



SAN DIEGO BUSINESS JOURNAL

LEADERS IN LAW

AWARDS 2019

ESHEL BAR-ADON
Axos Financial, Inc. and Axos Bank
GENERAL COUNCIL CATEGORY
PUBLIC COMPANY

PAUL NAJAR
Gafcon, Inc.
GENERAL COUNCIL CATEGORY
PRIVATE COMPANY

DANA MAIER
County of San Diego
GENERAL COUNCIL CATEGORY
RISING STAR

SARA NEVA
Procopio, Cory, Hargreaves & Savitch LLP
ATTORNEY CATEGORY
RISING STAR

TIM HUTTER
Allen Matkins
ATTORNEY CATEGORY
RISING STAR

DUSTY WOLVERTON
Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman
ATTORNEY CATEGORY
RISING STAR

JOHN PHILLIPS
Fish & Richardson
ATTORNEY CATEGORY
PATENT

MEGAN CHUNG
Kilpatrick Townsend & Stockton LLP
ATTORNEY CATEGORY
INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

LAURA BUCKLEY
Higgs Fletcher & Mack
ATTORNEY CATEGORY
TAX

JUSTINE PHILLIPS
Sheppard Mullin
ATTORNEY CATEGORY
CYBER SECURITY

MILES SCULLY
Gordon Rees Scully Mansukhani LLP
ATTORNEY CATEGORY
LITIGATION

SCOTT STANTON
Mintz, Levin, Cohn, Ferris, Glovsky, and Popeo P.C.
ATTORNEY CATEGORY
MERGERS & ACQUISITIONS

JACOB SAPOCHNICK
Law Offices of Jacob J. Sapochnick
ATTORNEY CATEGORY
IMMIGRATION

JENNIFER CHANG
Hecht Solberg Robinson Goldberg & Bagley LLP
ATTORNEY CATEGORY
REAL ESTATE

JESSE IMBRIANO
Casa Cornelia Law Center
ATTORNEY CATEGORY
NONPROFIT

NADIA BERMUDEZ
Klinedinst PC
ATTORNEY CATEGORY
LABOR & EMPLOYMENT

WILLIAM WHELAN
Solomon Ward Seidenwurm & Smith LLP
ATTORNEY CATEGORY
LABOR & EMPLOYMENT

SPONSORS



Letter from the Publisher



The San Diego Business Journal's inaugural Leaders in Law event honored 17 of San Diego's top lawyers and in-house general counsel attorneys. We received more than 200 nominations. From these we selected 105 finalists. The range of our nominees' accomplishments and community involvement was impressive. It made the process of selecting winners all the more challenging. We even had one tie, in the labor and employment category.

We revealed the winners during an Oct. 24 gathering at the University Club Atop Symphony Towers. The event brought together 200 people, including San Diego's best legal minds and their associates. The University Club was a superb venue, offering a spectacular view from the top of Symphony Towers in downtown San Diego. I want to thank Frank Busic, general manager at the University Club, and his staff for their hospitality. I also want to thank one of our sponsors, Southwest Airlines, for providing three sets of round-trip airline tickets as raffle prizes. Ron Marcus, director of marketing with the San Diego County Bar Association, had the pleasure of selecting the ticket winners at random.

Kicking off the awards presentation was Chris Olmsted, shareholder with Ogletree Deakins. Event judges then presented winners with their awards. There were five judges who reviewed and scored finalists' applications.

On behalf of the San Diego Business Journal, I want to thank our judging panel Chris Bryant, president and CEO of the San Diego Employers Association; Peter Callstrom, president and CEO of the San Diego Workforce Partnership; Tracie Childs, co-chair with Ogletree Deakins; David H. Crean, Ph.D., managing director for healthcare and life sciences at Objective Capital Partners; and Rana Sampson, director and community relations ambassador for MUFG Union Bank's Southern California and San Diego divisions, and our sponsors for making this event possible: Ogletree Deakins, Southwest Airlines, Union Bank and Green Rope. They join us in congratulating our winners and finalists.

Barb Chodos

Barb Chodos
President & Publisher

JUDGES



CHRIS BRYANT
President & CEO
San Diego Employers Association

Chris Bryant is the President and CEO of the San Diego Employers Association. Prior to joining SDEA Chris spent many years in the financial services industry where she held leadership roles in Business Banking, Retail Banking and Administration at the local, statewide and national levels. As a volunteer she currently serves as the Treasurer for Rest Haven's Children's Health Fund, is on the Board of the Executives Association of San Diego and is the past Treasurer and Secretary of the National American Lung Association.



PETER CALLSTROM
President & CEO
San Diego Workforce Partnership

Peter Callstrom had led nonprofit organizations in the San Diego region since 1986 including services to people with disabilities, the homeless, and under-represented job seekers. He joined the Workforce Partnership as CEO in 2012. With an annual budget of \$30 million from multiple sources and investors, the Workforce Partnership funds, oversees and delivers workforce programs to empower job seekers to meet the needs of regional employers. The Workforce Partnership conducts in-depth labor market research, releasing numerous studies in order to understand the needs and trends in our economy.



TRACIE CHILDS
Co-chair
Ogletree Deakins

Tracie Childs is the co-chair of Ogletree Deakins California Class Action Practice Group. She represents a wide array of employers in defending class actions and complex employment practices issues including wrongful termination, discrimination, harassment, whistleblower, qui tam/False Claims Act, wage & hour and PAGA. Her clients include large national retail companies, medical and pharmaceutical companies, government contractors and non-profit organizations. Ms. Childs handles litigated matters from inception to verdict. Her practice also includes counseling of employers regarding employment practices.



DAVID H. CREAN
Managing Director
Objective Capital Partners

David H. Crean is a Managing Director at Objective Capital Partners where he leads the firm's M&A and partnering transactions with life science and healthcare clients. Dr. Crean holds FINRA Series 79 and Series 63 licenses as a Registered Investment Banking Representative. Dr. Crean also serves on the Board of Directors for several life sciences-related companies and non-profit organizations and is a contributing author for Forbes. Dr. Crean was recognized by M&A Advisors for the 2019 Investment Banker of the Year (finalist), SDBJ's 2018 Healthcare Hero, and the 2017 Thought Leader of the Year.



RANA SAMPSON
Community Relations Ambassador
MUFG Union Bank

As MUFG Union Bank's Community Relations Ambassador for the Southern California region, Rana Sampson supports retail branch operations and serves on the Union Bank Foundation Area Committee. Prior to joining the bank in 2014, Rana spent several years working on local crime and safety issues. During her early career, she worked as an NYPD police officer, undercover in narcotics, Director of Public Safety, international crime reduction consultant and Vice President at a San Diego nonprofit focused on foster children with mental and behavioral health challenges. Rana holds a law degree from Harvard and a Bachelor's degree from Barnard College, Columbia University.

SPONSORS



Anthony Arnold
Partner

AT THE HEART OF LEADERSHIP

Inspiring the legal community with a commitment to company growth and community involvement. Barnes & Thornburg congratulates our own Anthony Arnold and all the finalists in the San Diego Business Journal 2019 Leaders in Law.

BARNES & THORNBURG LLP
Uncommon Value

ATLANTA CALIFORNIA CHICAGO DELAWARE INDIANA MICHIGAN MINNEAPOLIS OHIO TEXAS WASHINGTON, D.C.

btlaw.com

Leaders in Law Awards Reflect Well on Legal Community

RECOGNITION: Judges Narrowed 105 Finalists To 17 Winners

■ By BRAD GRAVES

San Diego's legal community converged at **The University Club Atop Symphony Towers** on Oct. 24 to honor the region's brightest legal minds. The occasion was the **San Diego Business Journal's** inaugural Leaders in Law Awards.

One of the best views seemed to be from the lectern. **Chris Olmsted** — a shareholder at event sponsor **Ogletree Deakins** and the first person to present an award that evening — said he saw something in the crowd of 200.

"Looking out, it crossed my mind what a great pool of legal talent we have here in San Diego," he said after the event. "We have the foremost experts in the world. ... It was good to see all the people in the same room."

Seventeen people accepted awards. Most awards honored the top attorney in a particular specialty. Three in-house general counsel attorneys were honored, as were three Rising Stars — attorneys early in their careers who we will likely hear more from.

A Challenge for the Judges

Five business leaders served as judges

for the event. **Rana Sampson** was one of them, poring over 105 finalist applications, tallying points to determine who would go home with winners' plaques. She said she used a matrix to help in the process.

"I was so thrilled to see the level of competition," said Sampson, director and community relations ambassador for **MUFG Union Bank's** Southern California and San Diego divisions. "It speaks well for San Diego's legal profession and potential clients."

Dr. **David Crean**, Ph.D., was another judge. It was one thing to rank the nominees on professional abilities and accomplishments, Crean said before the event began. But that is not everything. "How are they giving back?" asked Crean, who is managing director for health care and life sciences with **Objective Capital Partners**.

Meaningful community involvement carried significant weight with Crean, Sampson and **Tracie Childs**, co-chair of **Ogletree Deakins**.

Chris Bryant, CEO of the **San Diego Employers Association**, also spent time with the finalist applications (narrowed from more than 200 nominations). The

finalists' track records made the contest "a tough one to judge," she said. Bryant said she was impressed by the finalists' professional accomplishments, such as significant case wins and sizable settlements. Many nominees invested time in their firms and in mentoring new associates, which reflected well on them, she said.

"It's hard not to rank everybody right at the very top," said **Peter Callstrom**, another judge for the event. Callstrom is CEO of the **San Diego Workforce Partnership**.

Southwest Airlines, **Union Bank** and **Green Rope** joined **Ogletree Deakins** as sponsors for the event.

Looking Back, and Ahead

There was a chance for winners to say a few words as part of the ceremony. **Paul Najjar**, general counsel for **Gafcon**, compared winning the award to the feeling of making a great softball play when he was 10 years old. Najjar is also president of the San Diego chapter of the **American Corporate Counsel Association**.

Another winner — **Jennifer Chang**, junior partner at **Hecht Solberg Robinson Goldberg & Bagley LLP** — said being

part of the awards ceremony was a motivating experience.

"Hearing the accomplishments of the other winners inspired me to continue to hone my craft and to devote more time and energy to serving this great community," said Chang, who won in the Real Estate category.

Crowded Calendars

The evening received great reviews from others in the legal community.

"The event really distinguished itself by being held in such a beautiful venue, with great food and a great bar," said **Bill Eigner**, partner with **Procopio**. "It was fun being with friends and colleagues."

"I was very impressed. The event was well attended. The awards, and awards process, appeared to be well regarded and appreciated," said **Ron Marcus**, director of marketing and outreach for the **San Diego County Bar Association**.

"Attorneys are busy people with busy lives," Marcus continued. "It was nice to see so many attorneys able to attend this event to support their colleagues and peers as they received recognition for their achievements and contributions to the community." ■

PUBLIC COMPANY



ESHEL BAR-ADON

Executive VP — Strategic Partnerships & Chief Legal Officer
 Axos Financial, Inc. and Axos Bank

Eshel Bar-Adon won the award for general counsel in the public company category. Bar-Adon is Executive Vice President for Strategic Partnerships and Chief Legal Officer for **Axos Financial, Inc.** and **Axos Bank**, leading a team of 12 attorneys. He also established and formerly led the company's specialty finance division.

As chief legal officer, Bar-Adon has successfully guided the company through several complex M&A transactions. His legal knowledge, strategic competence and crisis management skills allowed him to effectively navigate complicated legal waters, while facilitating the uninterrupted growth and continued profitability of the company.

Bar-Adon received his bachelor's degree from the University of Texas and his J.D. from Georgetown University Law Center.

"I'm delighted and honored to receive this award," Bar-Adon said. "I believe that it is a recognition of Axos' accomplishments as well as my own. I am grateful to Axos for providing me the opportunity to build and manage a best-in-class corporate legal department within a highly complex, innovative and rapidly growing diversified financial services business."

PRIVATE COMPANY



PAUL NAJAR

General Counsel
 Gafcon, Inc.

Paul Najjar manages the legal, risk management and human resources departments at **Gafcon**, a real estate development firm. Najjar does so in a way that facilitates growth while protecting his employer. He continues to play a key role in a project called **Seaport San Diego**, which involves the redevelopment of 70 acres of premier waterfront that is currently known as **Seaport Village**.

Najar is "firm but fair," said one of the people who nominated him. He also builds consensus. "I have personally witnessed Paul navigate very complex legal issues and resolve them with all parties feeling satisfied, not just at **Gafcon** but at two other companies as well."

Najar received his bachelor's degree from UC Irvine and his J.D. from UC Davis.

He is president of the Association of Corporate Counsels in San Diego and said he was accepting his award on behalf of the chapter.

RISING STAR



DANA MAIER

Senior Deputy County Counsel
 County of San Diego

The Rising Star award for general counsel went to **Dana Maier**.

As senior deputy county counsel for the **County of San Diego's** Probation Department, Maier has served as top legal counsel to probation as the department fundamentally shifted its juvenile justice approach to one less punitive, and more positive youth-development focused. The Comprehensive Strategy for Youth, Family and the Community focuses on preventing youth from getting into trouble in the first place, by investing in a variety of programs to support them in their communities. Using research-backed best practices, Maier collaborated with experts from the Center for Juvenile Justice Reform at Georgetown University as the county's Probation Department and juvenile justice system partners adopted the Youth in Custody Practice Model, which focuses on engaging families, addressing trauma, and creating safe, fair and healthy environments.

Maier received her bachelor's degree from American University and her J.D. from the University of San Diego School of Law.

HIGGS | FLETCHER | MACK
 CELEBRATING 80 YEARS

CONGRATULATIONS TO LAURA BUCKLEY

HFM Partner and 2020 Chair-Elect of the California Lawyers Association's Taxation Section, on her selection as a "Leader in Law."



Thank you, Laura, and all of the other honorees, for your leadership and for all that you do for the legal profession.

Higgs Fletcher & Mack is a full-service law firm that serves diverse individuals and industries, and is celebrating 80 years of successfully representing companies and people in need of exceptional legal counsel.

Marc S. Schechter
 Partner



CONGRATULATIONS 2019 Leaders in Law Nominees

MARC S. SCHECHTER
 Specialty Counsel
 and
 PAUL D. WOODARD
 Rising Star

Paul D. Woodard
 Partner



BUTTERFIELD
 SCHECHTER LLP
 ATTORNEYS & COUNSELORS

We Know ESOPs

FIRM FOCUS ON EMPLOYEE BENEFITS LAW

Butterfield Schechter LLP is San Diego County's largest firm focusing its law practice primarily on employee benefit legal services. Our experience in employee benefits law and business law provides creative solutions for the most pressing business concerns. We are also dedicated to employee ownership and know all things ESOP (Employee Stock Ownership Plans). Learn more at www.bsllp.com.

10021 Willow Creek Road, Suite 200 - San Diego, California 92131
 Telephone: (858) 444-2300 - Facsimile: (858) 444-2345

RISING STAR



WINNER

SARA NEVA

Real Estate Attorney

Procopio, Cory, Hargreaves & Savitch LLP

Sara Neva, an attorney with Procopio, counsels clients on real estate, finance and general business transactions. She is highly skilled in representing her clients in leasing numerous office building properties in a streamlined manner while keeping lease forms up to date with new laws. She spearheaded writing and editing a summary of the most important 2019 real estate statutes and regulations critical to owners of commercial and multifamily projects.

Neva's bachelor's degree is from Santa Clara University. Her J.D. is from the University of Minnesota Law School. She received both degrees magna cum laude.

Neva came to San Diego from Minnesota five years ago and quickly immersed herself in the community. Her pro bono work includes the San Diego Volunteer Lawyers Program and the Innocence Project. She is also active in the Urban Land Institute's Young Leaders Program, the Downtown San Diego Partnership and the NTC Foundation. "My general goal is to help make San Diego the best place to live, work and shop," she said.

RISING STAR



WINNER

TIM HUTTER

Partner

Allen Matkins

Tim Hutter of Allen Matkins is a Rising Star winner.

Hutter was elected to partner in 2018. He handles many high-profile real estate litigation matters with tens of millions of dollars at stake. Complex construction defect and delay claims, land use and entitlements, landlord/tenant disputes, among many other legal matters, all fall under his breadth of experience. He routinely guides the conversation about key development issues, both in his official role with the city of San Diego's Historical Resources Board and as an advocate for clients seeking to build and develop across the state. His nominator called him "a trusted voice on affordable and mixed-income housing policy, a topic that is at the forefront of many commercial real estate conversations in California."

Hutter received his bachelor's degree from Yale and his J.D. from the UCLA School of Law.

In accepting his award, Hutter thanked the judges, his partners and colleagues at Allen Matkins, his clients and his wife, whom he credited for helping him practice law.

RISING STAR



WINNER

DUSTY WOLVERTON

Associate

Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman

Dusty Wolverton, an associate with Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman, wins the Rising Star Award. Wolverton is a member of Pillsbury's Corporate and Securities - Technology practice group, serving on a team of lawyers that advises clients on mission-critical acquisitions. He counsels clients on key deal-related risks, drafts and negotiates acquisition agreements, coordinates among Pillsbury's cross-disciplinary team of attorneys to provide tailored transaction guidance, and mentors junior associates.

"From a small-town boy in Idaho to a rising star in San Diego, I feel honored to be among you," Wolverton said in accepting his award. "I feel honored to be here. It's the best of every world that we live in. We get to be attorneys in San Diego, California. But moreover we get to do the best kind of law, ... the most complex law, the most far-reaching law."

He thanked the partners in his firm for their support and praised the passion he sees in the legal community. Wolverton is a graduate of the University of Idaho and Duke University School of Law.

PATENT



WINNER

JOHN PHILLIPS

Principal

Fish & Richardson

John Phillips of Fish & Richardson is being recognized for his work in patent law.

Phillips represents companies of all sizes — from startups to Fortune 500 corporations — across all industries in inter partes and ex parte post-grant work, due diligence and freedom-to-operate investigations, patent opinions and strategic patent prosecution. He has become a firm leader in post-grant appearances before the U.S. Patent Trial and Appeal Board; he has made more than 114 appearances before the board, with 31 appearances in 2018 alone.

Phillips received a bachelor of science degree in electrical engineering, cum laude, from the University of Michigan, and for a time worked as an engineer at the Scripps Institution of Oceanography. He received his J.D. from George Washington University Law School, where he was valedictorian.

Phillips' pro bono work includes serving as an attorney for the Alliance for Children's Rights, a Los Angeles-based nonprofit protecting the rights of impoverished, abused and neglected youth.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY



WINNER

MEGAN CHUNG

Patent Litigation Partner & Managing Partner

Kilpatrick Townsend & Stockton LLP

Megan Chung is the top scoring attorney in the intellectual property category. As managing partner of Kilpatrick Townsend's San Diego office, Chung is the first female Asian-American to lead a firm office. She heads the patent litigation team in San Diego and focuses her practice on complex and technical intellectual property litigation.

She has evaluated intellectual property and litigated claims addressing technology as varied as software, augmented reality, biotechnology, medical devices and fishing lures. She defended Edwards Lifesciences against Medtronic in a case involving surgical heart valves, and the firm led a countersuit. The parties eventually settled multiple cases and exchanged cross-licenses; Medtronic paid over \$1 billion in license fees.

Megan Chung received her bachelor's degree in human biology and a master's in education from Stanford. She received her J.D. from UC Davis.

Through her pro bono work, Chung has successfully won asylum hearings for women who are persecuted based on their religious and/or political beliefs.

TAX



WINNER

LAURA BUCKLEY

Partner

Higgs Fletcher & Mack

Laura Buckley, partner with Higgs Fletcher & Mack, is the winner in the tax category. She specializes in resolution of tax controversies before the Internal Revenue Service, CA Franchise Tax Board, CA Department of Tax and Fee Administration, CA Office of Tax Appeals and the U.S. Tax Court. Buckley received her J.D., summa cum laude, from Southwestern Law School in Los Angeles and her LL.M. in Taxation from New York University. Before joining Higgs Fletcher & Mack, she was an IRS Chief Counsel attorney and a Special Assistant U.S. attorney. She is 2020 chair-elect of the California Lawyers Association's Tax Section and an adjunct professor at the University of San Diego School of Law, teaching Advanced Business Planning.

"Winning the award was unexpected and extremely flattering," Buckley said. She thanked her firm for its support, and especially for the mentoring she received there. "HFM encouraged me early on in my career to get involved in the community in a meaningful way."

Sheppard Mullin congratulates our seven Leaders in Law finalists:



Whitney Hodges Peter Klee Stephen Korniczky Stephen LaSala Justine Phillips Nancy Scull Lisa Yun

All of these outstanding attorneys exemplify Sheppard Mullin's commitment to put clients first and provide superior legal representation.

SheppardMullin

Brussels | Century City | Chicago | Dallas | London | Los Angeles | New York | Orange County | Palo Alto
San Diego (Downtown) | San Diego (Del Mar) | San Francisco | Seoul | Shanghai | Washington, D.C.

www.sheppardmullin.com

Legal experts. Trusted advisors.

For 40 years AALRR's attorneys have defended San Diego's employers against all types of labor and employment claims. We bring the experience of nearly 200 attorneys to create tailor-made solutions for your unique situations.



aa/r

Atkinson, Andelson
Loya, Ruud & Romo
A Professional Law Corporation

www.aalrr.com

4275 Executive Square, Suite 700
La Jolla, CA 92037

(858) 485-9526



Robert Fried Partner Michael O'Connor, Jr. Partner Michael Morphew Associate Alicia Belock Associate

Cerritos | Fresno | Irvine | Marin | Pasadena | Pleasanton | Riverside | Sacramento | San Diego

CYBER SECURITY



JUSTINE PHILLIPS

Partner - Cyber & Employment Attorney
Sheppard Mullin

Justine Phillips of Sheppard Mullin is the top scoring attorney in the cybersecurity category.

As a partner at Sheppard Mullin, Phillips covers privacy/security by design, cyber risk management and mitigation; e-workforce policies; compliance with data regulations; retention/destruction policies and protocols; information security and data privacy; crisis management and forensic investigations for data breaches; business email compromises; developing policies/protocols/trainings within an organization to create a culture of cyber-awareness; electronic discovery; and social media issues.

The attorney said it was "a tremendous honor" to get the award. "With the tsunami of litigation approaching in cyber law, it is a great recognition — to be recognized by the San Diego Business Journal and the community," she said.

Phillips received her undergraduate and law degrees from the University of San Diego. Her application lists 20 charitable and professional organizations that receive her help. She founded Women in Discovery-San Diego and Mother Attorney Mentoring-San Diego.

LITIGATION



MILES SCULLY

Partner
Gordon Rees Scully Mansukhani, LLP

Miles Scully, partner at Gordon Rees Scully Mansukhani LLP, received the award for litigation. Ranked as one of the top trial attorneys in the nation, he has served as first chair for 73 trials and has achieved notable courtroom victories; Dremak v. Urban Outfitters produced the largest defense verdict in the history of his firm. A recent office opening in Hawaii put his firm in all 50 states. Scully's work extends beyond the courtroom to the business world. It takes in real estate and development as well as other vertical markets. Ultimate Fitness, for example, is a multimillion-dollar sports supplement company.

Scully received his bachelor's degree from Ohio University and his J.D. from The Ohio State University College of Law. Scully said he came to San Diego 25 years ago and saw the top attorneys in town winning awards. "I never thought I would be in the same position. I'm humbled and grateful," he said.

MERGERS & ACQUISITIONS



SCOTT STANTON

Member
Mintz, Levin, Cohn, Ferris, Glovsky, and Popeo P.C.

Scott Stanton is a member of the San Diego office of Mintz. His work in mergers and acquisitions is central to his practice. By now he has participated in more than 100 deals. He handles public company mergers, tender offers, hostile takeovers and many other types of strategic acquisitions and divestitures. His capital markets capabilities include representing issuers and underwriters in public and private offerings of debt and equity securities. He has advised on significant transactions for companies such as Classy Inc. and AMN Healthcare.

"I'm honored to be selected by the panel of judges for this award," Stanton said. "It's very meaningful to me to get this recognition, especially with all the talented and experienced lawyers who are finalists for this award."

Stanton received his bachelor's degree from Stanford University and his juris doctor from UC Davis. He is chairman of the Corporate Directors Forum and serves on the La Jolla Playhouse board of trustees.

IMMIGRATION



JACOB SAPOCHNICK

Immigration Lawyer
Law Offices of Jacob J. Sapochnick

Jacob Sapochnick of the Law Office of Jacob Sapochnick is the winner in the immigration category.

Sapochnick's passion for helping others and for immigration law and technology placed him at the top of his field. Through his website, YouTube videos, apps and guides, his office turns the otherwise dry and daunting topic of immigration law into a source of useful information during times when it is crucial to understand the changes in immigration law.

Moreover, Sapochnick provides presentations that are open to human resources staffing and legal personnel representing companies that hire foreign nationals. Through seminars and webcasts, he assists HR and legal professionals with developing and implementing their immigration programs.

There is so much controversy surrounding immigration, Sapochnick said after the awards ceremony. The award, he continued, was an indication he was doing something right. It is nice to be recognized, he said, adding he is very grateful for the award.

Sapochnick employs 25 people in his practice.

REAL ESTATE



JENNIFER CHANG

Junior Partner
Hecht Solberg Robinson Goldberg & Bagley LLP

Jennifer Chang, a lawyer with Hecht Solberg Robinson Goldberg & Bagley LLP, is the winner in the real estate category. She was named junior partner in December, on her first anniversary of joining the firm. She represents the firm's developer and home builder clients in a variety of acquisitions and dispositions, financing and leasing transactions. During the last two years, Chang has attracted a number of new clients to the firm, including one of the largest Fortune 500 companies in San Diego. She also works with the firm's clients in Asia, utilizing her language skills and unique ability to work with people. Chang received her bachelor's degree from Duke University and her J.D. from the University of San Diego School of Law.

"It was an honor to be recognized as a finalist and a wonderful surprise to be selected among this group of accomplished San Diego attorneys," Chang said.

NONPROFIT



JESSE IMBRIANO

Legal Director
Casa Cornelia Law Center

Jesse Imbriano of the Casa Cornelia Law Center is being recognized for his work in the nonprofit sector. Casa Cornelia offers services to immigrants. Imbriano directly supervises the legal work of the law firm — including a robust team of staff attorneys and hundreds of volunteer attorneys from the private bar — while maintaining an active case load.

When the "Zero Tolerance" policy and family separations began to affect Casa Cornelia's clients, Imbriano led Casa Cornelia to quickly develop an infrastructure to respond to the legal needs of this population. This included partnering with federal defenders who were serving separated parents, and harnessing existing relationships with legal services providers across the country to help locate separated family members. To this day, under his leadership, legal staff continues to address the legal needs of all clients who have been identified as having been separated at the border.

Imbriano received his bachelor's degree from Columbia University and his J.D. from Villanova University School of Law.

Pillsbury is proud to congratulate our **2019 SDBJ Leaders in Law** finalists.



Callie Bjurstrom



Eric Kremer



John Wetherell



Dusty Wolverton



Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman LLP | pillsburylaw.com

501 West Broadway | San Diego, CA 92101 | +1.619.234.5000 • 12255 El Camino Real | San Diego, CA 92130 | +1.858.509.4000

CONGRATULATIONS

William V. Whelan

2019 LEADERS IN LAW AWARD WINNER

for Labor & Employment Category



Solomon Ward
Attorneys at Law

Solomon Ward Seidenwurm & Smith LLP
401 B Street, Suite 1200, San Diego, CA 92101

(619) 231-0303 | www.swslaw.com

GORDON REES SCULLY MANSUKHANI CONGRATULATES

2019 LEADERS IN LAW



Miles Scully
Award Winner "Litigation"



Brandon Saxon
Finalist

Gordon Rees Scully Mansukhani — Your 50 State Partner™

As the only law firm with offices and attorneys in all 50 states, Gordon & Rees delivers maximum value to our clients by combining the resources of a full-service national firm with the local knowledge of a regional firm. Featuring more than 900 lawyers nationwide, we provide comprehensive litigation and business transactions services to public and private companies ranging from start-ups to Fortune 500 corporations.

Founded in 1974, Gordon & Rees is recognized among the fastest growing and largest law firms in the country. The firm is currently ranked among the 35 largest law firms in the U.S. and the top 50 firms for diverse and female attorneys in the AmLaw 200.



www.grsm.com

YOUR 50 STATE PARTNER™

LABOR & EMPLOYMENT



NADIA BERMUDEZ
Shareholder
Klinedinst PC

Nadia Bermudez of **Klinedinst PC** is one of two winners in the labor and employment category. Bermudez has an established practice that focuses on counseling and defending clients in employment matters. Additionally, she has significant experience as a professional trainer in sexual harassment prevention and other employment topics. Fluent in both English and Spanish, she is adept at helping a wide variety of clients navigate the increasingly complex business environment in California. She was selected by Gov. Gavin Newsom to serve on the San Diego and Imperial County Regional Judicial Selection Advisory Committee in 2019, and she was appointed to serve as a lawyer representative by the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of California and was then selected to serve as co-chair and lead the local delegation to the 9th Circuit Conference. "I think we all recognize what a special place San Diego is to practice," Bermudez said after the awards program. "This is a warm and collegial crowd. I am happy to be among the award recipients tonight."

LABOR & EMPLOYMENT



WILLIAM WHELAN
Partner
Solomon Ward Seidenwurm & Smith LLP

William Whelan, partner with **Solomon Ward Seidenwurm & Smith, LLP**, is one of two winners in the labor and employment category. Whelan's practice focuses on labor and employment issues, primarily on behalf of management. He has successfully represented medical groups, manufacturers, retailers, nonprofit employers, religious institutions, a school of law and financial institutions in obtaining favorable litigation outcomes. He has successfully handled many wrongful termination, discrimination, wage and hour class actions, employee compensation cases, partnership disputes, contract cases, non-compete contract claims, trade secret cases and interference with contractual relations claims. In remarks from the podium, Whelan said some of the credit for the award belongs to two lawyers he worked with on a pivotal case: Laura MacNeel of Aya Healthcare and Kendra Hall of Procopio. Whelan received his bachelor's degree from Pomona College and his J.D. from UCLA. His pro bono work includes chairing the board of St. Vincent de Paul Villages.

DALLO LAW GROUP
TAX LAW FIRM

Congratulations to Michael Dallo on Being Recognized a 2019 Leaders in Law Finalist!

TRUST A TRUE TAX EXPERT TO SOLVE YOUR TAX PROBLEMS.

TAX SETTLEMENTS • TAX AUDITS
INTERNATIONAL TAX • TAX APPEALS

Founder Michael Dallo is a San Diego Tax Attorney who holds an advanced Masters of Law Degree in Taxation, is a CPA, a Certified Tax Law Specialist, and a Professor of Taxation at the University of San Diego. As a San Diego Tax Lawyer, he has extensive experience in developing creative legal solutions for your tax problems. He has shown his strength in negotiation, and is a showcase example of leadership in his field.

San Diego Business Journal LEADERS IN LAW FINALIST 2019

PEACE OF MIND.

mdallo@dallolawgroup.com 619.795.8000 www.dallolawgroup.com

Yelp 5 STAR RATING, Avvo 10.0 RATING, Master of Laws, Rising Stars Award & Title, Preeminent, etc.

Fisher Phillips congratulates San Diego attorney **Miranda Watkins** on her recognition as a 2019 Leaders in Law finalist by the *San Diego Business Journal*

Miranda Watkins
mwatkins@fisherphillips.com

We applaud all of this year's nominees and recipients on their accomplishments and thank them for their dedication to the San Diego business community.

Fisher Phillips www.fisherphillips.com
4747 Executive Drive Suite 1000 San Diego, CA 92121

On the Front Lines of Workplace Law.™

Congratulations to **John Whittemore** on being named a SDBJ Leaders in Law Rising Star finalist!

Effective. Timely. Thorough.

California Office: 800 Silverado St, 2nd Floor La Jolla, CA 92037 858.551.2440

Nevada Office: 5470 Kietzke Ln, Ste 200 Reno, Nevada 89511 775.384.0022

BLANCHARD KRASNER & FRENCH
www.bkflaw.com

A Better Brand of Business Law.

Blanchard Krasner & French is a proud sponsor of SDBJ Leaders in Law

SAN DIEGO BUSINESS JOURNAL LEADERS IN LAW AWARDS 2019

Buchalter
AZ | CA | OR | WA
www.buchalter.com

CONGRATULATIONS Shareholder **BRIAN C. FISH**

2019 Leader in the Law Nominee
San Diego Business Journal

SCMV SELTZER CAPLAN MCMAHON VITEK

Congratulates our Leaders in Law finalists.

Brian Katusian, Tax
Andrea Myers, Litigation
Scott Williams, Real Estate

WWW.SCMV.COM

CONGRATULATIONS DANIELLE HUMPHRIES AND GABE WRIGHT!

Hahn Loeser congratulates partners Danielle C. Humphries and Gabe P. Wright for their selection as finalists for *San Diego Business Journal's* Leaders in Law 2019. We are happy to celebrate their significant contributions to the firm, their leadership, and their community involvement. Congratulations to Danielle, Gabe, and all of the Leaders in Law finalists and winners.

HAHN LOESER Hahn Loeser & Parks LLP | hahnlaw.com | 619.810.4300
attorneys at law 600 W Broadway | Suite 1500 | San Diego, CA 92101

SAN DIEGO | CLEVELAND | COLUMBUS | NAPLES | FORT MYERS | CHICAGO



Barb Chodos (San Diego Business Journal).



Carole Buckner (Procopio Cory Hargreaves & Savitch LLP) and John Wetherell (Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman LLP).



William Whelan and Andrew Myers (Solomon Ward Seidenwurm & Smith), and Mendi Mattingly (SolarTurbines).



Rana Sampson (MUG Union Bank) presenting awards for the Leaders in Law winners.



David Crean (Objective Capital Partners) and George Reyes (Best Best & Krieger).



Attentive audience at the SDBJ Leaders in Law Awards.



Guillermo Escobedo (Jackson Lewis P.C.) and Steve McAvoy (ADR Services).



Paul Najjar (Gafcon), Sheri Morefield and Justine Phillips (Sheppard Mullin Richter & Hampton LLP).



Ron Marcus (The San Diego County Bar Association) and Barb Chodos (San Diego Business Journal).



William Kammer (Solomon Ward Seidenwurm & Smith LLP) and Steve Coopersmith (The Coopersmith Law Firm).



Anthony and Samantha Arnold (Barnes & Thornburg LLP).



Ryan Rupe (Liedle Larson Vail), Karen Landers (SD Metropolitan Transit System), Tami Vail (Liedle Larson Vail) and Tom Landers (Solomon Ward Seidenwurm & Smith LLP).



Rebecca Carter, Kristine Custodio Suero, Paul Woodard and Nicole Sealey (Butterfield Schechter LLP).



Carrie Battilega Luetzow (Andrews Lagasse Branch + Bell LLP) and Adam Lenain (Mintz, Levin, Cohen, Ferris, Glovsky and Popeo, P.C.).



William Eigner and Sara Neva (Procopio, Cory, Hargreaves & Savitch LLP).



Roberto Alcantar and Nancy Maldonado (Chicano Federation), Robert Fried (Atkinson, Andelson, Loya, Ruud & Romo), Francisco Valle (Valle Consulting), Anne Wolverton (San Diego Symphony) and Dusty Wolverton (Pillsbury, Winthrop, Shaw, Pittman LLP).



Terri and Arthur Moreau III (Klinedinst P.C.)



Frank Busic (University Club atop Symphony Towers) addresses the audience.



David Salisbury (Mintz, Levin, Cohen, Ferris, Glovsky and Popeo, P.C.), Steve Coopersmith and Michael Nicoud (The Coopersmith Law Firm).



Chris Bryant (San Diego Employers Association) and Peter Callstrom (San Diego Workforce Partnership).



Mary Le Blaylock, Martha Mosier, Nicole Maldonado (Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices California Properties).



Tu Vo, Theo Gianulis and John Whittenmore (Blanchard, Krasner & French, APC).



Chris Olmsted (Ogletree Deakins) presenting awards for Leaders in Law.



Ryan Kirby (Atlas General Insurance Services LLC) and Michael Kirby (Kirby & Kirby).



Mary Wyman and Tayler Marshall (Witham Mahoney & Abbott, LLP).



Paul Najjar (Gafcon) and Michael Brown (DLA Piper).



Miranda Watkins and Haylee Saathoff (Fisher Phillips LLP).

WMA
WITHAM MAHONEY & ABBOTT

Build. Invest. Protect.
www.wmalawfirm.com

RISK... needs to be managed.

The original Santa Fe Depot tower coming down in 1915.

Managing Risk and Negotiating Insurance

CAVIGNAC & ASSOCIATES
INSURANCE BROKERS

Commercial Insurance | Surety Bonds | Employee Benefits | Risk Control | Personal Lines
450 B Street, Suite 1800 | San Diego, CA 92101 | 619 234 6848
www.cavignac.com



Anne Wolverton (San Diego Symphony) and Dusty Wolverton (Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman LLP).



Jennifer Chang (Hecht Soldberg Robinson Goldberg & Bagley LLP).



Dana Maire (County of San Diego).



Paul Najjar (Gafcon) and Tim Hutter (Allen Matkins).



Eshel Bar-Adon (Axos Financial, Inc. and Axos Bank).



Jared Smith and John Phillips (Fish & Richardson).



Jacob Sapochnick (Law Offices of Sapochnick).



Craig Johnson, Mendy Mattingly, Wisdom Beasley (Solar Turbines).



Laura Buckley (Higgs Fletcher & Mack LLP).



William Whelan (Solomon Ward Seidenwurm & Smith LLP).



Nadia Bermudez (Klinedinst P.C.).



Sara Neva (Procopio, Cory, Hargreaves & Savitch LLP).



Justine Phillips (Sheppard Mullin Richter & Hampton LLP).

CONGRATULATIONS FOR WINNING
2019 LEADERS IN LAW

Founder Jacob Sapochnick is a San Diego Immigration lawyer who holds an advanced master of law (LLM) in International law. He is an entrepreneur and a local Angel investor in numerous start ups. As a san diego immigration lawyer, he has extensive experience in investment visas and advices local employers who are seeking foreign workers to add to their teams. He is a true advocate for immigrants and their employers, and is a showcase example of leadership in his field.

SAPOCHNICK
— LAW FIRM —
U.S. IMMIGRATION LAW

Contact us at info@h1b.biz or 619-819-9204

SAN DIEGO BUSINESS JOURNAL
LEADERS IN LAW
AWARDS 2019

Congratulations
2019 Winners & Finalists
See you next year!

#LeadersInLaw 2019
#SDBJEvents