

# LEADERS OF INFLUENCE WOMEN IN LAW

CUSTOM CONTENT • August 26, 2024

## 2024 WOMEN IN LAW PROFILES

**HALEY AANESTAD**

MANLY, STEWART &amp; FINALDI

Raised on the west coast in Dana Point, California, Haley Aanestad embarked on her higher education journey at Chapman University in Orange County and graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Business

Administration with an emphasis in Finance and a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science. She also played soccer for the Panthers for four years and was named the team captain her senior year.

Advocating for survivors of sexual abuse is what drives her to work hard and hold institutions, both large and small, accountable. It is because of these brave survivors that institutions enabling sexual abuse are being held accountable for their systemic failures.

Her passion for the sport led to several awards, including the Jack Duddy Leadership Award in 2016 and a team record for the most minutes played — 6,777. Studies continued at Chapman University's Dale E. Fowler School of Law where Aanestad competed as a Moot Court Board Member, received the esteemed Professor William Stallworth Award for Contract Law Course Excellence, and finally graduated magna cum laude in 2020.

Aanestad has practiced in childhood sexual abuse litigation since embarking on her legal career. First joining the firm in 2018 as a law clerk, Aanestad has gone on to represent survivors of sexual abuse in cases involving religious institutions, healthcare providers, universities, fraternities, and public-school districts. Currently, Aanestad is a part of the team handling the Northern California Roman Catholic Clergy Cases, representing over 100 survivors.

**LAURIE A. BADDON**

MCDERMOTT WILL &amp; EMERY LLP

Laurie A. Baddon focuses her practice on employment litigation and counseling. She provides trusted and strategic advice to clients of all sizes, from family offices and high-net-worth individuals to Fortune 500 companies, on day-to-day employment-related issues to ensure compliance with federal, state, and local employment laws. She advises clients on matters ranging from personnel management decisions, leaves of absence, workplace accommodations, workplace investigations, pre-litigation disputes, executive compensation, employment agreements, restrictive covenants, reductions in force, and workplace policies, procedures, and handbooks. She also conducts employment diligence in mergers and acquisitions of all sizes and advises buyers on workforce integration and risk mitigation post-closing.

Baddon defends employers in all stages of employment litigation including in class action and single plaintiff wage and hour lawsuits and in harassment, discrimination, retaliation, wrongful termination, misclassification, and breach of contract claims. She advocates for clients in federal and state courts and administrative agencies, including proceedings before the Department of Fair Employment and Housing, the Division of Labor Standards Enforcement, and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

**CHRISTINE BARAN**

FISHER &amp; 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). She is actively involved with the California Fuels & Convenience Alliance and is on the Board of Directors with the Orange County Apartment Association.

## Holland &amp; Knight

**ANNE REDCROSS BEEHLER**

HOLLAND &amp; KNIGHT

Anne Redcross Beehler is a real estate and business litigator in Holland & Knight's Newport Beach office. Ms. Beehler represents the real estate industry and other corporate and individual clients in

disputes across California and New York. Her practice focuses on matters affecting real property — including, for example, secured loan dispute and workouts, landlord/tenant disputes, partition claims, and acquisition/disposition disputes. Moreover, she has substantial experience with respect to partnership disputes, corporate governance disputes, complex contract and fraud matters, theft of trade secret cases, claims under the state and federal securities laws, and *qui tam* and whistleblower actions.

Ms. Beehler handles her cases from start to finish — with substantial experience trying cases in state and federal court. She particularly enjoys acting as a counselor to clients and finding ways to minimize litigation, as often as she appears in court as a zealous advocate on behalf of her clients.

Clients describe Ms. Beehler as practical, thoughtful, dogged, and always prepared. Several clients have remarked that she "is the reason they can sleep at night." Ms. Beehler is also active in the community, mentoring other women lawyers, and she is actively involved in the OC Women Lawyer's Association and the OC Bar's Mommy, Esq. Committee. She also is on the Advisory Board of ALIGHT — a pro bono organization that focuses on providing legal services to survivors of human trafficking.

## Buchalter

**FARAH BHATTI**

BUCHALTER

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

Ms. Bhatti expertly navigates the complexities of issues within the areas of trademark 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). While there, she examined more than 2,000 trademark applications and represented the USPTO before the Trademark Trial and Appeal Board (TTAB). 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 trademark litigation under the Anticybersquatting Consumer Protection Act (ACPA) as well as other federal laws.

Ms. Bhatti works has been recognized as a leader by the World Intellectual Property Review and is an active committee member of the International Trademark Association.

**KATIE BINKLEY**

VETERANS LEGAL INSTITUTE

Katie Binkley is the deputy executive director at Veterans Legal Institute where she assists in the management and future planning of the firm. She supports planning the annual fundraiser, Lawyers for Warriors, and advocates for VLI in the legal and business community.

Binkley is the chair of the Legal & Re-Entry working group of the Orange County Veterans and Military Families Collaborative (OCVMFC). She also sits on the Executive Board of the Orange County Bar Association (OCBA) Family Law Section and is a member of the OCBA Pro Bono and Community Outreach Committees. Binkley sits on the Board of the Leadership Tomorrow program, administered by the Newport Beach Chamber of Commerce, after successfully graduating from the program in 2024. Binkley is also part of the Fieldstone Leadership Network's Class of 2024.

In the years of 2023 and 2021, Binkley was honored as one of Congressman Lou Correa's Women of the Year. Binkley regularly pens articles for publications like Orange County Lawyer and US Veterans Magazine.

Binkley is a graduate from the Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law at Arizona State University. During her time in law school, she was awarded the Judge Mary M. Schroeder Award for pro bono service, and graduated with the highest pro bono distinction. Serving veterans is important to Binkley. Her late grandfather was an Army Officer during the Korean War so she seeks to honor him, and all veterans, by dedicating her practice to serve our heroes.

\*Admitted to practice in Arizona and California. VA Accredited.

# Leaders of Influence – Women in Law 2024



**Celeste Stahl Brady**  
**Partner**

csbrady@stradlinglaw.com  
949.725.4141

**Areas of Focus**

- Affordable Housing
- Public/Private Partnerships
- Public Law Litigation/CEQA
- Public Law



**Allison Burns**  
**Partner**

aburns@stradlinglaw.com  
949.725.4187

**Areas of Focus**

- Public Law
- Public Law Litigation/CEQA



**Karla Kraft**  
**Partner**

kkraft@stradlinglaw.com  
949.725.4060

**Areas of Focus**

- Business Litigation
- Consumer Litigation & Enforcement
- Wage & Hour Class Actions
- Employment Litigation



**Vanessa Legbandt**  
**Partner**

vlegbandt@stradlinglaw.com  
949.725.4073

**Areas of Focus**

- Bond & Underwriter Counsel
- Public Finance
- Economic Development/PPP



**Carol Lew**  
**Partner**

clew@stradlinglaw.com  
949.725.4237

**Areas of Focus**

- Tax
- Bond & Underwriter Counsel
- Disclosure Counsel
- Public Finance



**Kathleen Marcus**  
**Partner**

kmarcus@stradlinglaw.com  
949.725.4080

**Areas of Focus**

- Securities Litigation & Enforcement
- Blockchain Technology & Digital Currency
- Corporate Investigations & White Collar Defense



**Amanda McFall**  
**Partner**

AMcFall@stradlinglaw.com  
949.725.4029

**Areas of Focus**

- Public Companies
- Corporate & Securities



**Lisa Northrup**  
**Partner**

lnorthrup@stradlinglaw.com  
949.725.4011

**Areas of Focus**

- Business Litigation
- Corporate Investigations & White Collar Defense
- Securities Litigation & Enforcement



**Jenny Tran**  
**Partner**

jtran@stradlinglaw.com  
949.725.4078

**Areas of Focus**

- Corporate & Securities
- Mergers & Acquisitions
- Tax

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## 2024 WOMEN IN LAW PROFILES

**CELESTE STAHL BRADY**STRADLING YOCCA  
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 &amp; EMERY LLP

Sarah Bro is the co-office managing partner for McDermott's Southern California offices. She focuses her practice on trademark prosecution, enforcement and brand portfolio management, as well as intellectual

property transactions, 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, fashion and apparel, consumer goods, beauty, wellness and lifestyle, arts, sports, and entertainment, nonprofit associations, real estate and hospitality, and professional services.

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 and Uniform Rapid Suspension 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 also has extensive experience drafting and negotiating endorsement and sponsorship agreements involving high-profile rights of publicity. 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 FinTech Practice Group.

**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; Surplus Land Act; and representation of Community Choice Aggregators.

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, Three Arch Bay Community Services 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.

**ROXANA CHAMOUILLE**

BUCHALTER

Roxana K. Chamouillé is a shareholder in Buchalter's Orange County office, and a member of the Firm's Real Estate and Real Estate Finance Groups. For over twenty years, Ms. Chamouillé has handled

sophisticated commercial real estate transactions for property owners, purchasers, sellers, and local, regional, and nationwide lenders. Ms. Chamouillé's extensive real estate experience includes conducting various due diligence, and negotiating, preparing, reviewing, and closing loan and purchase and sale documentation for the acquisition, disposition, financing, and development of a wide range of commercial projects, including retail, office, industrial, multi-family, hotels, self-storage, and schools.

Ms. Chamouillé has substantial experience in restructuring credit facilities, and advising clients through loan modification and forbearance arrangements of various credit types.

Prior to joining the Firm, Ms. Chamouillé served as the chair of the finance practice group at a prominent law firm. Additionally, she was the Founder and President of a law firm specializing in real estate transactions and litigation.

In 2018, Ms. Chamouillé was selected as a member of "Top 100 Lawyers" by the Top 100 Magazine. She is also an active member of Chief, an exclusive network of women executive leaders.

Additionally, Ms. Chamouillé is involved in various Firm and community matters. She is a member of the Firm's DEI Committee, volunteers her time for animal advocacy and rescue, and is on the Planning Committee for various Girls Inc. of Orange County events. She is a Gracie Jiu Jitsu Black Belt, and has helped empower numerous women and children through jiu jitsu instruction.

**RAQUEL COOPER**

MANLY, STEWART &amp; FINALDI

Raquel Cooper is an attorney with Manly, Stewart & Finaldi. As a career sex crimes prosecutor, her practice is focused on representing survivors of sexual abuse, assault, and harassment.

Before joining Manly, Stewart & Finaldi, Cooper served as an Orange County Deputy District Attorney for more than a decade. There, she represented the People of the State of California in the prosecution of hundreds of criminal cases ranging from sexual assault, forcible rape, child molestation, kidnapping, stalking, domestic violence, and attempted murder, among others. She conducted nearly 50 criminal jury trials during her career in the Orange County District Attorney's Office. Due to her overwhelming trial success, she was promoted to the role of Senior Trial Advisor. In this position, she supervised Deputy District Attorneys, elevating their trial skills, strategies, and techniques.

For more than half of her prosecutorial career, Cooper worked in the District Attorney's Sexual Assault Unit where she exclusively prosecuted felony sexual assault crimes. Cooper worked with law enforcement at the local and federal level, as well as agencies across the country and internationally to investigate sexual assault crimes, locate, apprehend and often extradite perpetrators to Orange County, where she then filed criminal charges, litigated pre-trial motions, met with survivors, supervised child abuse forensic interviews and conducted jury trials and sentencing hearings.

Cooper conducted sexual assault investigative trainings for the Orange County Sheriff's Department, the District Attorney's office, and other local law enforcement agencies.

**BRIDGET K. DEVOY**

MCDERMOTT WILL &amp; 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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## 2024 WOMEN IN LAW PROFILES



### DEBBIE DICKSON

SMITH DICKSON, CERTIFIED  
PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS, LLP



Deborah Dickson founded Smith Dickson, Certified Public Accountants, LLP, 30 years ago and continues to serve as the managing partner. Her experience includes forensic accounting and expert testimony, tax, and consulting.

Dickson provides forensic accounting, litigation support services and expert witness testimony with an emphasis on business disputes including fraud and embezzlement, intellectual property, real estate, trust and estate, employment, and personal injury. She works as a forensic expert witness in Federal, State, Probate, and Family Law Courts; in arbitrations; and as a court appointed referee - providing asset and fraudulent expense tracing, economic damage analysis; lost profits and unjust enrichment calculations; forensic accounting; business valuations; financial/tax records analysis; and expert testimony.

Dickson personally handles the tax and accounting matters for high-net-worth clients and business owners—advising on strategic business planning, tax planning and compliance, bank financing negotiations, and financial statement presentation. She is frequently involved with due diligence and structuring of business buy/sell deals. She is a popular speaker on subjects such as tax planning and buying/selling businesses.

Dickson began her career as an auditor for Deloitte (formerly Touche Ross) and subsequently accepted an offer to run the Entrepreneurial Services Division at PricewaterhouseCoopers (formerly Coopers & Lybrand).

Contact Dickson at (949) 553-1020,  
www.smithdickson.com



### CAROLINE DJANG

BUCHALTER



Caroline Djang is an Irvine-based Shareholder in Buchalter's Insolvency and Financial Law practice group and Co-Chair of the Orange County Litigation practice group. Djang has vast experience representing creditors, trustees, debtors, and committees in bankruptcy cases and adversary proceedings. Djang is a certified mediator and a Chapter 11 Subchapter V Trustee for the Central District of California. She counsels her clients on the best strategies for pursuing and collecting debts and realistically advises them on their prospects for recovery. She also helps her clients in financial distress to understand their options. Djang is a frequent speaker on the Small Business Reorganization Act.

Djang is dedicated to serving the Orange County legal community, including serving as president of the Orange County Women Lawyers Association and on the Board of Directors of the Orange County Bar Association. She also serves on the Board of Directors for the James T. King Bankruptcy Inn of Court and the Ninth Judicial Circuit Historical Society. Djang was a longtime Lawyer Representative for the Central District of California and served as an At-Large Member of the Ninth Circuit Conference Executive Committee.

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 100 Southern California Attorneys, Top 50 Women, Top 50 Orange County; 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.



### 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. As a founding partner of a leading litigation firm in California routinely retained as trial counsel in complex and challenging cases throughout the state, Ms. Dorey has shaped a firm of exceptionally talented litigators with diverse cultural and personal backgrounds, with particular focus on creating an environment that empowers female attorneys. In doing so, Ms. Dorey has created a work environment where employees feel appreciated and part of a team that cares. As a result of the employee focused work environment, Everett Dorey's number of attorneys continues to grow 20% annually, quickly becoming one of the fastest growing firms in the region.

Ms. Dorey has authored numerous articles that have been published across numerous publications on a regional and national level, she has also been a panel speaker for various professional presentations. She has received numerous industry awards, including but not limited to, recognition in the 2022 – 2024 editions of Benchmark Litigation, The Best Lawyers in America, Lawyer of Distinction by the National Law Journal, 2022 Leaders of Influence- Women in Law and 2022 Women in Business by the Orange County Business Journal, and a Southern California Rising Star Super Lawyer in 2019 – 2024, and Daily Journal's 2024 Top Women Lawyers list.



### ANNE MARIE ELLIS

BUCHALTER



Anne Marie Ellis is the California chair of Buchalter's Products Liability Practice Group and the chair of the Chemical Law and Prop. 65 Industry Group. She concentrates on product liability defense, personal injury and commercial litigation, general liability, regulatory compliance, and client counseling.

Whether defending claims as trial counsel, managing risks associated with allegations of catastrophic injuries and wrongful death, or establishing strategies to prevent and defend California's Proposition 65 claims, Ellis has a reputation for practicality and efficiency in complex, high exposure investigations, litigation, trials and regulatory matters. Prevailing in state and federal courts across the country, Anne Marie has a complex litigation background that includes class actions and every phase of litigation and trial. She is well versed on e-discovery and preservation of trade secrets and confidential information.

Ellis also spends considerable time helping clients prevent litigation and apply best practices to comply with regulatory obligations. She is a frequent author and presenter to legal and industry audiences. Recently, Ellis has been advancing the discussion around trends in PFAS claims and compliance with Prop 65. She offers extensive experience managing California Proposition 65 compliance as well as defending private enforcement cases.

Ellis has also helped clients fight back against Consumer Legal Remedies Act, false advertising, unfair business practices shakedown suits and similar claims. She was also honored as a Finalist for the 2024 "Orange County Inspirational Women" Awards by L.A. Times B2B Publishing.



### LISA EYANSON

VETERANS LEGAL INSTITUTE



Lisa Eyanson is an accomplished criminal defense attorney with over 30 years of litigation experience. Eyanson has dedicated her career to representing indigent clients, including over two decades in 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 assisting Veterans with expunging and sealing criminal records, affording them better access to housing and employment, ensuring Veterans access to all resources available to stay safe and secure. In 2023 alone, VLI assisted over one hundred Veterans to expunge convictions, many of which were a result of service-related trauma.

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

In 1994, Eyanson joined the Orange County Public Defender's Office eventually serving as a Senior Deputy Public Defender, where the majority of her litigation experience was in the handling of serious, violent, and complex felony matters, including special circumstance and capital murder cases. In her free time, she serves as the Volunteer Coordinator with USO of Orange County and as the 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), the Vice-Chair of the Veterans Legal Institute ("VLI") Executive Board, is a California State Bar Board Certified Specialist in Estate Planning, Trust and Probate Law with Klinedinst Attorneys.

Finkelstein founded AHAVA Law where estate planning is planning for life... with your love!™ She has been selected as a Super Lawyers rising star every year from 2018 – 2024 and has an AVVO top attorney rating of 10.0.

Finkelstein's experiences as an elementary school teacher with Teach for America and as a Law Clerk for the U.S. Air Force JAG Corps honed her passion for education and veterans. She has been volunteering with VLI since 2014 and pioneered the monthly pro bono estate clinic in 2017. Through the clinic she serves approximately 100 veterans and their families each year. She is the 2021 VLI Lawyers for Warriors Veterans Advocate of the Year.

Finkelstein has served on the VLI Board of Directors since 2016 and the Executive Board since 2020. Finkelstein chaired/co-chaired 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 four of her grandparents served in the United States Military.

Finkelstein is the 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 frequently speaks at educational seminars for the local Southern California community as well as teaching continuing legal education courses throughout the United States.

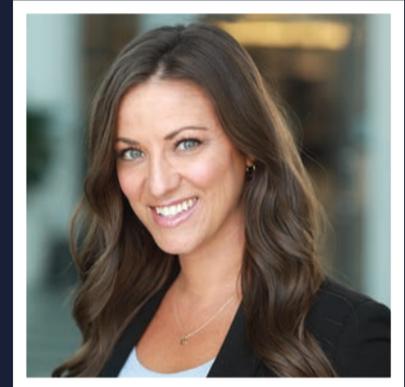
## EMPOWERING SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL ABUSE



**COURTNEY THOM**  
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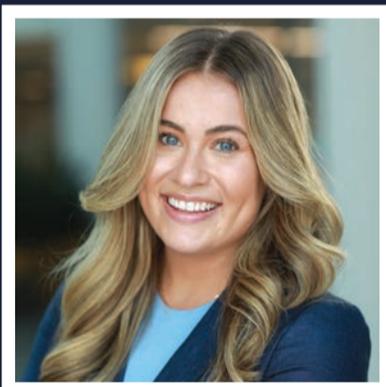
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ATTORNEY



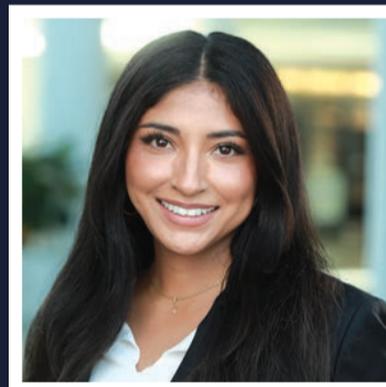
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ATTORNEY



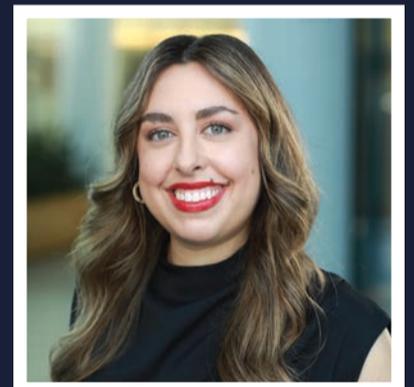
**JENNY LOURO**  
ATTORNEY



**COURTNEY PENDRY**  
ATTORNEY



**ARIEL ROMERO**  
ATTORNEY



**CRISTINA NOLAN**  
ATTORNEY

### FIGHTERS FOR JUSTICE

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

## 2024 WOMEN IN LAW PROFILES



### 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 \$9.5 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 75 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.



### MELISSA FULGENCIO

UPLIFT LAW

Melissa Fulgencio began her legal journey at the University of California, Irvine, where she double majored in English Literature and Political Science, earning high honors at graduation. She received a scholarship to Western State College of Law with externships in juvenile dependency and criminal law. After passing the CA Bar Exam the first time, and over the next 14 years, Fulgencio built an impressive career in law focusing on business law and litigation.

Six years ago, Fulgencio founded Uplift Law, PC, which started as a boutique firm and has evolved into a recognized entity within the legal community. Despite initial skepticism, her passion for technology and small business fueled her hard work, allowing her to establish herself as a formidable presence in the field. Uplift Law has grown significantly, now serving over 300 clients globally through its innovative remote services.

Her dedication to overcoming challenges reflects her grit and perseverance. Under her leadership, Uplift Law has become synonymous with small businesses looking for a legal champion who is likeable and relatable.

Fulgencio's commitment to her clients and her innovative approach have earned her a nomination for the OCBJ Women in Business awards, highlighting her influence in the field. This recognition not only validates her efforts but also serves as an inspiration for others aspiring to make a difference. As she continues to break barriers, Fulgencio exemplifies the essence of "leadership and commitment in law."



### MORGAN GALLAGHER

COX, CASTLE & NICHOLSON

Morgan Gallagher is a partner at Cox, Castle & Nicholson and a leading California real estate and land use attorney. She is highly regarded for her ability to guide clients strategically and efficiently through the complex and dynamic processes that define California land use law, and to successfully resolve cases when projects are challenged. Gallagher specializes in transactional and litigation real estate matters involving land use, zoning, entitlements, and environmental permitting for complex and controversial projects.

Gallagher has extensive experience in local and State planning and zoning regulations, the California Environmental Quality Act, the Subdivision Map Act, and the Coastal Act. She advises clients on all aspects of development projects, from due diligence to project approval, and regularly appears before Planning Commissions, City Councils, and other agencies on behalf of her clients. She represents clients throughout the State on a wide range of real estate projects, including residential, renewable, office, corporate R&D campuses, industrial, commercial, and mixed-use.

Gallagher serves on the Board of the Orange County Salvation Army, Tustin Community Foundation, and Building Block Foundation. She is an Advisory Board Member for the Urban Land Institute (ULI) Orange County/Inland Empire Chapter and is Chair of the ULI Orange County/Inland Empire Women's Leadership Initiative. Gallagher is also a member of the Women's Conference Committee for the Building Industry Association Orange County Chapter.



### YESENIA M. GALLEGOS

MCDERMOTT WILL & EMERY LLP

Yesenia M. Gallegos is the co-office managing partner for McDermott's Southern California offices and a partner in the Firm's Employment Practice Group. She has over two decades of litigation experience representing employers in wage and hour class actions, Fair Credit Reporting Act class actions, California Private Attorneys General Act representative actions, embezzlement disputes, restrictive covenants, as well as defends against discrimination, harassment, and retaliation claims. She is also an experienced counselor who provides strategic advice to employers and the C-Suite on mitigating risk in mergers and acquisitions, pay equity, executive compensation and executive employment agreements, employment investigations, enforcement or avoidance of restrictive covenants, managing leaves of absence, and reductions in force.



### ROZANNA GEIL

VETERANS LEGAL INSTITUTE

Rozanna Geil is a Family Law Staff Attorney. Prior to joining VLI, Geil worked in private practice dedicated exclusively to family law. She has extensive experience working and collaborating with a diverse clientele as pro bono counsel for some of the largest non-profit organizations in Southern California. Geil is passionate about helping individuals gain access to justice and believes in empowering clients through education, guidance, and active involvement.

Geil received her Juris Doctor from Southwestern Law School, where she was conferred the first Public Interest Service Award upon graduation. She holds a Bachelor of Arts degree, magna cum laude, Phi Beta Kappa, from the University of California, Irvine, and an executive certificate in leadership from the Yale School of Management.

In her free time, Geil enjoys reading, photography, staying active, being outdoors, and spending time with family and friends.



### ELIZABETH R. GLASGOW

MCDERMOTT WILL & EMERY LLP

Elizabeth R. Glasgow focuses her practice on multigenerational wealth preservation through the use 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.

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## 2024 WOMEN IN LAW PROFILES

**LINDA GULLEDGE**

FISHER &amp; PHILLIPS LLP

Linda Gulledge is a partner in Fisher Phillips' Irvine office and a core member of the firm's PEO and Staffing Practice Group. Gulledge represents employers on employment-related advice and counseling issues, transactional and regulatory matters, including audits, California and multi-state wage and hour compliance, benefits, leave management, and other employment-related legal matters.

In her current practice, Gulledge helps clients understand and navigate complex legal and regulatory compliance challenges. Gulledge devotes a significant portion of her practice to working with staffing, gig economy, employer of record (EOR), employee leasing, and Professional Employer Organization (PEO) clients on diverse topics including contracts, start-up advice, mergers and acquisitions, and independent contractor status. She is actively involved in the National Association of Professional Employer Organizations and serves on NAPEO's State Government Affairs Committee. In addition, she regularly conducts seminars, webinars, and training sessions for executives, managers, and human resource professionals on employment law topics.

**KELLY HAGEMANN**

MICHELMAN &amp; ROBINSON

Kelly Hagemann, a partner at Michelman & Robinson, has been at the forefront of the firm's specialized practice in the dynamic field of behavioral healthcare. With a focus on mental health and substance use disorder treatment providers, Hagemann has expertly navigated her clients through the evolving landscape of federal and state regulations over recent years. Her dedication extends to advocating for broader access to essential mental health and substance use disorder treatment services, including challenging discriminatory zoning laws and unjust payment practices by insurers and self-funded employer plans.

Hagemann's expertise also includes guiding her clients through critical moments, such as sentinel events, government investigations, and administrative actions. She remains deeply committed to supporting those delivering vital behavioral health services, particularly for adolescents and young adults.

Buoyed by a keen understanding of the behavioral healthcare market, Hagemann has played a pivotal role in the growth of many M&R healthcare clients, helping them evolve from small businesses into national, private equity-backed enterprises. Her work is driven by a clear recognition of behavioral healthcare as an integral component of the national healthcare system, especially in response to the devastating opioid crisis. Hagemann's mission is to ensure that behavioral healthcare is safe, accessible, and available to all who need it, partnering with her clients to achieve this goal.

**MONA Z. HANNA**

MICHELMAN &amp; ROBINSON

Mona Z. Hanna continues to distinguish herself as one of the nation's leading litigators. Renowned for her expertise in high-stakes class action lawsuits, Hanna's track record of courtroom triumphs underscores her reputation for excellence. As the National Complex & Class Action Trial Chair and Managing Partner of Michelman & Robinson's office in Irvine, she remains a pivotal figure within the firm and the broader legal community.

Hanna's legal acumen is perhaps most visible in her defense of "bet-the-company" cases, where her strategic approach has resulted in significant wins, including early-stage dismissals and the defeat of high-exposure class certification efforts. In addition to her formidable presence in the courtroom, Hanna is a dedicated mentor, passionate about shaping the next generation of legal talent. She is a driving force behind M&R's trial advocacy program (TAP), an in-house initiative designed to equip associates with essential trial skills through a structured learning experience.

Her influence extends into the community too. A past member of the Orange County Bar Association's Board of Directors, Hanna also actively participates in the California and Los Angeles Bar Associations. Her commitment to giving back is further exemplified by her support of Working Wardrobes, an organization dedicated to helping individuals overcome barriers to employment.

Hanna's exceptional career has not gone unnoticed. She has been recognized with numerous accolades, including repeat recognition as a "LEADER OF INFLUENCE: Women in Law" by the Orange County Business Journal, a testament to her enduring impact on the legal landscape in Orange County and beyond.

**SUZANNE HEEG**

ADAMS CORPORATE LAW

With over 35 years of experience as an intellectual property attorney, Suzanne Heeg brings a wealth of knowledge and expertise to the Adams Corporate Law team, a boutique law firm specializing in Mergers and Acquisitions. Her career spans decades of advising some of the world's leading technology companies, aerospace giants, and government defense contractors, both as in-house counsel and within prominent law firms.

Heeg's background in computer science, combined with her deep understanding of intellectual property law, allows her to effectively bridge the gap between technology and legal frameworks. She has successfully drafted and negotiated hundreds of complex agreements, including those related to intellectual property and technology transactions. Her work encompasses collaboration and research agreements, outsourcing transactions, licensing agreements, software and cloud services agreements (SaaS, PaaS, IaaS), end-user license agreements (EULAs), and material transfer agreements. Heeg also specializes in assisting government contractors in negotiating data rights with the Department of Defense, ensuring the protection of valuable intellectual property from unintended licensing to the U.S. Government.

Renowned for her leadership and collaborative approach, Heeg excels at resolving issues efficiently and professionally. Her diverse clientele includes companies in high-tech, medical devices, low-tech industries (such as windsurfers and water heaters), software, and media. Heeg is licensed to practice law in California and is registered as a patent attorney with the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO).

Learn more about Suzanne Heeg's expertise and how Adams Corporate Law can assist with your intellectual property and M&A needs by visiting [adamscorporatelaw.com](http://adamscorporatelaw.com).

**GRACE HOROUPIAN**

FISHER &amp; PHILLIPS LLP

Grace Horoupien is a 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, wage and hour violations (both individual and collective actions), unfair business practices, whistleblower claims, workplace violence and wrongful discharge.

She represents employers in both state and federal courts as well as before state and federal agencies, such as the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), the California Department of Fair Employment and Housing, and the Division of Labor Standards Enforcement (DLSE). 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 was the former Vice Chair and General Counsel of the Huntington Beach Chamber of Commerce, where she was honored as "Member Of The Year" in 2011. Horoupien is "AV" Peer Review Rated by Martindale-Hubbell. She is also the former Chair of the firm's Associate Development Committee.

**PEGGY HOSKING**

BUCHALTER

Peggy Hosking is a distinguished attorney with a comprehensive practice spanning several areas of business law. As outside general counsel, Hosking provides strategic legal guidance to business owners from start-up and formation to sale or transfer to the next generation. Hosking also works closely with business and real estate owners to develop holistic estate plans to protect their assets and ensure their legacies.

With a robust focus on M&A, Hosking has successfully facilitated numerous high-profile transactions, helping clients achieve their goals while minimizing risk. Her expertise in commercial real estate further complements her practice where she adeptly handles transactions, negotiations and disputes, ensuring that her clients' real estate portfolios are profitable.

Additionally, Hosking is the Co-Chair of the Equine Law practice group where she blends her expertise in counseling businesses with decades of experience in the equestrian world.

Her dedication to her clients is evident in her personalized approach, commitment to understanding each client's unique needs and goals, and her ability to provide insightful, practical advice which makes her a trusted advisor to business owners across various industries.

Hosking earned her JD from Loyola Law School and is a member of the California bar. She is a shareholder in Buchalter's Orange County office. She not only a legal expert, but also a valued partner in her clients' success.



**Kimberly Nayagam**  
Partner  
Employment



**Jessica Sanders**  
Associate  
Government



**Kelsey Quist**  
Partner  
Government



**Sarah Van Buiten**  
Associate  
Litigation & Trial



**Ashley Vernick**  
Partner  
Litigation & Trial

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## 2024 WOMEN IN LAW PROFILES

### Holland & Knight



**SARAH KELLY-KILGORE**  
HOLLAND & KNIGHT

Sarah Kelly-Kilgore is a litigation attorney in Holland & Knight's Newport Beach and Los Angeles offices and a member of the firm's Litigation and Dispute Resolution Practice. Ms. Kilgore focuses her practice on a wide variety of litigation matters.

Ms. Kilgore has experience litigating cases in a broad range of practice areas, including employment litigation, fraud, business torts, defamation, securities and investments, real estate, contracts, federal agency enforcement actions, unfair competition, trade secrets, director and officer liability, fraudulent conveyance corporate governance disputes, and shareholder and consumer class action litigation. She has been lead counsel in a number of high-profile cases involving significant national and international public attention, including matters reported in The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, The Washington Post and The Boston Globe.

In addition, Ms. Kilgore regularly advises business entities on matters of employment law, including sexual harassment, discrimination and wrongful termination. Her clients include public companies, private businesses, executives and celebrities.



**MANDY H. KIM**  
MCDERMOTT WILL & EMERY LLP

Mandy H. Kim focuses her practice on intellectual property litigation. She 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 has led teams in all stages of litigation from pre-suit investigations through trials and appeals. She has an impressive record in achieving favorable results for her clients in federal district and state courts, the Patent Trial and Appeal Board, and the International Trade Commission.

In addition to her practice, Kim is a leader in her community as a member of the board of directors for Public Law Center and executive board for Orange County Korean American Bar Association. She is actively advancing the Firm's commitment to diversity and inclusion and pro bono, serving on the Firm's Racial and Ethnic Diversity Committee and as the head of pro bono and hiring partner for the Orange County office.



**BARBARA KLEIN**  
KLEIN FAMILY LAW

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

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

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

Holland & Knight is proud to celebrate our own

**Anne Beehler, Sarah Kelly-Kilgore**  
and **Wendy Kottmeier**

and all of the *Orange County Business Journal's* 2024 Women in Law honorees for their recognition as dedicated professionals who are changing the legal landscape in California.

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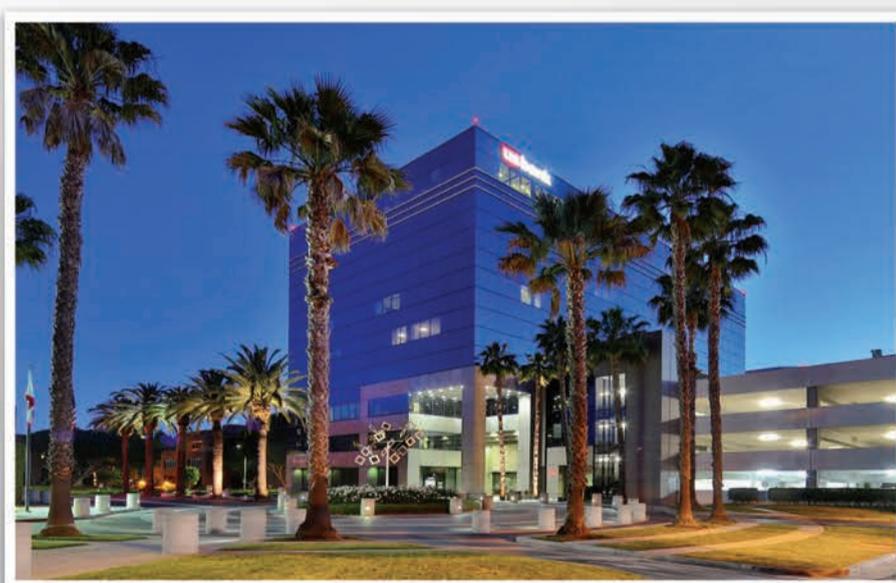
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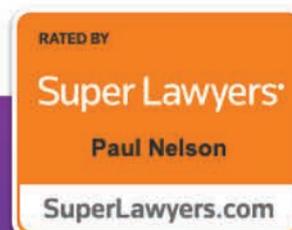


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## 2024 WOMEN IN LAW PROFILES

## Holland &amp; Knight

**WENDY R. KOTTMEIER**

HOLLAND &amp; KNIGHT

Wendy R. Kottmeier is a business attorney 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 children.

## Stradling

**KARLA KRAFT**STRADLING YOCCA  
CARLSON & RAUTH

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

Much of Kraft's work focuses on defending employment litigation, including wage and hour class actions, PAGA complaints, and single plaintiff lawsuits. But she also tries trade secret, false advertising, antitrust, partnership, and business tort disputes, and defends class action suits against large consumer product companies and financial services providers.

Clients credit Karla 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.

McDermott  
Will & Emery**MARISSA C. KRUMM**

MCDERMOTT WILL &amp; EMERY LLP

Marissa C. Krumm focuses her practice on commercial litigation, mass torts, and products liability, with a proven track record securing defense verdicts in high-stakes, multi-week jury trials in venues across the country. Outside of the courtroom, Krumm conducts litigation-related diligence in connection with transactions and advises clients on valuing and minimizing risks related to acquiring troubled assets.

Beyond her commercial work, Krumm has an active pro bono practice assisting various non-profit legal organizations to overturn wrongful convictions and prosecute human trafficking, among other causes.

SMITH  
DICKSON  
CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS, LLP**GINA LARA**SMITH DICKSON, CERTIFIED  
PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS, LLP

Gina Lara has been counseling clients in tax and financial planning matters for more than fifteen years. She began her career in the financial industry working at an independent wealth management firm that catered to business owners, professional athletes, and other high net worth clientele. During her tenure, Lara became versed in all aspects of financial planning, from investment management, tax, and estate planning. She has completed her MBA from Pepperdine University and obtained her license as a Certified Financial Planner (CFP®), Lara.

Several years ago, Lara joined the team at Smith Dickson, CPAs—a firm that she knew and respected from having collaborated with on behalf of her wealth management clients. At Smith Dickson, Lara continued to develop her skills and qualifications, most recently becoming Partner, and head of the firm's trust and estate work.

Lara's distinctive background provides her clients with an unparalleled scope of knowledge that is utilized in both the tax and the forensic accounting department at Smith Dickson.

Contact Lara at Smith Dickson, Certified Public Accountants, LLP, 949-553-1020, [www.smithdickson.com](http://www.smithdickson.com).

## Stradling

**VANESSA LEGBANDT**STRADLING YOCCA  
CARLSON & RAUTH

Within California's complicated and heavily-regulated municipal debt framework, Vanessa Legbandt provides clarity for public agencies that seek to raise financing for public facilities. Whether 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 timeframes and staffs transactions appropriately to ensure she obtains the most beneficial financing for her clients.

## Stradling

**CAROL L. 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 funding 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 and tax credit projects permitted under the Inflation Reduction Act, such as refundable credits. 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, public utilities, cities, counties, highway authorities, water districts, housing authorities, hospitals, school districts and municipal agencies and nonprofits provide development projects through a variety of sources, including tax-advantaged and taxable bonds, public/private partnerships, and tax credits. 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 ETAAC advisory committee that provides advice directly to Congress and the IRS Commissioner on a broad range of tax matters. Ms. Lew also served as Chair of the IRS IRSAC, providing advice to the IRS Commissioner, President of the National Association of Bond Lawyers, and as Chair of The American Bar Association Taxation Section's Tax Exempt Financing Committee.

## 2024 WOMEN IN LAW PROFILES



### JENNY LOURO

MANLY, STEWART & FINALDI

Jenny Louro is a compassionate advocate hailing from the sunny shores of Southern California, where she was born and raised. Jenny earned her undergraduate degree in International Development Studies at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA).

During her tenure at the University of San Diego, School of Law, Louro distinguished herself through her hands-on experience and commitment to public service. As an extern with the Honorable Judge Di Cesare at Orange County Superior Court, she gained invaluable insight into the workings of the legal system and honed her understanding of judicial proceedings.

In addition to her judicial externship, Louro took on a leadership role as the chair of the Pro Bono Legal Aid Clinic for Domestic Violence. Through her dedication to providing free legal services to survivors of domestic violence, Louro not only empowered her clients to seek justice but also played a vital role in breaking the cycle of abuse and promoting healing within the community.

Prior to joining Manly, Stewart & Finaldi, Louro gained experience in catastrophic personal injury litigation, where she refined her skills in advocacy. Now, as a seasoned attorney, she continues to carry forth this dedication into her practice, where she works exclusively in representing survivors of sexual abuse, harassment, and molestation against public and private entities. With a steadfast commitment to serving her community, Louro stands as a trusted ally for those in need. Whether navigating complex legal matters or providing compassionate support to survivors, she is unwavering in her pursuit of justice.



### AZI MANOUSSI

MVP TRIAL LAWYERS

Azadeh Manoussi is the founding managing partner of MVP Trial Lawyers, a premier and reliable Plaintiff-advocating litigation firm specializing in Business/Civil Litigation, Employment Law, Personal Injury, and Worker's Compensation.

Before earning her J.D. and passing the California Bar Exam, Ms. Manoussi excelled as a business broker, negotiating and selling over 400 businesses. Ms. Manoussi has built a respectable law firm that represents a diverse and broad client base, ranging from individual litigants to large, Fortune 100 companies. The skill, expertise, and dedication to ensuring clients receive the justice they deserve at MVP Trial Lawyers is the product of Ms. Manoussi's commitment to leading a team of passionate, strong, and experienced individuals.

From a modest team of five to a formidable firm of over 60 professionals, Ms. Manoussi's unwavering support for her staff is irrefutable. Built on a foundation of trust and respect, Ms. Manoussi's leadership has transformed MVP Trial Lawyers to the leading law firm it is today.

Ms. Manoussi has dedicated her expertise in Employment/Workers Compensation to advocating for women's rights, particularly in the realm of sexual harassment. She fights to ensure the safety of all women in the work environment—a right many are denied. With a blend of compassion and rigor, Ms. Manoussi works tirelessly to make every client's voice heard and respected. Azadeh Manoussi is not just a powerful woman in a male-dominated profession but a beacon of hope for women seeking justice and equality in the workplace.



### 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 secured more than 30 declinations to bring an action from the SEC and DOJ. 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. Clients 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 and False Claims Act. Marcus also assists clients facing cyber security incidents and defends regulatory investigations involving blockchain, cryptocurrency and token offerings.

Clients 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 assessment and developing robust compliance programs.

Marcus is a member of Stradling's Management Committee and serves as Co-Chair of the firm's Enforcement Defense and Investigations Practice.

**EVERETT DOREY** LLP

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**WOMEN IN LAW**

Everett Dorey LLP is a full-service civil litigation firm of trial attorneys. Everett Dorey prides itself on its legal acumen, trial record, experience and its ability to put clients in the best position to succeed. Client objectives are tailored to individual needs, ranging from early resolution based on experienced evaluations to favorable jury verdicts with awards of attorneys' fees and expert costs.

Recent Firm and Attorney Recognitions:

- "2024 Top Women Lawyers" by Daily Journal
- Ranked in Chambers USA 2024
- "2024 Best Law Firm, Tier 1 Commercial Litigation" by Best Lawyers
- "2024 Best Lawyer in Commercial Litigation" and "2024 Ones to Watch" by Best Lawyers
- Ranked in Chambers USA 2023
- "2023 Recommended Firm," "2023 Litigation Star," and "2023 Future Star" by Benchmark Litigation
- "2023 Best Lawyer in Commercial Litigation" by Best Lawyers
- "2023 Best Places to Work" by Orange County Business Journal
- "2023 OC 500 Directory of Influence" by Orange County Business Journal
- "2022 Top 100 Lawyers" by Daily Journal
- "2022 Top Verdicts" by Daily Journal

**Samantha E. Dorey**  
Partner, Co-Founder



## 2024 WOMEN IN LAW PROFILES

**AMANDA MCFALL**STRADLING YOCCA  
CARLSON & RAUTH

Amanda McFall is a partner in the firm's Corporate and Securities Practice Group. She represents public companies, underwriters, and investors across a broad range of industries including technology, life sciences, banking, e-commerce, and social media. She advises clients on securities offerings, Securities Act and Exchange Act reporting, stock exchange listing and compliance, corporate governance, complex commercial contracts, and general corporate matters. She has represented many of the firm's public company and investment banking clients in connection with initial public offerings, follow-on public offerings, secondary offerings, and private placements.

Prior to joining Stradling, Amanda worked in-house at Amazon where she advised clients on a broad range of strategic, commercial, and regulatory matters, including anti-trust, pricing, data sharing, intellectual property, finance, and marketing issues.

**DAMARIS MEDINA**

BUCHALTER

Damaris Medina is a shareholder in Buchalter's Los Angeles & Orange County offices. She is the firm's chief diversity officer, co-chair of the Firm's Health Care & Life Sciences Practice, and a member of the Board of Directors.

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. She 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 routinely receives recognition as a leader in her field from numerous sources. She was recognized as one of Los Angeles' "Most Influential Women Attorneys" by the Los Angeles Business Journal, "Top OC Inspirational Women" and "DEIA Visionary" by LA Times B2B Publishing, "Top Women in Business" by the Orange County Business Journal, and received the prestigious California Lawyer of the Year (CLAY) Award in 2017. She has also been named one of the Top Healthcare Attorneys by the Daily Journal, and one of the "Top Women Attorneys in Southern California" since 2014 by Super Lawyers Magazine.

**CATHY MOSES**

COX, CASTLE &amp; NICHOLSON

Cathy Tran Moses is a partner at Cox, Castle & Nicholson and a litigation attorney who focuses on complex business and real estate litigation and dispute resolution. She has obtained successful results for the firm's clients in a wide range of complex litigation matters, including partnership disputes, breach of contract disputes, business torts, and other real estate litigation.

In terms of business litigation, Moses has represented clients in numerous high-stakes business disputes concerning partnership agreements, purchase and sale agreements, leases, and other written contracts; fraud and breach of fiduciary duty claims; valuation disputes; and complex landlord-tenant issues. She is experienced in all phases of commercial litigation, including pre-dispute negotiations, discovery, dispositive motion practice, and trial and arbitration.

Moses is actively involved in various professional organizations and currently serves as Director for the Constitutional Rights Foundation, Orange County Chapter. She also is a Professionalism and Ethics Committee Member of the Orange County Bar Association, and a member of the Association of Business Trial Lawyers. She also volunteers on a pro bono basis with Community Legal Aid SoCal.

She has received various accolades for her career achievements and was a recipient of the ACLU Foundation of Southern California's 2010 Social Justice Award. In addition, she was recognized in Bisnow's "SoCal Women Leading Real Estate" Event, 2023; named to LA Times B2B's "O.C. Inspirational Women" List, 2023; and recognized as a Southern California Rising Star in Business Litigation by Super Lawyers, 2017 through 2020.

**ANTOINETTE NADDOUR**

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. She has published multiple articles related to legal aid and veterans affairs and was named one of the "Mighty 25" by the prestigious military association We are the Mighty.

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.

**KIMBERLY NAYAGAM**

RUTAN &amp; TUCKER LLP

As a Partner at Rutan & Tucker, LLP, Kimberly Nayagam has dedicated her legal practice to supporting employers of all sizes and industries as they navigate the complexities of federal, state, and local employment laws.

Nayagam's litigation practice includes defending employers in discrimination, harassment, retaliation, and wrongful termination cases. She also represents employers in wage and hour and PAGA litigation, including defense of both individual and class action claims. In addition to her litigation practice, Nayagam provides direction and guidance to businesses seeking to comply with California's complicated system of employment laws and regulations. This includes advice and counsel on wage and hour compliance, performance management and terminations, leaves of absence, and personnel policies.

Prior to joining Rutan & Tucker, Nayagam worked as a business litigation associate in Sacramento, where she handled complex commercial and business disputes. Nayagam's business acumen is an invaluable advantage to the clients she serves. Clients benefit from Kimberly's business-minded, decisive, efficient, and pragmatic approach to handling complex employment law matters in a manner that best serves her clients' financial and business needs while also limiting legal risk.

Nayagam enjoys spending time with her family, and nowadays you are most likely to find her at a local park with a toddler in tow.

**CRISTINA NOLAN**

MANLY, STEWART &amp; FINALDI

Cristina Nolan has focused her legal career on representing survivors of childhood sexual abuse. Many of the survivors Nolan represents are children, adults victimized as children, or vulnerable adults. Nolan has been involved in the most significant sexual abuse cases in the nation, including those against Redlands Unified School District, Torrance Unified School District, Los Angeles Unified School District, as well as the Roman Catholic Diocese of Orange and Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Los Angeles.

Her dedication to fervently representing survivors is shown through the six-figure and multi-million-dollar settlements she has obtained on behalf of survivors. As a native Spanish-speaker, Nolan also takes great pride in working with the Spanish community, often marginalized and forgotten, to help survivors understand their legal resources and options, and to help them seek justice.

Nolan works tirelessly, representing each of her clients to help them obtain what they deserve—healing and justice.

Before MSF, Nolan attended California State University, Fullerton and obtained a B.A. in Political Science, with a minor in Spanish. Nolan graduated from Chapman University Dale E. Fowler School of Law. She was a member of the Mock Trial Board, an ABA Arbitration Competition Regional Semifinalist, a member of the Minority Law Students Association, Vice President of the International Law Society, and became certified as a mediator. Nolan gained practical legal experience by serving as a judicial clerk to the Honorable Frederick Aguirre of the Central Justice Center Superior Court of California, and as an extern in the Anaheim City Attorney's Office.

## 2024 WOMEN IN LAW PROFILES



**LISA M. NORTHRUP**

STRADLING YOCCA  
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 case in both federal and state court through verdict. Additionally, Northrup advises and assists clients with pre-litigation dispute resolution and investigations.



**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.



**COURTNEY PENDRY**

MANLY, STEWART & FINALDI

Courtney Pendry is a Chicago native who attended Valparaiso University in Indiana, graduating with honors with a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration.

Pendry believes that obtaining accountability from the individuals and institutions who have allowed and enabled perpetrators to prey on others under their control is crucial not only for the healing of the survivors, but to ensure these abuses do not continue in our schools, churches, doctors' offices, and youth-serving organizations.

Following college, Pendry went directly to Michigan State University College of Law where she worked with the MSU Chance at Childhood Legal Aid Clinic, both as a clinician and later as the student coordinator, earning her Child & Family Advocate Certificate. Pendry's experience with the Clinic also provided her with the opportunity to work in conjunction with the School of Social Work, assisting children and families involved in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems.

Since joining Manly, Stewart & Finaldi, Pendry has represented hundreds of survivors of sexual abuse, harassment, and molestation, against public entities, private entities, the Catholic Church, and more. Pendry also has experience representing sexual abuse survivors in some of the nation's most significant multi-plaintiff sexual abuse cases, including those against Dr. Tyndall/USC and Dr. Heaps/UCLA. These cases resulted in settlements of \$852 million (Tyndall /USC) and \$243.6 million (Heaps/UCLA).

In 2021, Pendry was named Consumer Attorney of the Year by the Consumer Attorneys of California.

**M | R MICHELMAN & ROBINSON, LLP**  
ATTORNEYS AT LAW

**We celebrate our extraordinary women attorneys, including M&R's stellar team in Irvine!**

Left to right: Allison Aguirre (Associate), Kelly Hageman (Partner), Mona Hanna (Irvine Office Managing Partner), Amanda Anderson (Associate), Samantha Drysdale (Senior Associate), Jennifer Mauri (Senior Associate)  
Not pictured: Jane Kutepova (Senior Associate), Agnes Shin (Associate)

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## 2024 WOMEN IN LAW PROFILES

**LISA PETERSON**

FISHER &amp; PHILLIPS LLP

Lisa Peterson represents employers of all sizes on a full spectrum of labor and employment matters, from providing counseling and advice to pre-litigation negotiations, and all the way through trial. Her diverse practice includes litigating claims involving wrongful termination, discrimination, harassment, retaliation, whistleblower claims, and Private Attorney General Act (PAGA) actions and class actions. She represents clients in a variety of industries, with a focus on the hospitality, restaurant and healthcare industries.

Peterson also provides preventative counseling to employers on subjects 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. She is a proven trial attorney and has successfully tried several cases to verdict in jury trials.

In 2024, Peterson was appointed to the Greater Irvine Chamber of Commerce (GICC) Board of Directors. GICC is a premier business member organization with over 800 businesses in the Greater Irvine area, aiming to promote an economic climate that strengthens the competitiveness of local services, programs, and information.

**STELLA POGOSYAN**

VETERANS LEGAL INSTITUTE

Stella Pogosyan is a dedicated trial attorney who graduated from Southwestern Law and was licensed to practice law in California in December 2011. She began her legal career at the Orange County Public Defenders Office and the Orange County Alternate Defenders Office, dedicating eight total years and gaining substantial experience in criminal law representing adult and juvenile indigent defendants facing felony and misdemeanor charges.

In 2020, Pogosyan established herself as a solo practitioner, specializing in criminal law. She also began to expand her practice areas to mediation, family law, education law, and estate planning. Her strategic approach and dedication to her clients has earned her a reputation as a fierce and compassionate advocate.

In 2024, she brought her skills to Veterans Legal Institute, where she happily assists veterans with housing issues and other legal matters.

Outside of her professional life, Pogosyan is an avid rock climber and mountain biker. She volunteers as a Park Ambassador with OC Parks, reflecting her commitment to community service and the great outdoors.

**KELSEY QUIST**

RUTAN &amp; TUCKER LLP

Kelsey Quist works closely with many of Rutan & Tucker's high profile city clients. She has become the "Law Enforcement Specialist" in Rutan's Government and Regulatory Department responsible for interfacing with and advising the Chiefs of Police and department personnel for all of Rutan's city clients (including Irvine PD, Menifee PD, Claremont PD, La Palma PD, and formerly Laguna Beach PD). Her practice currently includes defending and litigating all civil and criminal hearings on behalf of Rutan's police department clients, reviewing and advising on department-related policies (such as "Use of Force," Miranda advisements, AB 481 Military Equipment Use, and First Amendment and Social Media policies), prosecuting "vicious" and "potentially dangerous" dog cases, and advising on any civil and criminal discovery matters and Public Records Act requests. She advises applicable licensing agencies on the processing and reviewing of CCW applications. She is also responsible for the training and implementation of Gun Violence Restraining Order ("GVRO") programs amongst local law enforcement agencies designed to combat increased gun violence statewide. Additionally, Ms. Quist is General Counsel for the Irvine Police Service Animal Foundation—a non-profit organization committed to raising donations to assist the development of Irvine Police Department's service animal programs.

Ms. Quist is actively involved in Rutan & Tucker's pro bono programs, which includes her lead representation on a contentious guardianship matter, and her recent work assisting human trafficking victims as part of the Human Trafficking Clinic in partnership with UCI and the Public Law Center. She was recently the recipient of Rutan & Tucker's Excellence in Pro Bono Service Award for 2022. Ms. Quist has also been recognized as "Best Lawyers: Ones to Watch in America" for 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024 and 2025.

**MICHELLE ROBINSON**

VETERANS LEGAL INSTITUTE

Michelle Robinson is the Managing Attorney at Veterans Legal Institute (VLI) since 2021, supporting close to 25 staff members, who advocate to provide pro bono legal services and access to justice to Veterans and active service members in need. As Managing Attorney, Michelle is dedicated to representing low income, disabled, homeless current and former military service members, in an array of practice areas, to foster client self-sufficiency. As the mother of 5, one of whom is a Marine Corp. veteran, 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.

**ARIEL ROMERO**

MANLY, STEWART &amp; FINALDI

Ariel J. Romero is an attorney at Manly, Stewart & Finaldi. She was part of the litigation teams in the high-profile cases involving former USC gynecologist George Tyndall and former UCLA gynecologist/oncologist James Heaps.

In *Tyndall*, MSF was Plaintiffs' Liaison Counsel and obtained an \$852 million global settlement, the largest sexual abuse settlement against a university in history. These complex, multi-plaintiff litigations provided Romero with extensive knowledge in litigating physician sexual abuse. She is also part of the trial team at MSF in cases involving minor children abused by their teachers and coaches.

Romero is passionate about her work in representing survivors and brings a unique perspective given she is a survivor of trauma. As a victim of mass gun violence, she understands and is compassionate about the struggles victims face daily—particularly minority victims.

Having worked on *Tyndall* and *Heaps*, where legislation was critical to success, Romero intends to advocate for legislative changes to help survivors.

Romero grew up in Los Angeles and graduated from Loyola Marymount University, receiving a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration with an emphasis in Business Law. As an undergraduate student, she clerked for the District Attorney's office at Airport Courthouse in Los Angeles. Romero continued her higher education at Chapman University's Dale E. Fowler School of Law, where she was involved in the First-Generation Scholars Program both as a student and mentor, became Managing Editor of the *Chapman Law Review* and received The National Order of the Scribes Award upon graduation in 2021.

**LAUREN ROSEMAN**

FISHER &amp; PHILLIPS LLP

Lauren Roseman is a partner in Fisher Phillips' Irvine office committed to providing employers of all sizes and types fast, innovative, and practical employment law advice. She defends employers in employment litigation including wage and hour class and PAGA actions, claims pursuant to the Federal/Cal-WARN Acts, and discrimination, harassment, and retaliation claims. She works closely with her clients (primarily in the life sciences, PEO, manufacturing, financial services, automotive, hospitality, and food service industries) to implement handbook policies and employment practices that help prevent costly litigation at the outset. Specifically, much of her practice focuses on walking clients through best practices for managing reasonable accommodations, leaves of absence (FMLA, CFRA, PDL, FEHA), and complicated termination and disciplinary decisions. Roseman also routinely conducts harassment, discrimination, and retaliation prevention trainings for managers. Lauren loves public speaking and takes pride in making employment law digestible for her clients.

Fisher Phillips has newly appointed Roseman as the Co-Director of Development and Retention on the firm's Women's Initiative & Leadership Council Steering Committee. In this new role, Roseman will further support the advancement and retention of the many brilliant female attorneys at Fisher Phillips.

Prior to joining Fisher Phillips, Roseman interned with a boutique employment law firm focused on hospitality industry clients. She also externed for the Honorable Karen S. Crawford and the Honorable Cynthia A. Bashant at the United States District Court for the Southern District of California.

## 2024 WOMEN IN LAW PROFILES

### RUTAN



**JESSICA SANDERS**

RUTAN & TUCKER LLP

Jessica Sanders represents and advises numerous public entities across southern California. She regularly advises government clients on development and housing transactions, open government legislation, and other municipal affairs.

Sanders also assists Rutan & Tucker's public entity clients on negotiating and drafting purchasing and land use transactional documents. Sanders keeps clients informed of annual changes to California housing and land use legislation and works with local agencies to update local standards and procedures to comply with state law.

In addition to advising Rutan & Tucker's numerous governmental clients, Sanders serves as Assistant City Attorney for the cities of Cerritos and La Quinta, and Deputy City Attorney for the City of Yorba Linda.

Sanders places a high value on community involvement through both pro bono and volunteer work. Sanders works one-on-one with her pro bono clients to draft needed contractual and procedural documents and answer their questions on transactional matters. In Sanders' free time, she volunteers for Big Brothers Big Sisters of Orange County where she serves as a mentor and companion for a youth enrolled in the program.



**CAROLINE SCALA**

FISHER & PHILLIPS LLP

Caroline Scala is a partner in the Irvine office. She has defended hundreds of employment cases including employee claims of harassment, retaliation, disability, wrongful termination, and wage and hour. Scala is an aggressive litigator and has obtained favorable settlements, rulings and trial verdicts for her clients. Recent successes include obtaining complete summary judgment in a disability discrimination case and successfully defending against two employees' bids to seize nearly \$800,000 in unpaid wages.

Scala also helps employers minimize risk and provides advice on employee terminations, accommodations, and discipline, among other employment-related matters. Scala also drafts and reviews company policies and provides employee and supervisor training on a variety of topics.

Scala attended law school on a full merit scholarship. During law school, Caroline served as an Articles Editor for the Chapman Law Review and judicial extern to the Honorable William F. Rylaarsdam of the California Court of Appeal. Scala was also a member of the Mock Trial Honor Board, where she obtained a perfect score as defense counsel in the ABA National Criminal Justice Trial Advocacy Competition in Chicago.



**DANIELLE STRUWE**

QUINN AND DWORAKOWSKI

Danielle Struwe is a senior associate at Quinn and Dworakowski, a premier family law firm in Irvine. She's known for representing high-net-worth individuals—like business owners, executives, and professionals—with a unique blend of sharp negotiation skills and fearless courtroom advocacy. Struwe's knack for navigating complex financial matters, business valuations, and tough custody battles has made her a go-to attorney in her field.

Struwe's path to becoming a lawyer is a true story of grit and determination. She graduated magna cum laude from Western State College of Law, earning national recognition for her standout performance on the Honors Moot Court team. Struwe has an unwavering commitment to excellence. As a single mom, she put herself through law school while working two jobs in the restaurant industry, proving just how determined and hardworking she is.

Beyond her legal practice, Struwe is deeply involved in the community. She's a guest lecturer at her alma mater, Western State College of Law, and serves on the board of the Monarch Beach Rotary Club. She's also an active member of several professional associations, including the Orange County Bar Association and the Orange County Women Lawyers Association.

But there's more to Struwe than just her formidable legal skills. She's known for her genuine care and compassion for her clients, approaching each case with understanding and empathy. Struwe isn't just an exceptional attorney; she's also a nice person, dedicated to making a positive difference in the lives of those she serves.



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- Employment Claims



## 2024 WOMEN IN LAW PROFILES



### 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 is transitioning

her Executive Certifications from Harvard into essential areas for businesses today – with significant programs, opportunities and initiatives in each of her areas of Certification - Cybersecurity, Experiential/Digital Transformation, Sustainability and Artificial Intelligence (including AR, VR and Mixed Reality,) enhancing her 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. She has been launching THE WAVE CONNECTION®, a multimedia platform to complement her legal and business practice, showcasing and commercializing the innovation and leadership of clients and providing 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 Steering Committee/Executive Leadership of the Ambassadors of Compassion, Harvard Business School and Kennedy School Alumni Associations, U.S. Bank Advisory Board, Wyland Foundation/BlueCo Board and member of the Google International Cybersecurity Consortium of Clinics.



### COURTNEY THOM

MANLY, STEWART & FINALDI

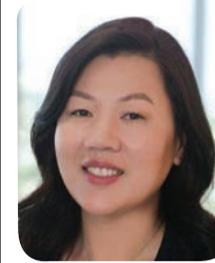
Partner Courtney Thom brings invaluable experience as a career sex crimes prosecutor to her practice. Before joining Manly, Stewart & Finaldi, she served as a Deputy District Attorney for Orange County. In this role, Thom

zealously represented the People of California in the prosecution of criminal cases, including sexual assault, rape, child molestation, and child pornography, among others. Notably, she conducted over 50 criminal trials, many of which garnered significant media attention.

Notably, Thom worked in the District Attorney's Sexual Assault Unit where she exclusively prosecuted felony sexual assaults, including child molestation and forcible sex crimes. Many of the survivors in those cases were children as young as infants and adults who gained the courage to report the abuse they experienced years ago as children. She worked tirelessly alongside law enforcement agencies to investigate sexual assault crimes, filed criminal charges, met with survivors, and skillfully conducted jury trials and sentencing hearings.

Thom's unwavering commitment to serving survivors has been recognized by Waymakers, a prestigious Orange County foundation, which honored her with the Sexual Assault Victim Service Award in 2019. Additionally, she has played a pivotal role in enhancing community safety by providing Sexual Assault Investigations training to the Orange County Sheriff's Department.

Due to her unparalleled expertise in both criminal and civil litigation on behalf of survivors, Thom is exceptionally adept at navigating complex legal proceedings, including serving as Marsy's Law representation. Moreover, she actively advocates for legislative reforms aimed at bolstering protections for individuals most vulnerable to sexual abuse.



### JENNY TRAN

STRADLING YOCCHA CARLSON & RAUTH

Jenny Tran is a Partner in Stradling's Corporate and Securities practice group. Her areas of practice include M&A, and business and tax planning

for privately held businesses and their owners on entity design, business succession, risk management and allocation, corporate compliance and governance, and operations.

Tran provides legal and tax guidance to advance practical business solutions. Acting as external general counsel, she supports businesses across diverse sectors such as aerospace, energy, online digital media, insurance agencies, retail markets, pharmacies, hotel franchisees, fashion, cannabis, and food and beverage operations. She is dedicated to assisting family-owned enterprises in safeguarding their legacies, sustaining growth, and fostering harmonious relationships among owners and operators. She actively collaborates with the trusted advisors of business owners and their families to adeptly devise, implement, and execute tailored solutions for tax efficiency, operational expansion, and seamless business succession.

For nine consecutive years Tran has been included on the Southern California Super Lawyer Rising Star list. She is also a Director at Large of UC Irvine's Alumni Association.

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# 2024 WOMEN IN LAW PROFILES

## RUTAN



**SARAH VAN BUITEN**

RUTAN & TUCKER LLP

Sarah Van Buiten focuses her practice on unfair competition litigation, including trademark, patent, and copyright infringement, false advertising and trade secret misappropriation. She represents clients in proceedings before the Trademark Trial and Appeal Board, in both inter partes and ex parte proceedings, and handles domain name disputes. Van Buiten advises and represents clients in managing and protecting their intellectual property rights in a variety of other contexts, including intellectual property disputes implicating third-party seller platforms. She also handles a wide-array of general business disputes involving breach of contract, breach of fiduciary duty and fraud.

## RUTAN



**ASHLEY VERNICK**

RUTAN & TUCKER LLP

With close to 15 years of litigation experience, Ashley Vernick is recognized each year as a leader in her field. Ashley is considered a generalist and "wears many hats," with her matters covering a broad spectrum of commercial disputes. She is often engaged to handle employment, insurance, real estate, breach of contract, and business tort disputes, and has over 10 years investigation experience that lends for a keen eye in identifying and addressing disputes early on. Vernick is known by her clients as someone to guide them through any business matter they may face, including reviewing and understanding contracts, identifying potential liabilities and coverage positions, understanding and abiding by corporate compliance programs, properly handling investigations, and improving training and related policies and procedures.

As shared by her peers, clientele, and neutral third parties, Vernick brings a well-rounded perspective to any matter she is handling. Known as a "business consultant" who keeps in mind her clients' business needs, Vernick is often engaged before disputes arise. Vernick is known to be creative in her approach and adept in at bringing both sides of a dispute closer together to potentially resolve the matter without costly and risky litigation, or at least narrow the issues to help streamline the process for all. Notwithstanding, she is known in the courtroom as a zealous advocate who will vigorously pursue her clients' rights, whether through mediation, arbitration, or trial.

Understanding the complexities of the legal practice and appetite for creative minds and collaboration, Vernick is intimately involved in her clients' business matters. This commitment is also manifest in her involvement in Rutan's recruiting, mentoring, and diversity efforts. Indeed, she has been the Chair of the Firm's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee during her entire tenure at the Firm, with a focus on supporting attorneys and their professional development through inclusion efforts and mentoring.

## BW Bremer Whyte Brown & O'Meara LLP



**NICOLE WHYTE**

BREMER, WHYTE, BROWN AND O'MEARA, LLP

Nicole Whyte is the founder and CEO of Bremer, Whyte, Brown and O'Meara, LLP, a 215 plus attorney full service law firm with nine offices in the Western US. Specializing in family law and complex civil litigation, she has been identified by the Daily Journal as one of California's top 100 women attorneys and was selected as one of America's top 100 attorneys. Whyte is consistently named in the lists of Best Lawyers in America and Super Lawyers in Orange County. Born, raised, and educated in South Africa, Whyte practiced law in Johannesburg before immigrating to the United States. After quickly learning the US legal system, Whyte founded Bremer Whyte in 1997. Whyte is licensed in multiple states and has a two-decade plus AV rating from Martindale-Hubbell.

Whyte is an accomplished trial attorney and appellate attorney, having argued and won an appeal upholding a \$93 million judgment in favor of her client. She is a sought-after speaker at legal conferences, and a published author in the areas of family law and trial advocacy. As a distinguished female founder and leader of one of the largest law firms based in Orange County, Whyte leads by example, encouraging lawyers in her firm to volunteer their time. Whyte prides herself on hiring diverse lawyers from all backgrounds, creating opportunities for many. Happily married for 25 years, mother to four children, and a practicing black belt in kenpo karate, she has shown it is possible to successfully balance family, career, hobbies, and community/volunteer work.



Bremer Whyte Brown & O'Meara, LLP's has 14 Family Law Attorneys including 6 Certified Family Law Specialists throughout Newport Beach, Los Angeles, and San Diego.

Our team of highly skilled attorneys handle cases in all areas of family law, including but not limited to **divorce, custody, visitation, modifications, spousal support, child support, paternity, property division, prenuptial agreements, postnuptial agreements, and contempt.**

## Bremer Whyte

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## Christine, Linda, Grace, Liz, Lisa, Lauren and Caroline

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



**Christine Baran**  
Partner | Irvine, Los Angeles  
cbaran@fisherphillips.com



**Linda Gulledge**  
Partner | Irvine  
lgulledge@fisherphillips.com



**Grace Horoupian**  
Co-Regional Managing Partner | Irvine  
ghoroupian@fisherphillips.com



**Lizbeth Ochoa**  
Partner | Irvine  
lochoa@fisherphillips.com



**Lisa Peterson**  
Partner | Irvine  
lpeterson@fisherphillips.com



**Lauren Roseman**  
Partner | Irvine  
lroseman@fisherphillips.com



**Caroline Scala**  
Partner | Irvine  
cscala@fisherphillips.com

fisherphillips.com  
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