

LEADERS OF INFLUENCE WOMEN IN LAW

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2023 WOMEN IN LAW PROFILES

ARMOND WILSON



MICHELLE ARMOND

ARMOND WILSON LLP

Michelle Armond is an internationally renowned intellectual property trial attorney litigating patents, trademarks, copyrights, and trade secrets. This year she was recognized as an "effective and forceful litigator" and the "founder of powerful litigation boutique Armond Wilson" headquartered in Newport Beach (IAM 1000 rankings). Her "winning formula fuses her Caltech electrical engineering education with her natural talent for writing" (Daily Journal).

Armond represents Fortune 500 companies, international market leaders, universities, and innovators as lead counsel in legally and technically challenging cases across a variety of technologies. Her work encompasses inter partes review and reexamination at the U.S. Patent Office, litigation in federal courts throughout the country, and appeals before the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit and U.S. Supreme Court.

Her track record winning high-stakes cases has earned her numerous awards and recognition. In 2023, Armond was named a Top IP Lawyer by the Daily Journal, an "IP Star" by Managing IP, a Leading Litigator in America by LawDragon, a Top 250 Woman Litigator by Benchmark Litigation, a top patent professional in the IAM 1000, among many others.



CHRISTINE BARAN

FISHER & PHILLIPS LLP

Christine Baran is a partner in the firm's Irvine and Los Angeles offices 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).

FERRUZZO



CHERYL L. BARRETT

FERRUZZO & FERRUZZO LLP

Cheryl L. Barrett is a partner within the Estate Planning and Trust Administration Practice Group at Ferruzzo & Ferruzzo, LLP.

Ms. Barrett successfully built her practice by understanding that two words can explain what differentiates an attorney who does estate planning from an excellent estate planning attorney: Experience and Empathy. Ms. 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 Ms. Barrett 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, Ms. Barrett's trust administration skills can be relied upon to carry out her clients' wishes.

Highly visible in the charitable community, Ms. Barrett served as Board Chair for Goodwill Industries of Orange County. The service supported her affinity for the needs of the disabled community and furthered her interest in special needs trusts.

When clients refer family members, there is no greater symbol of their confidence. Ferruzzo & Ferruzzo is rooted in relationships and Ms. Barrett is emblematic of that ethic.

Ms. Barrett earned a BA in Communications, cum laude, from California State University Fullerton, her JD from Pepperdine University, School of Law, and her Certification of Specialist in Planned Giving from California State University Long Beach.

Buchalter



FARAH BHATTI

BUCHALTER

Farah Bhatti is a shareholder and the chair of Buchalter's Trademark Law Practice and co-chair of the Internet, E-Commerce and Social Media practice groups. She focuses her practice on all aspects of trademark prosecution, including advising, counseling, and securing trademark protection for clients, with an emphasis on the worldwide selection and enforcement of trademarks. She also works closely with clients in formulating their domestic and international trademark protection and registration strategies. Ms. Bhatti also counsels and works with clients with regard to Federal trademark litigation and oppositions and cancellations proceedings before the Trademark Trial and Appeal Board.

Ms. Bhatti expertly navigates the complexities of issues within the areas of registration and enforcement, drawing on experience in private practice as well as her previous position as a trademark examining attorney at the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO). She also has extensive experience in the enforcement of Internet and domain names, through the implementation of strategies ranging from cease and desist letters, Uniform Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy (UDRP) complaints, individual website complaint procedures and even trademark litigation under the Anticybersquatting Consumer Protection Act (ACPA). Ms. Bhatti has been successful in obtaining substantial statutory damages and attorneys' fees on behalf of clients under the ACPA.

Recently, Ms. Bhatti has gained substantial experience in working with clients in the NFT (Non-fungible tokens) space by not only filing copyright and trademark applications to cover the underlying intellectual property of NFT's, but also with regard to licensing and other agreements relating to NFTs.



KATIE BINKLEY

VETERANS LEGAL INSTITUTE

Katie Binkley is the deputy executive director at Veterans Legal Institute. Her leadership has helped the organization serve even more homeless and disabled veterans across Southern California—with VLI bringing in over \$2 million in life saving benefits last year alone. Binkley also sits on the Executive Board for the Orange County Bar Association's Family Law Section as well as Co-Chairs the Orange County Veteran and Military Family Collaborative's Legal working group.

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, AZ. In 2018, she received the Judge Mary M. Schroeder Award for donating the most pro bono legal aid hours of all second year law 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 JD 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 years 2023 and 2021. She has been admitted to practice in the states of Arizona and California, as well as becoming accredited to practice before the Department of Veterans Affairs.

RUTAN RUTAN & TUCKER, LLP



HEATHER BLACKINTON

RUTAN & TUCKER LLP

Heather Blackinton represents companies and individuals in a wide variety of disputes, including matters involving construction contract disputes, contractors' licensing disputes, creditors' rights, breach of fiduciary duty and breach of trust, misappropriation of trade secrets, business ownership, separation and termination, landlord/tenant relationships and breach of contract.

Blackinton manages, conducts and supervises all facets of litigation from discovery through trial and appeal acting as both lead counsel and "second chair." She has significant experience representing lenders and borrowers – including banks and other lending institutions, as well as individuals – in disputes related to real estate secured debt, including in the context of personal guarantees of real estate secured loans involving the California anti-deficiency and "one form of action" rules and in the receivership process. In connection with this practice, Blackinton prepares and argues applications for pre-trial relief related to real estate secured loans, including writs of attachment, receivership and preliminary injunctions. She is also closely involved in the appellate process following litigation.



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JOANNA BLAKE

RUTAN & TUCKER LLP

Joanna Blake has over 20 years of experience representing local and national employers doing business in California. Blake's 10-plus years serving as a legal and human resources executive with multi-state restaurant employers provides her with the unique skills of a trusted advisor who can provide clients with practical and pragmatic advice on challenging human resources and employee relations issues.

Before going in-house, Blake represented employers in discrimination, retaliation, sexual harassment, wage and hour, disability, and wrongful termination cases in state and federal court. Blake has valuable insights into key strategies for avoiding and mitigating the employment law risks of operating a business in California and other states.



ASHLEY BOLDUC

CUMMINS & WHITE LLP

Ashley Bolduc practices in the areas of corporate and securities law, mergers and acquisitions, contract drafting and negotiation, and trademarks. She serves as outside general counsel to a variety of businesses including those in the software and technology industry, the fuel and convenience sector, multi-family property owners, food and beverage companies, medical groups, and start-up companies.

Ms. Bolduc counsels individuals starting businesses on what form of entity is best suited for them and how to maintain that business using ideal corporate governance practices. She prepares all corporate agreements and instruments such as stock and asset purchase agreements, shareholder/buy-sell agreements, and employee stock option plans and also navigates the currently complex waters of private offerings.

Ms. Bolduc's clients trust her to advise them on matters both large and small, from complex transactions involving hundreds of millions of dollars in assets to advising them on succession planning and everything in between.



EVE BRACKMANN

MUNCK WILSON MANDALA

Eve Brackmann serves as lead counsel in jury and bench trials in all California state and federal courts and she is well known for her effective private arbitration work. Her real estate practice covers high-stakes litigation for casino developers, shopping center owners, mortgage companies, and big-box retailers. Her business litigation practice covers disputes in venture partnerships, manufacturer and distributor disputes, contract-related lawsuits, fiduciary duty, unfair competition, defamation, trade secret, and anti-SLAPP lawsuits. Brackmann also has significant experience with high-stakes Homeowners' Association Disputes, as well as cannabis-related matters.

In the community, Brackmann serves as director at large on the Board of Directors for the Orange County Bar Association (OCBA) as well as co-chair of the OCBA Mentoring Committee, a member of Litigation and Real Property law sections in both the Los Angeles County and Orange County Bar Associations, the Cannabis law section of the Los Angeles County Bar Association, and she has served for over a decade as an arbitrator on the OCBA's Mandatory Fee Arbitration Panel.

Brackmann also serves as a director on the board of the University of San Diego Law School Alumni Association/Orange County Chapter, and she is a member of the University of Southern California Alumni Association. Other organizations to which Brackmann devotes significant time include California Women Lawyers, the Association of Business Trial Lawyers, Women Lawyers Association of Los Angeles, the American Bar Association, and the National Order of the Barristers. She is also a longstanding member of the Banyard Inn of Court (Master Benchers/Barrister).



CELESTE STAHL BRADY

STRADLING YOCCHA
CARLSON & RAUTH

Celeste Stahl Brady helps public and private entities—including cities, housing authorities, and successor agencies—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 contracting affordable housing, economic development, and infrastructure projects, often through public-private partnerships.

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

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



SARAH BRO

MCDERMOTT WILL & EMERY LLP

Sarah Bro is the office managing partner for McDermott's Orange County office. She focuses her practice on trademark prosecution, enforcement and brand portfolio management, as well as licensing, due diligence, copyright, right of publicity and domain name matters.

Bro assists clients with all stages of domestic and international trademark prosecution and provides consultation for the selection, clearance, enforcement and licensing of trademarks. Sarah's clients include companies in a variety of industries, including health care, blockchain and financial technologies, software/mobile applications, agriculture, fashion and apparel, consumer goods, beauty, wellness and lifestyle, arts and entertainment, food and beverage, hospitality, mining and pharmaceutical.

Bro has extensive experience in the research, drafting and filing of documents with the US Patent and Trademark Office, the Trademark Trial and Appeal Board and the US Copyright Office. She has a proven track record in recovering domain names through the Uniform Dispute Resolution Policy (UDRP) and Uniform Rapid Suspension (URS) policies. Bro is well versed in the submission of "takedown" and infringement notices across third-party websites, social media platforms, app stores and online marketplaces.

Bro is a member of McDermott's Pro Bono Committee, the Gender Diversity Committee and the Orange County Recruiting Committee. She is also a member of the Firm's legal cannabis industry group, which provides clients with regulatory, litigation, intellectual property, trade and tax services with respect to their investments and participation in the cannabis industry, all subject to the Firm's obligations under federal and state laws and bar licensure rules.



NIKKI BUFFA

LATHAM & WATKINS LLP

Nikki Buffa is a partner in the Orange County and Washington, D.C. offices of Latham & Watkins and a member of the Environment, Land & Resources practice, bringing 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 Nikki's work includes leading the Latham team working with 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 received the California Lawyer Attorney of the Year (CLAY) award in 2019 by The Daily Journal, for advising on The Ocean Cleanup, the Innovations in Pro Bono Award by California Leaders in Tech Law and Innovation Awards in 2019, and was recently named Green 500: Leaders in Environmental Law by Lawdragon 2023.

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 joined 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). In 2020-2021, Buffa served on the Biden-Harris Presidential Transition team as the White House Council on Environmental Quality Transition Team Lead. Buffa advises developers, utilities, and 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.



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**shulman bastian
friedman & bui LLP**

**LYNDA T. BUI**

SHULMAN BASTIAN
FRIEDMAN & BUI LLP

Lynda T. Bui is a bankruptcy lawyer and business litigator with Shulman Bastian Friedman & Bui LLP with offices in Orange County and Riverside. Ms. Bui is also a U.S. Bankruptcy Trustee in the Central District of California, having been appointed in 2010. In that capacity, she has successfully administered many complicated cases and distributed hundreds of millions of dollars to creditors on her and her clients' behalf. She has extensive experience in and focuses her practice on all aspects of pre-bankruptcy negotiations and bankruptcy, including representing trustees, debtors, creditors, plaintiffs and defendants in adversary proceedings in Chapter 11 and complex Chapter 7. Her clients are in a variety of industries including real estate, retail, restaurant, manufacturing, logistics, banking, food services, non-profit, and professional services. Some of her private clients include corporations, small businesses, financial institutions, and high net worth individuals.

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 and will become its Vice-President in the fall. Locally, she is serving her second two-year term as a Director 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. Ms. Bui received her B.A. from University of California at Los Angeles and her J.D. from Loyola Law School.

For leisure, she enjoys traveling with family, reading, taking morning beach walks and binging on Blinkist!

Stradling

**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.

LATHAM & WATKINS

**MICHELLE L.C. CARPENTER**

LATHAM & WATKINS LLP

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 has been recognized as a Local Women of Influence: Attorneys by Los Angeles Business Journal 2022, and is a recommended lawyer for Employee Benefits and Executive Compensation by The Legal 500 US. Carpenter was selected as "Southern California Rising Star" by Super Lawyers for Tax and is ranked as a notable practitioner in Employee Benefits & Executive Compensation by Chambers USA 2022. Michelle is a Board Member of Bet Tezdek, a nonprofit organization that provides free, comprehensive legal services for low income residents in Los Angeles.

MESSNER REEVES LLP

**KATHLEEN CARTER**

MESSNER REEVES LLP

Kathleen Carter, a partner with Messner Reeves, is a powerhouse trial lawyer known for her work as lead counsel on the plaintiff and defense side of multi-million-dollar lawsuits.

She has extensive litigation experience ranging from employment law and consumer actions to commercial disputes. Local and national publications have covered the results of her award-winning career, including discretionary settlements of \$10 million+ commercial disputes she negotiated. One of her largest verdicts was in a \$17.5 million plaintiff paraplegia case that made headlines as the highest amount a jury ever awarded at that time for an individual plaintiff in the Rancho Cucamonga branch of the San Bernardino Superior Court. As a top trial lawyer, she is a handpicked member of ABOTA, an exclusive organization for esteemed trial lawyers and judges.

Outside of the courtroom, Carter is an instrumental member of the California community. She works with bar associations and other professional organizations to support women in law, business, and leadership. Carter's philanthropy extends to working with animals as well, and she is a supporter of Best Friends Animal Society, an animal welfare organization based in Utah.

Carter graduated from Vermont Law School and earned her undergraduate degree from Saint Anselm College. She received her MBA from Pepperdine University. Carter's practice is based out of the Orange County office of Messner Reeves, where she collaborates with the seasoned team on commercial disputes, employment law, real estate, intellectual property, and general business law.

Carter is actively taking on new matters and can be reached at www.messner.com.

brownrudnick

**CATHRINE CASTALDI**

BROWN RUDNICK

Cathrine Castaldi is a partner and practice group leader of Brown Rudnick's Bankruptcy & Corporate Restructuring group. She concentrates her practice in the areas of bankruptcy, insolvency, reorganization and commercial litigation. Castaldi has represented Chapter 11 debtors, equity security holders, secured and unsecured creditors, trustees and committees in connection with bankruptcy cases, foreclosure actions, adversary proceedings, and related commercial litigation. Her experience in Chapter 11 cases involves representation of debtors from the inception of the case to matters involving plan confirmation and related issues, DIP financing arrangements, cash collateral disputes, valuation issues and litigation. Castaldi also represents individuals and middle market businesses in litigation matters incident to bankruptcy or out-of-court restructuring, including fraudulent conveyance and preference litigation.

Castaldi has worked on some of the most valuable and historically significant bankruptcy cases ever seen in the U.S., including several in the mass tort space. Her involvement to bring justice and much-needed compensation to tort victims has benefitted millions of affected individuals and families. Castaldi is part of the Brown Rudnick team that helped the Official Committee of Talc Claimants win dismissal of Johnson & Johnson subsidiary LTL Management's two bankruptcy cases for their lack of good faith.

Castaldi is a committed board member of the Brown Rudnick Charitable Foundation, which for over 20 years has helped those less fortunate in under-resourced communities throughout the country, specifically funding over 400 grants totaling over \$3 million in a diverse array of educational programs.

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**BRIDGET K. DEVOY**

MCDERMOTT WILL & EMERY LLP

Bridget K. Devoy focuses her practice in the areas of estate planning, trusts, charitable foundations, tax planning and estate administration. Devoy enjoys working with individuals and families to help them create sophisticated, tax-efficient estate plans that also achieve a client's non-tax goals, such as family harmony, personal growth of beneficiaries, and leaving a lasting philanthropic impact. She is particularly skilled in advising philanthropists and charitable organizations on charitable giving, including negotiating and drafting complex gift and grant agreements. Devoy also helps her clients create tax exempt entities and advises on tax exempt governance, grantmaking, and related tax compliance.

Prior to McDermott, Devoy worked in private practice and later served as general counsel at a national children's charity and assistant general counsel at a major entertainment studio. Such experiences have given her keen insight into the challenges and needs of clients' charitable organizations and businesses. Devoy is active in her local community and is particularly passionate about helping organizations focused on foster youth, the arts, wildlife conservation, and companion and farm animals.



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CAROLINE DJANG

BUCHALTER

Caroline R. Djang is an Irvine-based Shareholder in Buchalter's Insolvency and Financial Practices Group and the co-chair of the Orange County office's litigation practice group. Djang is a zealous advocate for her clients who is respected by the bench and bar for her integrity and efficiency in managing all areas of bankruptcy and insolvency, from comprehensive counseling to litigation services.

Djang represents debtors, creditors and trustees in chapter 7, 11 and 13 cases. Highly experienced in the areas of insolvency, bankruptcy and litigation, Djang provides her clients with thoughtful, strategic and cost-effective counsel on the best strategies for pursuing and collecting debts within the bounds of bankruptcy law. She also helps her clients in financial distress to understand their options.

In 2020, Djang was appointed by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of the United States Trustee, to serve as a Subchapter V trustee in Chapter 11 cases filed under the Small Business Reorganization Act of 2019. With her selection, out of approximately 250 applications, Djang became the first woman appointed to serve as a Subchapter V trustee in the Central District of California.

Djang's peers have recognized her with several awards, as have many media outlets. Djang's honors include being named by SuperLawyers Magazine in their lists of Top 50 Women, Top 50 Orange County and Top 100 Overall; the Los Angeles Times as a Banking and Finance Visionary; and The Best Lawyers in America® for Litigation, Bankruptcy and Creditor Debtor Rights/Insolvency and Reorganization.

RUTAN
RUTAN & TUCKER, LLP

KAYDI DOMIN

RUTAN & TUCKER LLP

Kathryn Domin's practice focuses on litigation involving a wide variety of industries and topics, including real estate transactions, landlord tenant disputes, misrepresentation and fraud, business interference claims, defamation, soft intellectual property disputes, unfair business practices, and class action defense (to name a few). Domin represents local individuals and businesses in Orange County, as well as companies operating nationwide.

Domin has taken several cases to trial, all of which of ended with judgment/verdicts in her clients' favor. While she is very experienced in aggressively litigating cases when that approach is appropriate, in each case and with every client she actively seeks the balance between the demands (financial and otherwise) of litigation and the best business result for her clients. She strives to be a counselor — one her clients can trust to always be looking out for their best interests.

EVERETT DOREY LLP



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.

Ms. Dorey has shaped a firm of talented litigators with diverse cultural and personal backgrounds, with focus on creating an environment that empowers female attorneys. Ms. Dorey leads by example and uses her influence to foster diversity and inclusion in the workplace; she has promulgated a firm culture where employees come first.

Employees goals, work or personal, are supported by the firm. In doing so, Ms. Dorey has created a work environment where employees feel appreciated and part of a team. The firm was named as a "Best Places to Work" by the Orange County Business Journal from 2020-2023. The firm was also recognized as a "Top Legal Organization for DEI" by Orange County Coalition for Diversity in the Law in 2021-2022, "2022 Top Workplace" by Orange County Register, "2022 Inclusive Workplace" by Best Companies Group and COLOR Magazine, and "2022 and 2023 Best Places to Work SoCal" by Best Companies Group. Ms. Dorey's commitment to the firm and its employees has allowed Everett Dorey to excel in the legal community.



CAITLIN EMMONS, ESQ.

VETERANS LEGAL INSTITUTE

Caitlin Emmons has established herself as a powerhouse at Veterans Legal Institute (VLI) as a Lead Staff Attorney and Discharge Upgrade 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. Ms. Emmons focuses on cases involving Military Sexual Trauma, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, Traumatic Brain Injury, and discrimination. She is an advocate for veterans who were unjustly separated from the military. Ms. Emmons has presented at Harvard Law School, University of California Irvine, and to numerous national law firms about discharge upgrades and veterans' benefits. Under her supervision, the discharge upgrade unit achieved a success rate 5.5 times higher than the national Board average. Through her client-centered empowering approach, survivors become thrivers.

Ms. 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 oversaw court operations in a four-county judicial district as the Trial Court Coordinator. 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 three young children.



LISA EYANSON, ESQ.

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 and his/her family can access all resources available to stay safe and secure. To date, VLI has prevented over 250 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 Defenders 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.



SHEILA-MARIE FINKELSTEIN

VETERANS LEGAL INSTITUTE

Sheila-Marie Finkelstein, Esq., LL.M. (Tax), is a California State Bar Board Certified Specialist in Estate Planning, Trust and Probate Law, the Principal at AHAVA Law, P.C., and recently joined Klinedinst Attorneys. 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 Super Lawyers rising star from 2018 - 2023 and has an AVVO top attorney rating of 10.0.

Finkelstein was 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 programming 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 State Military.

Finkelstein is the immediate and past President of the Orange County Jewish Bar Association and served on 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 Irvine, Lakewood, Newport Beach and Los Angeles.



Heather Blackinton
Partner
Litigation & Trial



Joanna Blake
Of Counsel
Employment



Sarah Kruszona
Partner
Real Estate

RUTAN

WOMEN OF INFLUENCE

Congratulations to these women of Rutan for being recognized as powerful professionals changing the Orange County legal community!

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Allison LeMoine-Bui
Partner
Government & Regulatory

Kathryn Domin
Partner
Litigation & Trial

Briana Richmond
Partner
Litigation & Trial



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**MICHELLE FONSECA-KAMANA**

WEST COAST LEMONS APC

Michelle Fonseca-Kamana is the founder and principal attorney at West Coast Lemons APC, a law firm specializing in California lemon law. Having personally negotiated over \$7.3 million worth of settlements from auto and RV manufacturers throughout her career, she is most proud of coupling incredible results with an unparalleled client experience, now having over 55 five star reviews. Her law firm origin story is unique in that she started her law firm three weeks before the pandemic hit in 2020, but this became a blessing in disguise as she became a pioneer in the area of social media marketing for attorneys and law firms. By actively sharing her lemon law knowledge in both English and Spanish via informational videos with her followers on Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube, and TikTok she built a solid direct to consumer and direct to business referral network all using social media. In her spare time, she mentors attorneys across the country on how to start their own law firms and use social media as a marketing tool. She has been featured as a guest on Clio's Building a Successful Law Firm series, the popular Legal Talk Network podcast New Solo, as well as legal conferences like the Women In Trial Travel Summit and the Clio Cloud Conference where she has discussed how to use social media to reach your target clientele, connect with potential referral sources, and stay top of mind.

FERRUZZO

**ALYSE M. FREDERICK**

FERRUZZO & FERRUZZO LLP

Alyse M. Frederick is an associate at Ferruzzo & Ferruzzo, LLP, where she is a member of the firm's Estate Planning, Trust Administration, and Probate Practice Groups. She is published by Thomson Reuters on the topic of working with clients with diminished capacity due to Alzheimer's dementia. Frederick represents clients in a wide variety of matters. Her practice focuses on estate planning, special needs planning, trust administration, probate administration and conservatorships. She also advises clients in tax planning, corporate formation, and business-succession planning.

Frederick enjoys using her expertise to create solid estate plans that preserve wealth and provide security for future generations. Frederick works closely with families experiencing life changes and trauma. She counsels clients and helps families navigate the trust administration and probate processes with sensitivity and discretion. Frederick's inherent passion for working with families also extends to protecting society's most vulnerable through conservatorships. Frederick first discovered her passion for using her legal skills and acumen to help people experiencing difficult life situations while working as a law clerk in the Children's Court in Los Angeles while in law school. Frederick earned her BA in Political Science, with honors, from Chapman University, and her Juris Doctor degree, from Chapman University Fowler School of Law. Frederick is an Orange County native and can often be

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**ALISON C. GIBBS**

FERRUZZO & FERRUZZO LLP

Alison C. Gibbs is a senior associate with Ferruzzo & Ferruzzo, LLP. She represents clients, big and small, in many industries including property management, financial services, retail, automotive, health care, hospitality, staffing, manufacturing, among other areas.

Ms. Gibbs advises employers in all aspects of employment law matters, including counseling employers on legal compliance, conducting internal investigations, audits, drafting transactional documents such as employee contracts, severance agreements, settlement agreements, independent contractor agreements, and employee handbooks. She practices the spectrum of employment matters, including disputes involving discrimination, harassment, retaliation, whistleblower, and wage and hour issues. Ms. Gibbs also represents employers and individuals in single-plaintiff, multi-plaintiff, class action matters, and representative lawsuits brought under California's Private Attorneys General Act (PAGA).

Throughout her career, Ms. Gibbs has represented employers in both state and federal courts as well as in matters before state agencies such as the California Department of Industrial Relations and the California Department of Fair Employment & Housing. Ms. Gibbs earned her undergraduate degree from Pepperdine University, and her juris doctor degree from Santa Clara School of Law. She resides in Newport Beach and enjoys Ohio State football, running, hiking, and spending time with her family and friends.

**ELIZABETH R. GLASGOW**

MCDERMOTT WILL & EMERY LLP

Elizabeth R. Glasgow focuses her practice on multigenerational wealth preservation and tax minimization, including the creation and implementation of dynasty trusts, business succession plans, asset protection strategies and charitable giving structures for business owners, real estate investors, entrepreneurs, and families managing inherited wealth. She provides comprehensive advice on a wide range of issues facing mobile high net worth individuals and geographically dispersed families, including coordinated income tax planning across multiple jurisdictions. She is also an experienced counselor to the non-profit community and works with a variety of tax-exempt entities in fulfilling their charitable missions by ensuring proper formation and management of their organizations.

Glasgow speaks frequently on the subject of estate planning, and income and transfer tax strategies. She has lectured at programs for the University of Southern California's Gould School of Law, Pepperdine University, and the American Bar Association.

Glasgow is a co-founding member of RISE, an organization of women lawyers committed to supporting each other's professional growth and advancement to becoming equity partners, general counsel, and high-ranking public officials. RISE is dedicated to developing necessary tools to shatter the glass ceiling in public service and corporate America.

**SARAH J. GROSS**

VETERANS LEGAL INSTITUTE

Sarah J. Gross is a VA-accredited attorney, author, and educator with publications in various journals including the Orange County Lawyer and the USC Interdisciplinary Law Journal. Gross is a lead staff attorney and veterans benefits team lead at Veterans Legal Institute. She supports homeless and low income veterans to ensure they have access to needed compensation, healthcare, and other benefits to which they are entitled for their military service.

Ms. Gross received a Bachelor's degree in English with a minor in Expository Writing through the University of California, Davis. She then entered their School of Education and received a Teaching Credential and a Master's degree in Education, and taught advanced English studies to high school and middle school students. Ms. Gross then completed law school at Chapman University Fowler School of Law. While at Chapman, Ms. Gross founded the law school's Health Law Society. Using her education background, she also contributed to curriculum development and served as teaching assistant for the law school's Legal Writing Skills course. Following her admission to the CA State Bar, Ms. Gross lived on campus at Pepperdine University School of Law and received a Master of Laws (LL.M.) through the Straus Institute for Dispute Resolution. Ms. Gross has worked with the OC Superior Court and in private practice. She spearheaded the development of a pilot program in elder care coordination in Orange County to assist senior citizens. She has worked with many veterans and their family members and continues to do so at VLI.

**LINDA GULLEDGE**

FISHER & PHILLIPS LLP

Linda Gulledge is a partner in the Irvine office and a member of the firm's PEO and Staffing Practice Group. She represents employers and staffing industry clients in all aspects of employment law, including transactional matters, compliance advice and audits, wage and hour compliance, benefits, leave management, and other employment-related legal matters.

Gulledge devotes a significant portion of her practice to working with staffing, employee leasing, and Professional Employer Organization (PEO) clients in compliance, employment, and transactional matters. She serves on the State Government Affairs Committee of the National Association of Professional Employer Organizations (NAPEO).

She regularly conducts seminars, webinars, and training sessions for executives, managers, and human resource professionals on employment law topics.

Exceptional Leadership



Nikki Buffa
Partner, Project Siting & Approvals



Michelle L.C. Carpenter
Partner, Benefits & Compensation



Michele D. Johnson
Partner, Securities Litigation
& Professional Liability



Kristin N. Murphy
Partner, Securities Litigation
& Professional Liability



Hilary A. Shalla-Strong
Partner, Real Estate

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.

2023 WOMEN IN LAW PROFILES

**KELLY HAGEMANN**

MICHELMAN & ROBINSON LLP

Kelly Hagemann is a partner at Michelman & Robinson who has spearheaded the firm's niche practice in the ever-changing behavioral health care space. She represents mental health and substance use disorder treatment providers of all types and sizes, having lead them through significant changes in federal and state authority over the last several years. Hagemann also works to ensure greater access to mental health and substance use disorder treatment services. Toward that end, she has challenged discriminatory zoning ordinances along with unlawful and discriminatory payment practices by insurers and self-funded employer plans. In addition, Hagemann guides her clients through sentinel events, government investigations, and administrative actions, and she is deeply aligned with those offering critical behavioral health services to adolescents and young adults in the wake of the COVID pandemic.

With extensive trial experience across industries, Hagemann has her finger on the pulse of the behavioral healthcare market. She has worked with many M&R healthcare clients, facilitating their transition from small businesses to national, private equity-backed brands. Her efforts are informed by what Hagemann views as a critical need—she sees behavioral healthcare as a key piece of the national healthcare paradigm, particularly in light of the nation's heart-breaking opioid epidemic. Hagemann's mission is to do what she can to see that behavioral healthcare is safe and accessible to all who need it and she partners with her clients toward that end.

Taken together, it is no wonder that Hagemann is an Orange County Business Journal Women in Law honoree.

**MONA Z. HANNA**

MICHELMAN & ROBINSON LLP

Mona Z. Hanna remains among the most preeminent lawyers nationwide. A sought-after litigator specializing in high-stakes class actions, her record of courtroom victories speaks for itself, as does her standing within Michelman & Robinson, LLP, where she is the National Complex & Class Action Trial Chair and Managing Partner of the firm's Orange County office. Best known for her work defending "bet the company" lawsuits, Hanna has also made a name for herself securing early-stage dismissals and defeating high-exposure class certified cases.

Outside the courtroom, Hanna is quite proud of her work mentoring younger lawyers. Toward that end, she is one of the architects of M&R's trial advocacy program, a structured in-house learning platform, designed primarily for associates, that teaches the anatomy of a trial.

Hanna is engaged within the community as well. A former member of the Orange County Bar Association's Board of Directors, she is also involved with the California and Los Angeles Bar Associations. In addition, Hanna actively supports Working Wardrobes, an organization helping thousands of individuals overcome obstacles to assimilate back into the workforce.

By virtue of her accomplishments throughout her extraordinary career, Hanna has been on the receiving end of several awards and honors, including being nominated three times for the "Top Women in Business" award by the Orange County Business Journal. That the OCBJ has also named her a "LEADER of INFLUENCE: Women in Law" is a great testament to the impact she has had upon the legal community in the OC and beyond.

**GRACE HOROUPIAN**

FISHER & PHILLIPS LLP

Grace Horoupien is the co-regional managing 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, retaliation, wrongful discharge and wage and hour violations claims, including class and representative actions.

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 Civil Rights Department, and the Division of Labor Standards Enforcement (DLSE). Horoupien 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. Horoupien also frequently presents seminars, workshops and trainings on employment issues for industry groups and private employers.

Horoupien is currently a member of the Orange County and Armenian Bar Associations and is "AV" Peer Review Rated by Martindale-Hubbell. In addition, Horoupien 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.

**JENNIFER R. JOHNSON**

THE LAW OFFICE 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. 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. In 2022, she was recognized as the OCTLA Member of the Year for her work mentoring law students. In 2023, Ms. Johnson was presented with Swim With Mike's Claire Snow Service Award for her work with disabled athletes.

LATHAM & WATKINS**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 class actions, corporate governance challenges, insider-trading claims, proxy contests, financial restatements, government investigations, and other high-profile disputes. Recently, Johnson won a \$26 million plaintiff's-side jury verdict in a breach of contract case in federal court, won a complete defense jury verdict in a \$400 million securities fraud trial on behalf of NextGen Healthcare, won summary judgment on behalf of the U.S. Soccer Federation in its equal-pay litigation with the Women's National Team, and achieved complete dismissal of a federal securities class action against Twitter.

Ms. Johnson has been recognized among the Top 100 Lawyers in California by the Daily Journal and was named a Securities MVP nationally by Law360. She is ranked Chambers Band 1 for Securities Litigation in California. Benchmark Litigation has honored her as a Top 100 Trial Lawyer, the California Securities Litigator of the Year, and a Top 20 Trial Lawyer in California. She is honored among California's Top Women Lawyers by the Daily Journal, was profiled in The American Lawyer for her role as Global Chair and as part of Latham's broad team of elite first-chair trial attorneys, and was named a Winning Litigator by The National Law Journal. Johnson received the California Lawyer Attorneys of the Year (CLAY) Award by the Daily Journal for her pro bono work. She serves on the boards of the Georgetown University Law Center, Berkeley Center for Law and Business, and Orange County Bar Foundation's Project Youth, the American Bar Association's Corporate Laws Committee, and the emeritus board of the Public Law Center.

**RIKA M. KIDO**

SHULMAN BASTIAN FRIEDMAN & BUI LLP

Rika M. Kido is a partner at Shulman Bastian Friedman & Bui LLP in Irvine. 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. With her assistance, her trustee clients have sold a variety of assets, including intellectual property, claims in pending litigation and real property (commercial and residential). Ms. Kido's practice also 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, 2020 and 2021.

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 and earned her Master of 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 the legal community. She recently co-produced the panel, "Dealer's Choice: The Benefits of RSAs and PSAs," for the California Bankruptcy Forum's 35th Annual Insolvency Conference. She is the Vice President of the Orange County Bankruptcy Forum and the Treasurer of the Southern California Network of the International Women's Insolvency & Restructuring Confederation.

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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2023 WOMEN IN LAW PROFILES

**MANDY H. KIM**

MCDERMOTT WILL & EMERY LLP

Mandy H. Kim focuses her practice on intellectual property litigation. Kim has extensive experience managing complex litigations across a wide range of technologies, including in the life sciences, biotechnology, medical devices, computer hardware and software, and consumer electronics industries. Kim routinely handles motion practice, fact and expert discovery matters, and has litigated a number of cases from pleadings through trial and/or settlement. She has represented clients in federal and state courts and before the International Trade Commission.

In 2023, Kim was ranked by IAM Patent 1000 for her patent litigation efforts. She also serves as Treasurer for the Orange County Coalition for Diversity in the Law, and she is a PLC Advocate for the Public Law Center.

While in law school, Kim earned specialized certificates from the Palmer Center for Entrepreneurship and the Law and Straus Institute for Dispute Resolution and received several awards. She also was managing editor of the Journal of Business Entrepreneurship and the Law and served as a law clerk in the Office of the City Attorney (Los Angeles), Intellectual Property Unit, General Counsel Division.

**WENDY R. KOTTMEIER**

HOLLAND & KNIGHT LLP

Wendy R. Kottmeier is a partner in Holland & Knight's Newport Beach office with more than 20 years of experience advising clients in mergers and acquisitions (M&A), private equity transactions, securities offerings, commercial contracts, licenses and general corporate transactions. She is a trusted advisor to emerging growth and middle-market companies, private equity firms, family offices and other investors operating through all stages of the business and investment life cycle. Ms. Kottmeier represents clients in a broad array of industry sectors – including technology, healthcare, medical device, beauty, consumer products and manufacturing – locally in Orange County and throughout the world. Ms. Kottmeier strives to provide practical legal advice to help her clients make the best decisions for their businesses and families. Often a corporate transaction is one of the most significant events in company's lifespan, and having a trusted professional on the team makes the process more efficient and more enjoyable.

Ms. Kottmeier has deep California roots, having received her law degree from the University of California College of the Law, San Francisco, where she graduated Order of the Coif. She received her undergraduate degree from the University of Redlands. When not practicing corporate law, Ms. Kottmeier dedicates time to various pro bono legal endeavors, including representing a number of local Orange County nonprofit organizations and working for the Election Protection hotline operated by the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law. She also enjoys spending time with her husband, Sasha, and their two children.

**KARLA KRAFT**STRADLING YOCCHA
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.

**MARISSA C. KRUMM**MCDERMOTT WILL &
EMERY LLP

Marissa C. Krumm focuses her practice on mass tort, complex commercial litigation and product liability defense in the healthcare, chemical manufacturing and agriculture industries. She has experience advising clients in commercial disputes, product liability matters, personal injury claims, civil actions, trade secret misappropriation, class actions and qui tam whistleblower litigation concerning the federal False Claims Act, Anti-Kickback Statute and Stark Law.

Krumm has successfully defended clients facing significant challenges in complex litigation, providing them with effective legal representation and helping them navigate through the complexities of the legal system. In high-stakes trials revolving around the health risks associated with polychlorinated biphenyl (PCB) exposure in the environment, Krumm represented a chemical manufacturer and secured defense verdicts, safeguarding her client's interests effectively. Additionally, Krumm has been actively involved in handling class action lawsuits. She successfully defended a health insurance provider against allegations of violations of the Telephone Consumer Protection Act, displaying her skill in navigating complex class action litigation.

Beyond her commercial work, Krumm has an active pro bono practice, where most recently, she obtained a benchmark settlement for victims of one of the largest labor trafficking schemes in recent US history. Additionally, Krumm serves as Pro Bono Legal Counsel to Lawyers for Children, she is a member of the National Association of Women's Lawyers and an Advisory Board member of Best Buddies International.

**SARAH KRUSZONA**

RUTAN & TUCKER LLP

Sarah Kruszona represents investors and developers in a broad range of transactions, including acquisitions and dispositions, financing, leasing, and other general real estate matters. She advises clients in all aspects of the acquisition and disposition process, from negotiating letters of intent and purchase agreements through diligence and closing, and works with all product types, including raw land, industrial, retail, office, multi-family housing and mixed-use developments. Her practice includes representing borrowers and real estate owners in a variety of real estate financing transactions, including acquisition, construction and permanent real estate secured loans from banks, insurance companies, Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, as well as joint venture equity arrangements. Kruszona also represents leasing clients which includes landlords in all aspects of industrial, retail, office and ground leasing, including drafting and negotiating leases, subleases, amendments, assignments, subordinations, non-disclosure and attornment agreements and estoppels.

Kruszona also provides strategic counsel to her clients on other general real estate matters, such as drafting and negotiating covenants, conditions and restrictions (CC&Rs), easement agreements, and side letter agreements, advising clients on title insurance matters, and assisting in the structuring and documentation of entity formation.

**VANESSA LEGBANDT**STRADLING YOCCHA
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 Legbandt 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 various municipal financings, including lease revenue, utility, and land-secured financings. She also represents public agencies and developers in financing and structuring various public-private partnerships for delivery of infrastructure and economic development projects. 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 representing public entities in connection with municipal financings and public private development arrangements gives her a firm grasp on her clients' goals and objectives, and the perspective to explore alternatives to their 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 transaction documents and her ability to resolve any issues quickly. Undaunted by the fast pace of municipal financings and development projects, Legbandt meets all required time-frames and staffs transactions appropriately to ensure she obtains the most beneficial financing for her clients.

Meet the Firm's Outstanding and Accomplished WOMEN IN LAW

*"Congratulations To All
The 2023 OCBJ Women In Law"*



**Back row, left to right: Melissa Davis Lowe, Rika M. Kido, Brooke S. Thompson, Mimi Lin*

** Seated front, Holly M. Ratzlaff, Lynda Bui*

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2023 WOMEN IN LAW PROFILES



ALLISON LEMOINE-BUI
RUTAN & TUCKER LLP

Allison LeMoine-Bui specializes in Affordable Housing and Economic Development. She regularly advises private developer and public agency clients regarding the planning, development, and operation of low- and moderate-income housing projects, including special needs and senior citizen housing projects.

LeMoine-Bui also has extensive experience in real property transactional matters. She has negotiated and drafted numerous agreements, including affordable housing agreements, ground leases, purchase and sale and economic development agreements, statutory development agreements, and various other general contracts. LeMoine-Bui is Deputy City Attorney for the cities of La Quinta and Irvine.



HAILEY LENNON
BROWN RUDNICK

Hailey Lennon is a corporate partner in Brown Rudnick's Digital Commerce practice. She helps clients navigate complex legal and regulatory challenges facing blockchain, DLT, cryptocurrency and digital assets companies, including relating to the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCEN), the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC), the Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC) and the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC). Lennon also handles SEC investigations and enforcement actions concerning the cryptocurrency space. Additionally, she assists clients in obtaining state money transmitter licenses, the New York Bitlicense, Wyoming special purpose depository institution (SPDI) license, and National Trust and Bank Charters. Lennon is a certified anti-money laundering specialist (CAMS).

Lennon utilizes her previous experience as a former regulatory in-house counsel at leading cryptocurrency exchange platforms Coinbase and bitFlyer to provide clients with front-end advice on regulatory requirements related to fintech and cryptocurrency.

Lennon is the founder and president of Crypto Connect, a professional network for cryptocurrency professionals and individuals. The network serves as a resource in the digital assets industry through networking, mentorship, collaboration, and other business development opportunities globally.

Lennon is a frequent speaker at major cryptocurrency conferences including Coindesk's Consensus and Bitcoin Magazine's yearly conference and makes frequent appearances on Fox Business. She is legal analyst at Forbes Crypto and is quoted on cryptocurrency matters in financial and cryptocurrency media, including CoinDesk, Decrypt, Yahoo, Bloomberg and The Wall Street Journal.



CAROL LEW
STRADLING Yocca
CARLSON & RAUTH

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.

Holland & Knight is proud to celebrate
Wendy Kottmeier
and all of the *Orange County Business Journal's*
2023 Women in Law honorees for their recognition
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2023 WOMEN IN LAW PROFILES

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MIMI LIN

SHULMAN BASTIAN
FRIEDMAN & BUI LLP

Mimi Lin is a partner in the firm's transactional practice group, representing clients in a broad range of corporate, real estate, and business transactional matters. She has over 20 years of experience gained from a combination of private practice and in-house roles. She regularly counsels clients on mergers and acquisitions, equity and debt financings, workouts, and foreclosures. She advises on entity formations and organizational governance and compliance, including the development and implementation of policies and procedures. She also represents clients in real estate transactions including acquisitions, dispositions, financings and leases. Additionally, Lin's practice includes estate planning as well as business succession planning.

Lin earned her Juris Doctorate from Loyola Law School of Los Angeles and a Bachelor of Science in Cognitive Science from UCLA. She serves on the board of directors of WISEPlace, a non-profit organization dedicated to ending homelessness for unaccompanied women. Outside of work, she devotes time to her family and together they enjoy eating, traveling and basketball.

shulman bastian
friedman & bui LLP



MELISSA DAVIS LOWE

SHULMAN BASTIAN
FRIEDMAN & BUI LLP

Melissa Davis Lowe has a broad range of experience across all areas of insolvency, restructuring and bankruptcy law for companies and individuals. Ms. Lowe is a partner at Shulman Bastian Friedman & Bui LLP in Irvine where she has been practicing for over 16 years. Ms. Lowe has represented nearly every type of party in Chapter 7 and Chapter 11 bankruptcy proceedings, including debtors and creditors in the newly enacted Subchapter V proceedings. Recently, Ms. Lowe has focused much of her practice on out of court workouts and restructurings in order for her clients to avoid a bankruptcy filing. 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.

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 and then her Master of Laws in Taxation in 2008. Ms. Lowe is passionate about community service. She sits on the board of directors and volunteers with the First Tee of Orange County, where she is the current Governance Committee Chair. She is also a current director of the OC Chapter of the FBA and is a member of the OCBF, serving as its president in 2013. Ms. Lowe lives in Lake Forest with her husband and two children.

Stradling



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 significant experience before a host of agencies and regulators, including the SEC, 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 Foreign Corrupt Practices Act, 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.

Buchalter

CONGRATULATES

Farah Bhatti

Caroline Djang

Damaris Medina

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Farah Bhatti
Shareholder
Intellectual
Property



Caroline Djang
Shareholder
Insolvency &
Financial Law



Damaris Medina
Shareholder
Health Care &
Life Sciences



2023 WOMEN IN LAW PROFILES

**ERIKA MAYSHAR**

MCDERMOTT WILL & EMERY LLP

Erika Mayshar advises foundations, hospitals and health systems, public charities and other tax-exempt organizations navigating complex legal and tax issues. She works closely with prominent philanthropists and nonprofits

across the United States to accomplish major corporate and charitable transactions, coordinate sophisticated tax planning and maximize philanthropic impact. She also works with private equity firms, investment management firms and closely held companies engaging in innovative business relationships with the nonprofit sector, managing tax-exempt investments or expanding corporate sustainability initiatives.

Mayshar advises on major strategic transactions such as joint ventures, mergers and acquisitions, tax-exempt bond financings, affiliations and restructurings. She offers nuanced counsel regarding the daily complexities of operating tax-exempt organizations, including governance, grantmaking, tax-sensitive investing, succession planning and Form 990 reporting. She also represents taxpayers under audit by the Internal Revenue Service, state attorneys general and state tax authorities in relation to charitable activity, unrelated business income and other matters.

**DAMARIS MEDINA**

BUCHALTER

Damaris Medina is a shareholder in Buchalter's Orange County & Los Angeles offices. She is the Firm's Chief Diversity Officer, Co-Chair of the Firm's Health Care & Life Sciences Practice, a member of the Board of Directors, and a member of the Firm's Litigation and Health Care Practice Groups.

Ms. Medina represents hospital systems and a diverse array of other health care clients in high stakes litigation in federal and state court, as well as in arbitration. Ms. Medina has successfully litigated numerous large exposure reimbursement cases against major health plans and recovered millions of dollars on behalf of health care providers. She also advises hospital systems and other health care providers on managed care contracting, revenue cycle strategies, and risk and compliance issues. Ms. Medina routinely defends providers against both private and government payor audits, as well as in False Claims Act cases brought by Federal and State agencies including the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) and the Department of Justice (DOJ).

Ms. Medina represents a wide range of clients including, but not limited to, large hospital systems, urgent care centers, emergency physician groups, billing companies, gastroenterologists, pathologists, neurologists, hematologists, pharmacies, plastic surgeons, dentists, health care consulting companies, emergency transportation providers, and Part D health plan providers. She also successfully handles business and commercial litigation matters that involve class action issues, securities, business structuring, shareholder disputes, breach of contract, and FINRA arbitration.

**KRISTIN N. MURPHY**

LATHAM & WATKINS LLP

Kristin Murphy is a partner in the Orange County office, serves as the Litigation & Trial Department Chair in Orange County, and is a member of the Training & Career Enhancement (TACE) Committee.

She has also served on the firm's Recruiting Committee, Equal Employment Opportunity Board, and Women Enriching Business (WEB) Committee.

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.

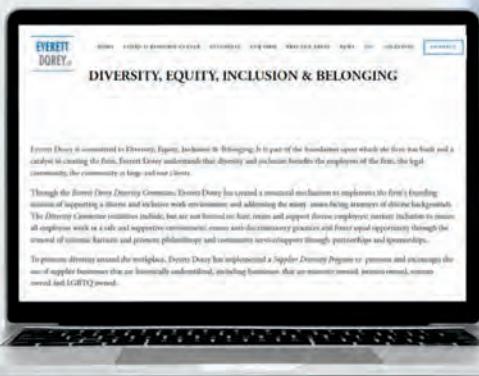
Murphy's recent representations include special committee engagements in controlling stockholder transactions, multijurisdictional litigation arising out of solicited and hostile takeover attempts, and investigations and litigation on behalf of special committees and boards of directors related to public company crises. She recently obtained dismissals for two clients in Section 14(a) cases (Wesco Aircraft and GTX, Inc.), and a third in Delaware Chancery on behalf of former special committee of Inovalon Holdings, Inc. (Inovalon). Murphy secured a complete dismissal of a stockholder class action challenging the fairness of Inovalon's sale to a private equity firm. Kristin was named a Next Generation Partner-Dispute Resolution: M&A: Litigation: Defense by Legal 500 in 2022 and 2023, and a Recommended Lawyer and Rising Star for M&A Litigation: Defense by the Legal 500 (2020-2021). She has also been named Future Star by Benchmark Litigation 2023.

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Everett Dorey is committed to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging. It is part of the foundation upon which the firm was built and a catalyst in creating the firm. Everett Dorey's commitment to racial and gender equity, diversity, and inclusion benefits the employees of the firm, the legal community, the community at large and our clients.

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2023 WOMEN IN LAW PROFILES



ANTOINETTE NADDOUR, ESQ., LLM
VETERANS LEGAL INSTITUTE

Antoinette Naddour 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 10,000 low-income Veterans to date, free of charge.

Naddour was an officer with the California State Guard for over six years serving 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.

Naddour 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.

Naddour is a former two term director at large of the Orange County Bar Association and co-chair of its Veterans and Military Committee. She is presently director at large with the Orange County Women Lawyers Association, also having been named its 2022 Attorney of the Year.

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.

FERRUZZO



CAROLINE K. NAM
FERRUZZO & FERRUZZO LLP

Caroline K. Nam is an associate at Ferruzzo & Ferruzzo, LLP within the Litigation Practice Group. Ms. Nam represents clients in a wide variety of civil litigation matters, including employer defense and business/commercial litigation.

Prior to her legal career, Ms. Nam's sports career began as a waitress at the Honda Center, eventually making her way into the front office for the Anaheim Ducks and later working for the Los Angeles Rams, where she ranked #1 in the department by clients for consistency, attentiveness, and professionalism in 2019. Shortly thereafter, Ms. Nam decided to pursue a lifelong goal of becoming an attorney and received her Juris Doctor degree from Chapman University, Dale E. Fowler School of Law, with an emphasis in Entertainment Law.

Ms. Nam's legal background extends to areas of international law, employment law, sports law, and high-profile cases. Along with her extensive litigation experience, early on, Ms. Nam served as the judicial extern for the Supreme Court of Rwanda where she assisted the judiciary in several policy recommendations, including her research on implementing plea bargaining into its criminal justice system. In recognition of her work, community involvement, and academic achievement, Ms. Nam received the Joann Leatherby Leadership Award for Women in the Law upon her law school graduation.

Ms. Nam's unique background and experiences have enhanced her ability to be an empathetic advocate for all her clients and as a compelling litigator in the courtroom to produce positive results.



LISA NORTHRUP
STRADLING YOCCHA
CARLSON & RAUTH

Lisa Northrup is a shareholder in Stradling's litigation practice group. Northrup's practice focuses on complex commercial litigation including contract disputes, business torts, and class action defense, as well as securities and white collar matters. She represents officers, directors, limited liability companies, and corporations in the consumer product, business services, and financial services industries.

While Northrup aims to help clients reach an early resolution, Northrup is prepared to draw on her experience litigating cases in both federal and state court through verdict. Additionally, Northrup advises and assists clients with pre-litigation dispute resolution and investigations.

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Top row, left to right: Samantha Drysdale (Senior Associate); Jennifer Mauri (Senior Associate); Agnes Shin (Associate); Allison Aguirre (Associate)

Bottom row, left to right: Jane Kutepova (Senior Associate); Mona Hanna (Irvine Office Managing Partner); Kelly Hageman (Partner)

Not pictured: Amanda Anderson (Associate)

2023 WOMEN IN LAW PROFILES

Fisher
Phillips**LIZBETH "LIZ" OCHOA**

FISHER & PHILLIPS LLP

Lizbeth "Liz" Ochoa is a partner in the firm's Irvine office. With over 20 years' experience representing employers, Ochoa 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 Civil Rights Department (formerly known as the 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 various types of trainings including, but not limited to, anti-harassment supervisor trainings in Spanish and English.

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

In 2010, 2013 and 2014, Ochoa was selected for inclusion in Southern California Super Lawyers – Rising Stars. Ochoa is fluent in Spanish and sits on the firm's Diversity Committee. She is also an ambassador for the firm's Women's Initiative and Leadership Council and has been the Co-Chair of the National Association of Women Lawyers' (NAWL) Diversity and Inclusion Committee for several years.

FERRUZZO

**SHANNON C. PAPAZIS**

FERRUZZO & FERRUZZO LLP

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

The variety of extensive trial experience Ms. Papazis gained early in her career while externing at the District Attorney's Office, and later expanding into the family law and civil realms, has enhanced her ability to truly excel as an effective litigator and trial attorney 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 partner in a leading trust and probate litigation firm in Southern California, Ms. 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. Ms. 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.

Ms. Papazis earned her BS in Business Economics, with honors, from the University of California, Santa Barbara, and her JD, summa cum laude, from La Verne College of Law.

Fisher
Phillips**LISA PETERSON**

FISHER & PHILLIPS LLP

Lisa Peterson is a partner in the Irvine office. She serves as a key advisor to employers across California in a diverse group of industries, from restaurant and hospitality to non-profits, public entities and healthcare. Peterson's practice includes litigating cases involving wrongful termination, discrimination, harassment, retaliation, and whistleblower claims, as well as wage and hour class and PAGA actions.

Peterson is a proven trial attorney and has successfully tried several cases to verdict in jury trials and arbitration, obtained key victories at the summary judgment stage and negotiated complex global class and PAGA action settlements.

In addition to litigation, Peterson also provides employers with prelitigation advice and counsel, such as handling of employee terminations and discipline, internal workplace investigations, development of various workplace policies and procedures, and compliance with state and federal labor laws.

Peterson has been listed as a Southern California Super Lawyer Rising Star from 2020-2023. She is fluent in Cantonese Chinese. Peterson also dedicates her time to fostering and mentoring junior attorneys to develop them in their litigation practices.



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Christine, Linda, Grace, Liz, and Lisa

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Congrats to our partner, colleague, and friend,

Kathleen Carter

named to the
Orange County Business Journal's
Women in Law in 2022 and 2023.

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are being made."
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Kathleen's Bio

Messner Reeves is a national firm providing full-service business counsel covering general corporate, intellectual property, litigation, real estate, immigration, and more.

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2023 WOMEN IN LAW PROFILES

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HOLLY M. RATZLAFF

**SHULMAN BASTIAN
FRIEDMAN & BUI LLP**

Holly M. Ratzlaff heads Shulman Bastian Friedman & Bui LLP's trust and probate department, specializing in estate plans, probate, trust administration and conservatorships. Ms. Ratzlaff has extensive experience assisting individuals and families in navigating issues within the probate court, including handling complex and litigious estates. She has litigated and settled numerous matters involving trustees, contentious probates and contested conservatorships.

She is a regular presenter within the community on estate planning and prides herself on educating individuals on the importance of estate plans.

Ms. Ratzlaff is a licensed realtor, offering her clients a unique and useful perspective on real estate sales in probate and trust administration, as well as an added service for clients wanting to sell properties. Ms. Ratzlaff regularly lectures brokers and realtors on the nuances of selling real estate in probate.

Ms. Ratzlaff grew up in Oregon. She graduated from the University of Notre Dame and attended law school at Whittier Law School. Her practice covers matters in Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, Los Angeles and San Diego Counties. She is active within the Orange County Bar Association and a member of the Trusts and Estates Section.

Inspired by her time in law school studying children's rights, Ms. Ratzlaff founded the Give Back Pack in 2014, a charity that supports local foster children.

RUTAN
RUTAN & TUCKER, LLP



BRIANA RICHMOND

RUTAN & TUCKER LLP

Briana Richmond has developed a diverse practice that touches on a wide variety of industries, including complex business disputes involving trade secret theft, fraud, breach of contract, business interference, business dissolution, defamation claims, as well as disputes involving commercial landlord-tenant contracts, commercial construction contracts, and residential construction defects, among other things.

Richmond has taken several cases to trial, all of which ended with judgments in her clients' favor. While she is well-versed in aggressively litigating cases when such an approach is appropriate, Richmond also actively seeks to balance litigation demands with clients' overall business concerns, including with respect to cost control and maintaining business relationships.

Richmond's dedication to professional excellence has led to Best Lawyers in America recognizing her as one of the "Best Lawyers: Ones to Watch" for 2021, 2022 and 2023.



MICHELLE ROBINSON

VETERANS LEGAL INSTITUTE



Michelle Robinson is the managing attorney at Veterans Legal Institute (VLI), supporting close to 25 staff members who fight to provide pro bono access to justice to Veterans in need. As

managing attorney, Robinson 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 five, one of whom is currently an active-duty Marine, she is deeply connected to the Veteran-focused mission of VLI.

Robinson has over 27 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.

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Leaders of Influence. Women in Law.

Cummins & White, LLP is proud to announce that Ashley Bolduc has not only become a partner of the firm but has been recognized by the Orange County Business Journal's 2023 Women in Law edition as an influential leader in Orange County's Legal Community.

Ms. Bolduc practices in the areas of corporate and securities law, mergers and acquisitions, contract drafting and negotiation, and trademarks. She serves as outside general counsel to a variety of businesses including those in the software and technology industry, the fuel and convenience sector, multi-family property owners, food and beverage companies, medical groups, and start-up companies.

2023 WOMEN IN LAW PROFILES

LATHAM & WATKINS



HILARY A. SHALLA-STRONG
LATHAM & WATKINS LLP

Hilary Shalla-Strong 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. Hilary'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 an investor in connection with the formation of a programmatic joint venture to develop multifamily assets, representation of an investor in connection with the formation of a programmatic joint venture for the acquisition of warehouse facilities, representation of the sponsor in connection with the formation of a joint venture and concurrent mortgage financing for data center properties and representation of a real estate investment trust in connection with its conversion to an UPREIT. Hilary serves as Corporate Department Chair in Orange County, is a former member of the Associates Committee, is former Chair of the firm's Mentoring Committee, and former co-chair of the Orange County office's Women Enriching Business (WEB) Committee.





ARDELLE ST. GEORGE
ST.GEORGE & CARNEGIE

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. Ardelle has 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. Ardelle has established these areas as pillars of her Law Firm and Solutions & Licensing 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. Now, she is launching THE WAVE CONNECTION®, a multimedia platform to complement her legal and business practice, to showcase the innovation and leadership of clients and provide services for their transformation into the future economy.

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

Her community work includes serving on the Executive Leadership Team of the American Heart Association, Harvard Business School and Kennedy School Alumni Associations, U.S. Bank Advisory Board, Wyland Foundation/BlueCo Board, President of the International and Orange County Boards of the Association for Corporate Growth and Executive Committee of the Ambassadors of Compassion.





MELISSA STEELE
VETERANS LEGAL INSTITUTE


Melissa Steele holds the position of Staff Attorney with Veteran's Legal Institute. She attended the University of California, Los Angeles where she received her Bachelor of Arts in Political Science in 1999. She attended Loyola Law School in 2004 where she graduated in the top quarter of her class. Melissa Steele has been a member of the California Bar since 2004, and is an active member of the Orange County Bar Association.


She also teaches at the University of California, Irvine, Division of Continuing Education in the Paralegal Studies Division where she teaches classes ranging from Fundamentals of the Paralegal Profession, Legal Research, Criminal Law, Torts, to Legal Career Skills. Additionally, she teaches at Coastline Community College in the Paralegal Division where she has taught various classes, including Legal Analysis and Writing, Criminal Law and Procedure, and Law Office Management.

Steele has experience in veteran affairs, family law, corporate law, business formation, employment law, and general civil litigation. She has a strong history of assisting public interest law firms, including volunteering as an attorney with Public Law Center, Community Legal Aid SoCal, and Veterans Legal Institute prior to becoming a staff attorney with Veterans Legal Institute. Steele comes from a long line of veteran family members who served in the Air Force, Marines, Navy, and Army and is pleased to work with VLI to best serve the legal needs of our veterans. She is admitted to practice law in California and is accredited to practice before the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Congratulations to our Founding Partner
and 2023 Leader of Influence honoree

Michelle Armond



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2023 WOMEN IN LAW PROFILES



MICHELLE S. STROWHIRO

MCDERMOTT WILL & EMERY LLP

Michelle S. Strowhiro is an employment counsel, litigator and M&A transaction advisor. She leads McDermott's Transactions and Executive Contracts Employment Subgroup and co-leads McDermott's COVID-19 Employment Task Force.

Strowhiro is a trusted advisor to both US and international companies, offering strategic counsel on various aspects of employment law compliance. She partners with clients to establish and maintain robust and lawful employment policies and practices. From employee onboarding to termination, Strowhiro efficiently manages employee relationships, conducts workplace investigations, administers leaves and resolves disputes. She regularly prepares and negotiates executive employment and severance agreements and advises companies on employment law issues for mergers and acquisitions. Strowhiro continually works with clients in the private equity, healthcare, technology, retail, marketing food and restaurant, sports, media and entertainment industries.

Strowhiro advises on and defends clients against putative nationwide class actions, collective actions and single- and multi-plaintiff lawsuits. Her litigation matters have involved a wide range of claims including those arising under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA), the Fair Employment and Housing Act (FEHA), the California Family Rights Act (CFRA), the Private Attorneys General Act (PAGA) and other state and federal employment laws.

Strowhiro has successfully achieved dismissals for her clients with motions on the pleadings, motions for summary judgment and by leveraging cases early to achieve aggressive and favorable resolutions. She has defeated class certification and has won affirmation of these results on appeal.



BROOKE S. THOMPSON

SHULMAN BASTIAN
FRIEDMAN & BUI LLP

Brooke S. Thompson is an associate at Shulman Bastian Friedman & Bui LLP in Irvine. Ms. Thompson is a member of the firm's litigation and bankruptcy departments. Ms. Thompson's practice area includes representing both plaintiffs and defendants in various civil litigation matters, as well as representing trustees, creditors, plaintiffs, and defendants in Chapter 7 bankruptcy cases and adversary proceedings.

Ms. Thompson grew up in Orange County and attended Huntington Beach High School before she obtained her Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from St. John's University in Queens, New York, in 2018. She stayed at St. John's University to earn her Master of Arts in American Government in 2019, and her Juris Doctorate in 2022.

Ms. Thompson made her way back to Orange County and joined Shulman Bastian Friedman & Bui LLP in 2022. She is excited to be back in California and involved in the local community.



CAMILLE VASQUEZ

BROWN RUDNICK

Camille Vasquez is a litigation partner and co-chair of Brown Rudnick's Brand & Reputation Management group. She is a passionate advocate for her clients and is adept at formulating offensive and defensive litigation strategies both in and outside the courtroom. She also has extensive experience handling parallel reputation management and crisis communications issues arising from these engagements.

Vasquez co-lead a Brown Rudnick team in the successful representation of actor Johnny Depp in his highly publicized defamation trial against ex-wife and actress Amber Heard. Vasquez gave a commanding performance in courtroom strategy and her passionate and fearless advocacy of Depp resulted in the jury's unanimous ruling in favor of Depp. It was a truly "decisive win" in what has been called "Hollywood's trial of the century."

Following the Depp trial, Vasquez was appointed co-chair of the Firm's Brand & Reputation Management group and has taken on some of the most high-profile and consequential cases with social and reputational importance. She helps her clients navigate legal and business scenarios to protect and manage their name, image and brand in an increasingly competitive and connected world.

Vasquez has received numerous recognitions, including Chambers, Legal 500, Benchmark Litigation, Variety's Hollywood's New Leaders, National Law Journal's Trailblazers, Law360's Rising Star, Daily Journal's Top Women Lawyer and Top 40 Under 40, Best Lawyers Ones to Watch, HOLA! Latina Powerhouse, and Hispanic National Bar Association Top Lawyer Under 40. She is a legal correspondent for NBC News.



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