and Mixed Reality) as well as holding JD and MBA degrees. St. George has established these areas as pillars of her Firm and Company and with her international teams, she provides a range of legal, business and technical experience and services to assist clients with their experiential/digital transformation into our new economy.

St. George brings global experience for advanced technology/innovation, education, healthcare/medical devices, broadcasting & entertainment, real estate, renewable energy, aerospace and other areas. St. George's expertise and legal services include General Counsel, Executive & Board Governance/Compliance, Intellectual Property, Brand Management, Regulatory, Licensing, Digital Transformation, Sustainability, M&A, Real Estate, Dispute Resolution/Litigation Strategy. Through Nautilus Licensing, St. George showcases the innovation of her clients.

Previously, President of the International and Orange County Boards of Association for Corporate Growth and OC Venture Group, currently, she serves on the U.S. Bank Advisory Board and the Executive Leadership Team of the American Heart Association.



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2021 WOMEN IN LAW PROFILES



COURTNEY THOM
MANLY, STEWART & FINALDI
Courtney Thom is an associate attorney with Manly, Stewart & Finaldi. As a career sex crimes prosecutor her practice is focused on representing victims of sexual abuse, assault, and harassment.

Before joining Manly, Stewart& Finaldi, Thom served as an Orange County Deputy District Attorney for 12 years. There she represented the people of California in the prosecution of criminal cases, including sexual assault, rape, child molestation, robbery, domestic violence, attempted murder, aggravated assault, burglaries, driving under the influence, among others. She conducted over 50 criminal trials during her career in the Orange County District Attorney’s Office.

Starting in 2016, Courtney worked in the District Attorney’s Sexual Assault Unit where she prosecuted felony sexual assaults, including child molestation and forcible sex crimes, by managing all phases of each case through disposition. She worked closely with law enforcement agencies to investigate sexual assault crimes, filed criminal charges, directed criminal discovery, met with victims, and conducted jury trials and sentencing hearings.

Thom graduated Cum Laude from Pepperdine University. Waymakers, a prestigious Orange County foundation serving at risk youth gave Courtney their Sexual Assault Victim Service Award in 2019. She has provided Sexual Assault Investigations training to the Orange County Sheriff’s Department.



JULIE R. TROTTER
CALL & JENSEN
Julie R. Trotter is the managing shareholder at Call & Jensen, a full-service litigation boutique headquartered in Newport Center for 40 years. Ms. Trotter specializes in the area of employment litigation and advice and counsel, and has represented clients in a variety of commercial disputes with a particular focus on class action and PAGA wage and hour disputes, employment discrimination, retaliation, harassment, wrongful termination, and claims under the Americans with Disabilities Act. She maintains an active practice partnering with companies headquartered in Orange County and around the country, and is regarded as an expert on California wage-and-hour matters. Ms. Trotter has achieved numerous defense judgments on behalf of her clients, and has established an impressive record of resolving her clients’ most intractable employment disputes and bet-the-company litigation. She is considered a “go to” attorney for managing her clients’ internal employment affairs and high-exposure claims. With the team of employment attorneys at Call & Jensen, Ms. Trotter strategically defends employment litigation in her clients’ best interests. Ms. Trotter is also a frequently sought-after speaker on employment issues for legal, human resources, and business audiences.

Ms. Trotter has been recognized as one of the top 50 lawyers in Orange County, and has been named as a “Super Lawyer” and “Rising Star” for 15 years. Ms. Trotter commenced her career at the Orange County office of Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher after earning her law degree from Pepperdine University School of Law where she was Valedictorian and graduated first in her class.



MEI TSANG
UMBERG/ZIPSER
Mei Tsang is a partner at Umberg/Zipser, a premier business litigation and intellectual property law firm in Irvine. She has an international IP practice focused on helping clients formulate their IP strategy, and shepherding their IP through various business cycles to achieve their business goals. Mei has substantial experience in patent, copyright, and trademark portfolio development, and in all aspects of IP enforcement, including negotiation, licensing, and litigation at various courts at the federal, state, and administrative levels. Her clients depend on her multicultural background and language abilities (Mandarin and Cantonese) to help them expand and navigate their IP strategy worldwide.

Tsang has been named to the prestigious 2022 Best Lawyers in America® list for Copyright Law, and has been ranked as a Southern California “Super Lawyer” since 2017. She is a sought-after speaker and organizer of educational programs ranging from IP to diversity and inclusion issues such as combatting hate crimes.

Tsang is a leader in the profession and community. For example, Mei is significantly involved with the Orange County Bar Association (OCBA). She currently serves on the Board of Directors for both the OCBA and its Charitable Fund, and co-chairs OCBA’s Diversity & Inclusion Committee. She is one of two nominees to become OCBA Secretary– a position that would elevate her to becoming its President.

Tsang is also the President-Elect of and chairs fund development for Community Legal Aid SoCal, an organization dedicated to meeting the legal needs of low-income people throughout Orange and Southeast Los Angeles Counties.

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2021 WOMEN IN LAW PROFILES



PROUD USAHACHAROENPORN

RUTAN & TUCKER



Clients look to trial partner Proud Usahacharoenporn for advice when faced with business disputes, including disputes involving contracts, real property, class actions, insurance coverage, business and intentional torts, unfair competition, and intellectual property. She counsels clients through the litigation process, with a focus on getting her clients the results they want while balancing their business concerns such as controlling costs and maintaining relationships. Her dedication to putting her client's needs first have led to the Southern California Super Lawyers recognizing her as a Rising Star every year since 2017.

Usahacharoenporn is also actively engaged in community outreach and pro bono work. She has served on a number of local boards, including for the Orange County Women Lawyers Association and Thai American Bar Association, and dedicates time to furthering the needs of the Southern California Asian American community. Through her pro bono work, Usahacharoenporn has represented non-profit organizations, victims of domestic violence, and low-income tenants.



VIKKI L. VANDER WOUDE

UMBERG/ZIPSER



Vikki L. Vander Woude is a partner at Umberg/Zipser, a premier business litigation and intellectual property law firm in Irvine. Vander Woude has a broad and diverse professional background, having worked in large and small law firms, as in-house counsel, and as a research attorney for the courts. She also founded and co-owns a small business with her husband. Vander Woude's experience gives her a unique perspective and skill set that is of immeasurable benefit to clients.

Vander Woude's practice is focused on complex business litigation, including trials and arbitrations. Vander Woude has extensive experience managing and resolving all types of complex cases, including class actions, and managing and overseeing litigation, case strategy and legal expenses for businesses of all sizes.

Vander Woude also uses her legal expertise to teach trial advocacy and evidence to high school students. She has served as lead attorney coach for several successful mock trial teams including Orange County School of the Arts, Beckman High School, and Pacific Coast High School. Vander Woude serves on the Board of the Association of Business Trial Lawyers, Orange County Chapter, and has received a number of awards for her community involvement, including "Attorney Coach of the Year Award" from the Constitutional Rights Foundation, Orange County, the State Bar's "Wiley W. Manuel Pro Bono Services Award", and the "High Personal Service Award" from Morrison & Foerster.

Holland & Knight

ANJULI WOODS

HOLLAND & KNIGHT



Anjuli Woods is an equity partner in the Orange County and Los Angeles offices of Holland & Knight. A member of the West Coast Litigation Section, Ms. Woods is licensed in California, Nevada, and Colorado, overseeing a multi-jurisdictional practice. With more than a decade of litigation experience, her practice focuses on complex, high-value business disputes covering a variety of industries, including real estate, entertainment, retail and healthcare. Ms. Woods has significant courtroom experience including handling several long-cause trials.


Ms. Woods is currently representing multiple landowners suing the State of California for failing to safeguard residents and business owners from extreme flood events. She is also handling multi-state litigation against the estate and businesses of a high-profile entrepreneur.

In 2021, the Colorado Court of Appeals upheld a \$106 million judgment Ms. Woods obtained in favor of her client, a prominent real estate developer based in Denver, Colorado.

Ms. Woods currently serves as the Public and Charitable Service partner for the Orange County Office. She also works with several charitable organizations including A Million Thanks, Pediatric Cancer Research Foundation, and Meals For Hope.

Ms. Woods is an active member of Gen Next, a non-profit working to create transformative opportunities for future generations through focus on leadership, public education and global security.


Ms. Woods attended Loyola Law School as a Dean's Scholar, graduating magna cum laude and admitted to Order of the Coif. She was named a Rising Star, Southern California, Super Lawyers in 2020.




WOMEN IN LAW

MicroVention is proud of the women in their legal department who, together, are dedicated in their passion to advance the development of innovative technologies to improve patient lives.

Tram-Anh Nguyen,
Associate General Counsel & Sr. Director of Legal Affairs,
built her team to align with company strategy and dynamic business needs.



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Orange County
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Irvine, CA 92612
Phone: 949.288.2329

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Women Make Great Rainmakers

With the intensified push towards diversity, inclusion and equality, an increasing opportunity looms large for the women who want to rise up in their profession. Women have always been known to lift each other up and generally be more inclusive in interactions within their firms and with clients. For those who want to develop more business and increase their positions within their firms, as well as in the community, now is the time to step up business development efforts. Women rainmakers typically enjoy higher earnings, have more job control and influence at their firms.

As we move through this pandemic, all professional service providers look for new and meaningful ways to not only enhance client relationships, but also to build new ones. These days it's all about helping clients, referral sources and potential clients to solve their problems. This is not the time to push for new business. It is the right time to step up and find creative ways to help others unscramble their business issues. Not all of their problems may be legal – that is the point. This is the time to put skin in the game and your clients will not forget.



Merry Neitlich

Consider being the resource to whom others turn to for guidance and connections. Help amplify the voices of those who are struggling to be heard. Women tend to be more inclusive and open to hearing other's viewpoints. This is what inclusivity and diversity truly means. It is not just having faces of many colors within a firm or at the table. Be that person who encourages everyone's voice to be heard.

Consider involving clients and targets on social media. Share their content, make a genuine and meaningful comment about their posts – don't just "like" it. Make frequent short posts adding content and value that clients are seeking. Post fresh ideas; make new connections about information by synthesizing existing content. Consider interviewing others for quotes you can put in your posts or articles. Since LinkedIn is the number one social media platform for business be certain your Profile page is completed. Forbes reports 67% of individuals will check out your LinkedIn Profile before website bio.

We learned from the 2008 recession that those who stayed visible and helped others were the ones whom recovered the quickest and deepest. Be that woman.

Merry Neitlich is the founder and managing partner of EM Consulting. She is an award winning business development consultant inducted into both the Legal Marketing Association Hall of Fame and the College of Law Practice Management. Merry can be reached at merry@emconsulting.org, www.emconsulting.org or (949) 260-0936.



The Best Defense is a Good Offense: Trust Accounting

by Gina Lara, MBA, CFP®, EA

When the first request for a trust accounting came from one of six multi-generational trust beneficiaries, counsel noted that the request was not a formal petition for accounting filed with the Court. Counsel argued that preparation of a formal fiduciary accounting pursuant to California Probate Code requirements would be overkill. The trustee agreed; after all, she reasoned, the beneficiaries were all family.

A few years later, mired in interrogatories and document production, this trustee came to us with her newly appointed defense attorney and engaged us to prepare extensive formal court fiduciary accountings.

Why did this happen?

Trustees who are not presently seeking court approval have flexibility in the format of their trust accounting, but they still must meet certain substance requirements. Accounting in the probate code format is the best way to ensure these requirements are met and adequate disclosure has been made to all beneficiaries.



Gina Lara

A court fiduciary accounting is the most bulletproof documentation of trust activity. It is prepared using a very specific format based on the applicable financial reporting framework outlined in the Probate Code and is consistent with the Uniform Principal and Income Act (UPIA). Instead of the debits and credits that accountants typically report, fiduciary accountants report in terms of principal and income. Rather than preparation of balance sheets and income statements, fiduciary accountants prepare schedules such as Assets on Hand and Summary of Account.

The cost of an accounting prepared in probate code format is an administrative expense of the trust. It is immaterial in comparison to the cost of defending oneself in court for failure to adequately deliver timely accountings of trust money to beneficiaries. When it comes to trust accounting, the best defense is a good offense by filing proper fiduciary accountings each year.

Gina Lara, MBA, CFP®, EA is Senior Manager in Tax and Forensics at Smith Dickson, Certified Public Accountants, LLP. She specializes in trust and estate compliance and litigation support. For additional information, contact Ms. Lara at (949) 553-1020 or email gina.lara@smithdickson.com.

Office Return

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thermometers, face masks, social distancing decals and sneeze guards have been set up throughout several common areas. The firm also implemented a visitor/vendor policy requiring all visitors/vendors have their temperatures taken prior to entering the office, placed a limitation on the number of visitors allowed in the office at any given time, and encourages deliveries be dropped off at the entrance of the office. Additionally, the firm relaxed its vacation and sick policies and requires that employees stay home when not feeling well or to take care of dependents, including children and elderly parents. Also, because of health and safety concerns pertaining to travel, the firm has limited non-essential business travel and requires pre-approval for any business trips.

Regarding technology, from its inception the firm's IT infrastructure has been progressive and cutting edge, including no in-office server. All the firm's applications are cloud based. Through the implementation of Azure AD and Multi Factor Authentication the firm can provide a high level of security and management control for its IT environment. The firm also invested in upgrading computers for all em-



CommerceWest's new HQ: CEO 'didn't want to force' decision to return

ployees. New laptops were issued to all employees with faster processors to allow employees to have the best possible remote work experience. The firm also implemented a policy to encourage employees to order office supplies for use at home, including stand up desks, dual monitors, printers, and standard office supplies. Lastly, the firm has started working on implementing regional work hubs and co-working spaces to provide more flexibility for employees.

CHRISTIAN BRYAN
Vice President of Global Real Estate
Alteryx

Has the company returned to the office?

Our offices have been open since June for teams to use if they choose. Any official return

MAZDA NORTH AMERICAN OPERATIONS Company Statement

MNAO is committed to providing workplace options to employees that enable them to optimize their productivity and work-life balance, while having access to the tools and resources necessary to effectively perform in their role. MNAO's new 'virtual first' workplace model provides the ability for most positions in the organization to be performed remotely on a frequent or regular basis.

to the office had been delayed until Jan. 3, 2022.

What is your vaccine and mask policy?

We are following CDC and Cal/OSHA guidelines for employees in the office and wearing of a mask is recommended for all employees.

Have you made any changes to the office?

We are in the process of moving our offices to **Spectrum Terrace**, as such we have vacant desks in our current office at **Park Place**. This allows for employees who do come in to spread out organically. We sanitize every desk nightly to ensure it is available for use the next day by anyone who wants to use it.

EMILE HADDAD
Founder
FivePoint Holdings LLC

Have your employees returned to the office?

There are currently just four people working from our office full time, including myself, our COO, CFO and chief legal officer. We are waiting to see how current coronavirus trends play out before bringing

everyone back. While the remote/hybrid model has worked well for us so far, I believe it is hard to maintain culture by being fully remote. Nothing can replace in-person connections and collaborations.

Have you made any changes to the office as a result of the pandemic?

We designed this office with an emphasis on common areas; it's an environment that encourages collaboration. One thing I will encourage more as people return to the office is outdoor meetings. I think walking meetings will be a great way to encourage employees to meet in a safe and active way.

Will you be requiring vaccination verification, testing, masks, etc.?

The vaccination discourse has been interesting. At first, I was somewhat in the camp of those who weren't sure about getting the vaccine, but ultimately realized it was the smartest and safest decision for me and my family. While I will encourage employees to get the vaccine, I won't mandate it. I'm more in favor of mandating masks in the office. ■

JP MORGAN CHASE & CO. Company Statement

We cannot overstate the importance of getting vaccinated and the firm offers lots of information and tools to help.

For our U.S. locations, we will align with the CDC's updated guidance and require all employees, regardless of vaccination status, to wear masks in public indoor settings and in common areas within our offices. Given that the CDC has stated more than 80% of counties across the U.S. have substantial or high community transmission rates, we will follow this guidance nationally for the time being.

The Business Journal encourages other local companies with notable and successful in-office, hybrid, and remote working policies to share their experiences for future articles. Email Editor Mark Mueller at mueller@ocbj.com with your stories.