

THRIVING IN THEIR

40s

Los Angeles' Leading Professionals

A SKILLED BUSINESS PROFESSIONAL – BE IT AN ACCOUNTANT, ATTORNEY, BANKER, REAL ESTATE EXPERT, HEALTH CARE provider, insurance professional or some other form of trusted advisor – can be one of the key ingredients for any company's success. Working with an expert who possesses the right skill set can actually help set growth in motion for businesses in virtually any industry.

Demand for such expertise can be competitive. Fortunately, Los Angeles is home to a growing group of such established experts – and the numbers of young people training to become such professionals are up. In our region there is no shortage of excellent advisors, many of whom happen to be in their 40s.

Listed alphabetically in this section, you'll find some of Los Angeles' leading professionals in their 40s, along with some insights about their careers, attributes and accomplishments.

THRIVING IN THEIR 40s

Letter from the Publisher



Traditionally, we’ve published a “40 in their 40s” section each year where we take a moment to spotlight some of the leading business professionals in the region that are in that particular age demographic. This year we received so many outstanding nominations that we decided to expand the section.

After reviewing the hundreds of excellent options, we whittled the selection down to 95 amazing Los Angeles professionals — CPAs, bankers, attorneys, real estate professionals, health care providers, insurance experts and others who serve as terrific examples of trusted advisors whose services the businesses of Los Angeles simply cannot do without...and who also happen to be between the ages of 40 and 49.

We’re still focusing on the cream of the “in their 40s” crop — we’re just providing more examples than ever before! For this issue, we’ve reviewed the careers of many of the most notable standouts in professional services. Listed alphabetically, you’ll find some of Los Angeles’ leading experts on various aspects of business success, along with some basic information about their careers, attributes and accomplishments.

Congratulations to each of the thriving professionals who made this list and thank you for working to keep the people and businesses of Los Angeles on the right track!

Best regards,

Josh Schimmels
Publisher & CEO

RSM celebrates the power of great people.
Congratulations Darcy Wilson–Jones and
Jason Krein.

It gives us tremendous pleasure to recognize the achievements of **Darcy Wilson–Jones** and **Jason Krein**. Congratulations on being named to the **Los Angeles Business Journal’s 2020 Thriving in their 40’s list**.

rsmus.com

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**MARSH & MCLENNAN
AGENCY**

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Brian Hegarty has been instrumental in the growth of MMA's Los Angeles office. Since opening in 2018, revenue has increased 150% and the team has quadrupled in size.

Congrats Brian Hegarty
on being named a leader
"Thriving in Their 40s"!

MarshMMA.com



Brian Hegarty
Principal, LA Managing Director

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THRIVING IN THEIR 40s



WADE ACKERMAN
*Partner and Co-Lead of Covington's
Digital Health Initiative
Covington & Burling LLP*

Wade Ackerman is a leading FDA regulatory and health policy lawyer working at the cutting-edge of life sciences and technology on the West Coast – a unique legal practice for Los Angeles. Despite his significant DC-facing client work, he remains active in the state and local community, both in his work supporting the LGBT+ community, as well as his service to the healthcare and life sciences ecosystem in California.

Ackerman has been active in the Williams Institute since he started practicing law in Los Angeles in 2004. The Williams Institute has had a profound impact on LGBT-related policy development for more than 15 years. On the healthcare and life sciences front, Ackerman volunteers as a trustee of the Keck Graduate Institute (KGI), which is the seventh and newest member of the Claremont colleges.



SAM AINA
*Senior Manager
Crowe LLP*

Sam Aina leads Crowe's Consulting practice for Technology, Media, and Telecommunications nationally, with a specific focus on supporting this industry to address risk and compliance requirements impacting their ability to meet their business objectives. Aina joined Crowe's Los Angeles Consulting practice in 2015 to build out Crowe's deep specialization serving the technology, media, and telecommunications industries in the market.

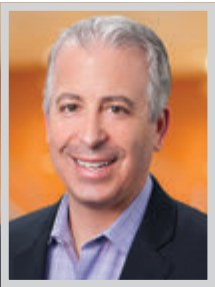
Under Aina's leadership, the practice has grown exponentially. In his leadership, he has also driven focus within the firm on how utilization of technology to address risk/compliance issues creates efficiencies for our clients and for risk professionals. He was instrumental in bringing to the market a digital approach allowing organizations to harness data in a structured and incremental manner. He has presented to clients, prospects, and to the profession on the approach.



AMY ALDERFER
*Member
Cozen O'Connor*

Amy Alderfer maintains a broad litigation practice, advising individuals and corporations, both large and small, on all aspects of litigation, from pretrial matters through trial and appeal. She leads complex litigation, mass actions, multidistrict litigation, and California coordinated proceedings. And she has experience with securities, franchise, real estate, product liability, false advertising, consumer protection, pharmaceutical and medical device, cannabis, and commercial disputes.

One aspect of her practice that is a direct and specific benefit to any company doing business in Los Angeles is her focus on California Proposition 65, which requires businesses to provide warnings about significant exposure to any of roughly 900 chemicals used in consumer products. Alderfer describes Prop 65 as "a trap for the unwary" because so many national and international companies are so grossly ill-prepared for the Prop 65 filings that hit when they bring products to market in California.



ANDREW APFELBERG
*Partner
Greenberg Glusker LLP*

Andrew Apfelberg, a partner at Greenberg Glusker LLP, is a corporate and finance attorney for middle-market companies throughout the United States. Often acting as their outside general counsel, Apfelberg provides advice on a business' significant transactions whether it's a merger or acquisition, private equity or other financing, joint venture or licensing deal. He has a considerable depth of experience in the branded consumer products, manufacturing & distribution, new media and technology industries.

Apfelberg's strong business and finance background comes from his USC's Marshall School of Business education and working for a Los Angeles based investment banking prior to going to law school. This experience enables Andrew to more effectively structure transactions and negotiate agreements to maximize the value to the client and increase the likelihood of getting the deal closed.



NEERAJ ARORA
*Partner
Morgan, Lewis & Bockius LLP*

As much of the world, and especially California, moves forward with ambitious goals to boost renewable energy production (California has set an objective of 100% commercial renewable power by 2045), Neeraj Arora has emerged as a primary contributor to the renewable industry's growth. Notably, Arora has developed an especially strong practice in advising on a fundamental piece of the renewable energy puzzle: storage.

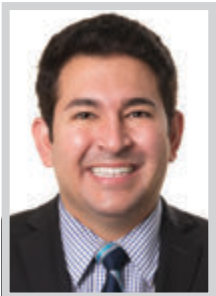
Arora wrote one of the first articles about financing energy storage, which appeared in Project Finance magazine. Storage on the industrial scale that utilities require is expensive and calls for skilled legal, contractual, and funding advice in order to be constructed and operated efficiently and profitably. An advocate of project financing, which in his Project Finance article he called the "new frontier" for storage projects, Arora has worked on multiple aspects of some of the most significant storage projects now operating anywhere.



MICHELLE A. AVAN
*Director, West Division Supervision Executive
Merrill Lynch Wealth Management*

Michelle A. Avan is a trailblazer and one of the most highly respected business women across multiple local and national groups serving the larger community. Her career in the financial services industry spans over 25 years where she currently manages regulatory, financial and reputational risk to ensure that 2,500 Financial Advisors in 98 offices across nine states and Guam adheres to regulatory and company policy compliance for Merrill in the west.

Avan is committed not only to helping clients grow their wealth and giving back to the community, but also to empower young people, particularly Black women and girls. Her passion is working with youth to help them realize their full potential through financial acumen, higher education, determination and drive. She is an active participant and mentor with the Los Angeles Black MBA Leaders of Tomorrow organization as well serving as a mentor at USC.



JAMES ("JIMMY") AZADIAN
*Member and West Coast Chair of Appellate Practice
Dykema Gossett PLLC*

Jimmy Azadian leads Dykema's West Coast appellate practice. He specializes in complex federal and state court commercial litigation raising cutting-edge and core business issues, the First Amendment to the Constitution, Article I of the California Constitution, and the application of California's anti-SLAPP statute in federal court.

Despite how busy Azadian has been in the courtroom, he also takes great pride in, and makes time for, providing mentorship and guidance for the next generation of appellate attorneys. He has served as an adjunct professor, teaching courses in Appellate Advocacy at Pepperdine University School of Law, Law and Economics at UCLA, the Supreme Court Practicum at Northwestern University School of Law, and Legal Ethics at USC. He has founded and leads a foundation that connects with at-risk youth and teaches them about the judiciary, securing special invitations from appellate courts for the youth to attend hearings.



JESSICA BABRICK
*Shareholder/Director
Weinstock Manion*

Jessica Babrick applies a broad background in litigation to resolve disputes involving trusts, estates, probate and conservatorships. She represents beneficiaries, fiduciaries and financial and charitable institutions in a wide variety of contested trust and probate matters. She is a fervent advocate for her clients and works closely with them to efficiently and effectively resolve claims concerning breach of fiduciary duty, undue influence, lack of capacity and the validity of wills and trusts. She has served as chair of the Beverly Hills Bar Association Trusts and Estate Executive Committee. She puts her clients' needs first and serves as a mentor to associates at the firm.

Babrick has been quoted in numerous publications and has been a guest speaker at events for the Los Angeles Estate Planning Council, CalCPA, Beverly Hills Bar Association, and Business Managers Discussion Group.

Congratulations



MARSHALL CAMP ANDREW WALSH

Thriving in their 40s

—*Los Angeles Business Journal*

THRIVING IN THEIR 40s



RYAN BARNCASTLE
Partner
Barnes & Thornburg LLP

Ryan Barncastle’s corporate and real estate practice is as diverse as Los Angeles, the city he calls home. His success as a lawyer can be attributed to the varied verticals in which his clients call on him as their deal counsel. He has amassed 15 years of experience advising sophisticated clients with complex corporate and real estate transactions and maintains a significant cross-border and international practice, broad exposure to a varied set of private equity and venture capital investments, institutional real estate clientele, an emerging focus on institutional cannabis matters, and an established role as the corporate legal advisor to entertainers, professional athletes and the companies they lead and support.

Barncastle assists with private equity transactions, debt financings, securities offerings, M&A, divestitures, venture capital investments and joint venture arrangements. As a transactional lawyer, he has garnered a background in a diverse set of real estate deals throughout the United States.



JESSICA STEBBINS BINA
Partner
Latham & Watkins

Latham & Watkins partner Jessica Stebbins Bina stands out among Los Angeles’ top trial lawyers. After establishing her courtroom reputation defending AEG Live in the six-month wrongful death jury trial brought by Michael Jackson’s family – resulting in a total defense verdict – she has built a fearsome litigation practice representing a who’s-who of clients in media, entertainment, and technology, including MGM, Apple, iHeart-Media, CoStar, Big Bus LA, ICM Partners, the International Olympic Committee, and the Association of Talent Agents.

Among recent highlights has been her work for Pandora Media in a high-profile dispute over digital royalties on pre-1972 recordings brought by founders of the 1960s band the Turtles. The suit centers on whether digital music services must pay royalties on pre-1972 recordings streamed prior to the enactment of the Music Modernization Act. After district courts returned contradictory opinions in two similar cases, the matter is headed back to the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals.



DANIEL BIR
Principal
Polsinelli

Daniel Bir joined Polsinelli’s national products liability and toxic and mass tort litigation teams as a principal in the Los Angeles office. He assists businesses with all stages of litigation on a variety of issues in various industries, including complex multi-party disputes with an emphasis on product liability actions, general liability actions and catastrophic injury claims. He has successfully argued discovery and dispositive motions, and has resolved endless cases through mediations, settlement conferences, and trial. His efforts in this area have resulted in decisions that assist clients in future cases and in developing long term litigation and business strategies.

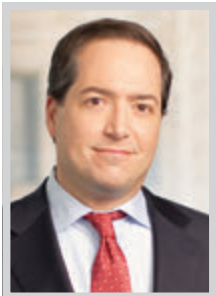
Bir is heavily involved in the community. He has worked on pro bono cases for the Center for Veterans Advancement, a program supported through the Public Counsel Law Center to help veterans gain employment after completing military service.



TRENT BRYSON
CEO
Bryson Financial

Trent Bryson has proven to be one of the leading benefits brokers and consultants in the country. Over the last few years, Bryson’s innovation, diligence, and determined pursuit of excellence have fostered Bryson Financial’s regional and national success. Capitalizing on his leadership responsibilities, he brings an adept knowledge of the insurance and financial industry’s complexities as it pertains to legislative policy allowing for cutting edge evaluations and unparalleled negotiation skills. Bryson also has noteworthy skills in recruiting top talent and superior knowledge to motivate this talent, constantly striving to create protocols that cater to the exclusive needs of each of his clients.

Bryson is currently an adjunct professor at Long Beach State, where he lectures on Human Resources. He is currently the political involvement committee chair for NAIFA - California, where he also served on the State Board and on the National Taskforce for the 70,000-member association.



MARSHALL CAMP
Partner
Hueston Hennigan LLP

Marshall Camp is a founding partner of Hueston Hennigan LLP. A former federal prosecutor and experienced trial lawyer, Camp has represented companies and individuals in connection with high-stakes business litigation, and in defense of criminal and regulatory investigations and enforcement actions. He has successfully tried numerous civil and criminal cases in forums across the country, and has represented clients in a range of industries, including technology, entertainment, medical device, insurance, and finance.

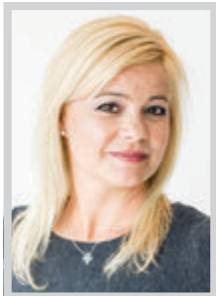
Camp is currently defending one of the highest profile criminal defendants in the “Varsity Blues” college admissions case, among other profile matters. He also served as lead counsel at both the trial and appellate court levels in a successful challenge to one of the most stringent, antidevelopment land use measures ever attempted, with the final victory hailed by the Los Angeles Daily Journal as “a major appellate win in a high-profile legal and political battle.”



CHRISTOPHER CASAMASSIMA
Partner
WilmerHale

Christopher Casamassima is an experienced trial lawyer who focuses on complex business disputes involving antitrust, breach of contract, fraud, trade secrets and other commercial issues. He has achieved significant victories on behalf of both plaintiffs and defendants in a variety of industries, including healthcare, entertainment, financial services and aerospace. Casamassima has led the defense for numerous corporate clients facing class action claims, qui tam claims and other matters involving significant potential exposure.

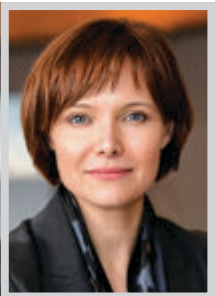
He has represented clients in high-profile matters impacting the Los Angeles business community, including representing Sony Pictures Entertainment after the company was left reeling from a data breach when thousands of documents were published online including personal email correspondence, employees’ personal data, executive pay and unreleased films and scripts. Casamassima is also an active member of the legal community, active in the American Bar Association’s Antitrust Law Section.



KYNDRA CASPER
Partner
DLA Piper

Kyndra Casper’s practice emphasizes land use and environmental matters, including project management, obtaining development entitlements, land use due diligence, administrative proceedings and litigation. She is extensively experienced in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act.

Casper is the lead attorney representing Harridge Development Group in the \$1 billion, highly publicized Crossroads Hollywood development. Her role has been all-encompassing, helping see the project through since its inception and attending more than 70 community meetings since the project was announced. The project will turn the historic Crossroads of the World in Hollywood, a landmarked site built in the 1930s that is often referred to as the first outdoor mall in the United States, into a modern destination with commercial space, retail storefronts, residential buildings and a hotel, all accessible through an open-air paseo connecting Sunset and Highland.



CLAIRE CASTLES
Partner
Jones Day

In 2011, Claire Castles returned to Los Angeles – her birthplace – to be closer to her family and join Jones Day’s Los Angeles office. Now, after 16 years of practice and almost 10 years at the Firm, she has developed her legal career and business experience to become one of the top health care lawyers in Los Angeles and a rising star in the national health care legal industry. Castles’ practice focuses on helping clients navigate a complex and ever-changing health care and life science regulatory compliance industry. As part of her work, she frequently assists on international matters with significant regulatory enforcement issues and potential reputational concerns for clients.

Castles’ quick understanding of her clients’ businesses and associated operational challenges distinguishes her work from others. Her knowledge and esteem in the industry allow her to work on some of the Firm’s most time-sensitive and trailblazing health care work.



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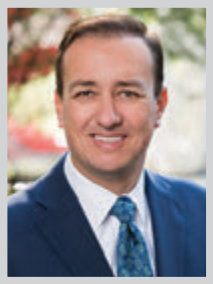
From assessing risk to M&A advisory, we know your business requires unique solutions to meet the specific moments you're navigating. That's why, at Fifth Third Bank, we have a team of local experts who understand your business. Whatever your business goals are, we're here to help you succeed. Let's build, together.

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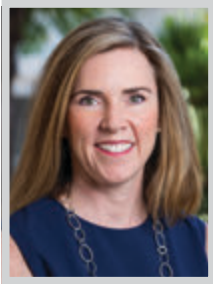
THRIVING IN THEIR 40s



DAVID CLAUSEN
Wealth Management Advisor
Northwestern Mutual

David Clausen provides holistic financial guidance to his clients. A key component to his success stems from this “client-first” mentality. Committed to the primary role of integrity in his client relationships, David recognizes that his success is measured and dictated by his ability to enact solutions that align with the varied interests of his clients. He takes the time to listen to their story, understand their goals, and partner with them to implement the steps necessary to help their vision to become a reality.

With 20 years of experience in the financial services industry, Clausen has partnered with successful attorneys, physicians, business owners, and affluent families to help steer them toward financial success. He frequently collaborates with fellow advisors to educate clients on wealth management strategies and solutions. He is regarded as a thought leader within the industry and has been published in multiple publications.



BETH COLLINS
Shareholder
Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck

Beth Collins is known as a problem solver who routinely tackles high-profile, high-controversy cases. She has a rare mix of significant entitlement, transactional and litigation experience that gives her a unique perspective and her clients an edge—whether she is litigating in the courts, drafting documents, negotiating a deal or advocating before public officials and agencies. She also leads her firm’s California Real Estate and Land Use Group.

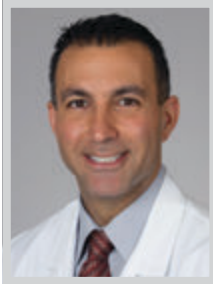
Collins’ career has also always included public service. Before law school, she moved to Los Angeles in 1994 to teach middle-school science and health in Southeast Los Angeles as a member of Teach for America. Since becoming a lawyer, she has donated thousands of pro bono hours. Recently, she worked pro bono to permit the Armenian American Museum in Glendale, and helped the Islamic Society of Santa Barbara permit the first mosque and cultural center in the Central Coast region of California.



STELIAN DAMU
Partner
Moss Adams

Stelian Damu has 15 years of experience in public accounting with over 13 years dedicated to providing assurance and consulting services to health care organizations and insurance plans. He specializes in providing assurance services to both for-profit and not-for-profit health care organizations, including home care organizations, long-term care organizations, hospitals, medical groups, and health plans. He is responsible for planning, preparing, conducting, and completing audits. As a trusted advisor, he interacts with clients throughout the year, bringing innovation and solutions to their industry challenges.

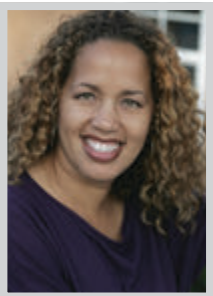
Damu is a “home grown” Moss Adams partner, having started his career with the firm shortly after graduating from California State University-Northridge with a Bachelor of Science in Accounting and Information Systems. He has experience leading audits of health care organizations with revenues ranging from \$20 million to over \$1 billion.



ARMAND DORIAN, MD, MMM, FACEP
Chief Medical Officer, Associate Professor of Clinical Emergency Medicine
Keck School of Medicine
USC Verdugo Hills Hospital

Armand H. Dorian, MD, FACEP, MMM joined the USC-VHH Executive team in July 2018 as the chief medical officer, business development, to help lead the physician medical staff as well as program development at USC-VHH. He is an associate professor of emergency medicine at the Keck School of Medicine, former chair of the Caduceus Society, and serves as a governing board member, a Foundation board member and community board member at USC-VHH.

Dr. Dorian brings nearly two decades of medical experience, as an Emergency Board Certified Physician and valued leader and administrator. Dr. Dorian is a compassionate physician executive who has been able to inspire, motivate and lead by instilling a culture of honesty, integrity, collegiality, accountability, and empathy.



BONIQUE EDWARDS
Principal
Kaleidoscope Consulting Group

After being laid off from two Internet companies during the dot-com boom, Bonique Edwards took matters into her own hands and started Kaleidoscope Consulting Group. Kaleidoscope transforms digital platforms for business owners, non-profit organizations and Fortune 500 companies globally. The company focuses on upgrading the brand of each client through the use of technology, graphic design and creating succinct copywriting for websites, brochures and online event activations using social media as a platform.

Based in South Los Angeles, Edwards started off by providing services to Black-owned businesses. She was compelled to help level the playing field and close the gap on the digital divide within her community. Through persistence and dedication, her reputation grew and her client roster began to encompass larger brands. She manages a team of engineers, the moderator and the guests to ensure that all online digital activations are handled effectively for the brand.



CHRISTOPHER EDWARDS
CEO
The Third Floor

What kind of child do you get when your father is a rocket scientist and your mother is an artist? You get a technically brilliant filmmaker! Chris Edwards, CEO and co-founder of the largest visualization studio in the world, The Third Floor, garnered such a pedigree. Edwards worked at Walt Disney Animation for five years as a 3-D artist. In 2002, he was recommended to George Lucas to work at Skywalker Ranch — Hollywood’s most coveted gig.

Filled with inspiration from their work, Edwards and some colleagues started their new business venture in Los Angeles and named the company after their office on the third floor of Skywalker Ranch. Before Edwards and TTF, the concept of pre-vis (Pre-Visualization) was never openly acknowledged in Hollywood; it is through Edwards’ efforts of advocating the technology that it became industry standard.



THEANE EVANGELIS
Partner and Co-Chair of the Class Actions Practice Group
Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher LLP

Theane Evangelis has served as lead counsel in a wide range of groundbreaking constitutional, class action, and appellate litigation. In particular, she is leading a wide range of high-profile litigation matters involving the “gig economy.” Evangelis has devoted herself to defending the gig economy, which is all the more critical now when millions find themselves unable to secure traditional employment, and the public is relying on on-demand services that governments have deemed “essential critical infrastructure.”

Among her recent highlights have been her work defeating application for a temporary restraining order against Uber Technologies, Inc. seeking to impose prior restraints on Uber’s speech regarding California’s Proposition 22. She also defended Uber in several landmark cases challenging its independent contractor model, including under California’s new law AB5. She has also defended Postmates in numerous gig-economy suits.



BRANDON FERRERA
Market Executive
Fifth Third Bank

Brandon J.E. Ferrera is an established middle market banker who joined Fifth Third Bank in early 2018. Bringing more than a decade of executive-level experience in relationship and commercial banking to his new role, Ferrera joined Fifth Third from Comerica where he led a middle market team and was responsible for the bank’s regional private equity strategy. Ferrera’s ability to balance these two areas that sometimes intersect with great complexity is one of his most significant strengths.

Ferrera has been charged with building a team of bankers as part of Fifth Third Bank’s middle market expansion into the California market. His team’s focus is developing and maintaining relationships with both privately owned and private equity owned middle-market clients. The group supports its clients’ growth with financing for leveraged buyouts, acquisitions, working capital and growth capital.



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Congratulations to one of our leading project managers, **Laura Whelan**, for being named one of Los Angeles Business Journal's *Thriving in their 40's* professionals.



commercial
real estate

THRIVING IN THEIR 40s



TANYA FORSHEIT
Partner
Frankfurt Kurnit Klein & Selz PC

Tanya Forsheit is chair of the Privacy & Data Security Group at Frankfurt Kurnit, where she also serves as supervising partner of the firm’s Los Angeles Office. She has advised on high-profile matters involving confidential data and other sensitive information for over 20 years. During this time, she has achieved many special accomplishments.

Widely recognized as one of the leading advisors on the California Consumer Privacy Act (CCPA), Forsheit has advised hundreds of organizations on readiness and compliance with the law. She testified before the California legislature during its consideration of amendments to the law, appearing as a witness in February 2019 at the request of the California Chamber of Commerce, and represented two different trade associations in their submission of comments to the California Attorney General on the CCPA’s proposed regulations.



TRACEY FREED
Founder & Managing Attorney
Freed Law, P.C.

Lawyer Tracey Freed is a leader in the digital media and tech space. She runs her own law firm and works on deals for start-ups to the biggest names in tech and digital media. She has also taught a course in Digital Media in the Law at Loyola Law School in Los Angeles for nine years, a course she designed, since she is one of the industry leaders, and indeed is one of few lawyers to have been operating in this space since it became a reality in the 21st century. She has also taught one of the first courses in the United States to focus on Artificial Intelligence in the Law.

Freed takes part in numerous women’s groups fostering women’s leadership and mentorship, in both private and academic settings. She graduated Magna Cum Laude with a BA in Sociology from UCLA in 2002 and obtained her JD from Loyola Law School in 2005.



JEANNE FUGATE
Partner
King & Spalding

Described as “fearless” by her clients, Jeanne Fugate does not shy from the tough cases and achieves outstanding results on behalf of both plaintiffs and defendants, nimbly pivoting between the two diametrically opposed sides. Having worked as a professional journalist before attending law school, she excels at TROs, ex partes, and trial work. Her commitment goes beyond the courtroom as well, as she is actively involved in several organizations that serve Los Angeles and the state of California.

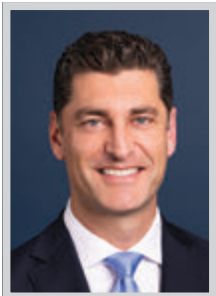
Fugate has served as a commissioner on the Los Angeles City Board of Civil Service Commissioners since 2014, and just completed a two-year term as president. The five-member board hears appeals of City employees who have been disciplined and approves personnel policy and procedures. In addition, last year she conducted a training for civil service hearing examiners, who make recommendations to the board, to provide guidance as to how to improve their reports.



ROBERT GARCIA
Director of Information Technology
Gursey Schneider LLP

Throughout his career, Robert Garcia has applied his IT expertise towards enabling businesses to operate more effectively and efficiently. However, with the exponential increase in ransomware, malware and identity theft, he recognized that cybersecurity would emerge as the foremost concern for companies and users alike. Cyberattacks affect all people, damage businesses, contribute to job losses, and can potentially put the safety of individuals at risk.

As a cybersecurity evangelist and data privacy advocate, Garcia began educating people on effective methods and controls to improve their security footprint in an insecure world. He has given talks to the California Society of CPAs, various professional services firms, and currently hosts a monthly lecture series for the LA Association of Legal Administrators. Able to cut through the noise and speak to firms’ real-life concerns, he is known as a thought leader in the cybersecurity and Infosec space.



MICHAEL GEIBELSON
Managing Partner, Los Angeles and Silicon Valley Offices
Robins Kaplan LLP

Michael Geibelson is a 15-year partner at the trial law firm Robins Kaplan LLP, three-year member of the firm’s executive board, and managing partner of its California offices. He leads the offices with distinction and brings great enthusiasm and dedication to the position. Geibelson, who joined Robins Kaplan in 1995, has achieved trial and litigation successes for retail, technology, real estate, and food and beverage clients in a wide range of business disputes.

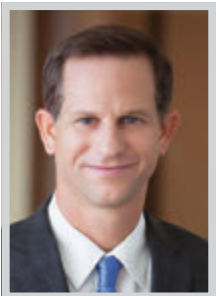
An experienced litigator, Geibelson’s trial experience is deep in commercial, class action, real estate, and antitrust matters, and ranges widely from the representation of cattle ranchers in fraud and veterinary malpractice matters, to building owners seeking to remedy welding product defects, to ship owners sued for trespass resulting from the grounding of their vessel, to organizations suing upon violations of the Clean Water Act and Endangered Species Act.



ROSS GERBER
President and CEO
Gerber Kawasaki Wealth and Investment

Ross Gerber is the co-founder, president and CEO of Gerber Kawasaki Wealth and Investment Management. He oversees Gerber Kawasaki’s corporate and investment management operations and serves individual clients. He has become one of the most followed investors on social and in traditional media. His investment ideas and advice have made him a regular in the business news.

Gerber and the Gerber Kawasaki team oversee \$1.4 billion of investments as of 11/13/20 and focus on technology, media, and entertainment sectors. Gerber Kawasaki has become a leader in Fintech by leveraging technology and social media to work with a large and diverse client base. GK strives to democratize investment advice and prepare the younger generation for their future. Gerber is an expert in online marketing and social media and co-developed the company’s app for IOS, My-MoneyPage.



SETH GERBER
Partner
Morgan, Lewis & Bockius LLP

An accomplished trial lawyer and leader of Morgan Lewis’s Intellectual Property Trade Secrets Working Group, Seth Gerber is distinguished for his international trade secrets practice, as well as for his pro bono cases and community service on behalf of the Anti-Defamation League. He represents companies and individuals in IP and business litigation involving a range of claims, including misappropriation of trade secrets, breach of contract, intentional interference, and breach of fiduciary duty.

Gerber is experienced in cross-border litigation involving the theft of trade secrets and property overseas, including in China. Well-versed in sovereign immunity issues, he has participated in a hearing before the US Senate Helsinki Commission, negotiated with foreign officials and the US State Department, and obtained a favorable judgment and sanctions award of over \$122 million against a foreign state in a Holocaust restitution matter.



JULIE GERCHIK
Partner
Glaser Weil

Julie R. F. Gerchik was born and raised here in Los Angeles, but is a dual citizen of both the United States and Great Britain. She obtained several degrees in the U.S. and England. After finishing her law degree at Oxford followed by an L.L.M. in civil rights and civil liberties at NYU, SHE joined a think tank in New York where she conducted opposition research for four years, often going on intelligence-gathering missions.

When Gerchik returned to L.A., she began practicing law and joined Latham & Watkins. She worked at Latham for more than a decade before moving to Glaser Weil. Now a litigation partner, she focuses her practice on all types of complex commercial matters including financial institution matters, securities litigation and regulatory matters, real estate and developer disputes, investigations, and entertainment, employment, technology, and IP matters. Gerchik is admitted to both the California and New York bars.

THRIVING IN THEIR 40s



MAGALY GOMEZ
Partner
Vaco

Magaly Gomez has placed hundreds of candidates into new positions, helping people find gainful employment and advance in their careers and helping businesses continue to thrive, especially important for people in today's challenging economy. But most of all, she's a Latinx businesswoman who is first-generation American and she's a global leader for her business.

Gomez is a partner at Vaco, a leading talent and solutions firm specializing in accounting, finance, technology and operations positions. She is the visionary who leads and directs the tremendously successful staffing line of business at Vaco, specializing in placing transactional and staff accounting and finance professionals in interim roles and direct hire positions. She built the line of business from scratch and has since grown her team, increased their client base, and placed hundreds of people for client peak season needs and into full-time jobs.



MICHAEL GOOD
Partner
CohnReznick

The phrase "doing well by doing good" is an appropriate one when it comes to Michael Good. He is an assurance partner with CohnReznick who leads the Not-for-Profit and Affordable Housing industry practices for the firm's Los Angeles offices, and is the Social Services Sector leader for the firm. His clients include organizations and companies in the not-for-profit, education, and affordable housing industries. He is fully committed to building stronger communities – through his career path and in his personal life as well.

As a young audit professional, Good was exposed to many different industries early on. And while he was happy to provide services to all these industries, he developed a passion for two of them: not-for-profit and affordable housing. He saw how the accounting and audit-related services he performed in these industries helped charitable organizations manage risk, maintain regulatory compliance, and strengthen their financial performance.



STUART GRAIWER
Partner
Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher LLP

Trusted advisor to private and institutional real estate investors, Stuart Graiwer has carved out a reputation as the leading lawyer for major studio deals, which include guiding Hackman Capital Partners in its purchase of CBS Television City and its acquisition of MBS Media Campus and the owners of Silvercup Studios in the sale of Silvercup Studios in New York City.

Rounding out his work on the studio front, Graiwer regularly guides his clients in connection with the acquisition, sale, development and financing of a variety of asset classes, including office, mixed-use projects, hotels, multifamily and residential developments, industrial, data centers and retail centers. Clients frequently turn to him for his deep knowledge and experience in the structuring of complex joint venture and partnership agreements, including the structuring of all classes of equity investments.



DEMETRIA GRAVES
Attorney and Certified Family Law Specialist
The Graves Law Firm

Demetria Graves attended Loyola Law School, and six months after passing the bar, opened her own family law practice in her hometown of Pasadena at the age of 25. Graves is currently a leading family law attorney, who has also become a Certified Family Law Specialist. She also serves as the Secretary of the Family Law Executive Committee with the California Lawyers Association and currently serves as the co-chair of the African American Alumni Association, Loyola Law School, assisting law school attendees to successfully complete law school. She is a mentor to several law students and young attorneys.

Graves is also an adjunct professor, and has taught at Abraham Lincoln Law School and West Los Angeles Community College. Additionally, she serves as a Judge Pro Tem with the Los Angeles Superior Court. She also has a podcast called "Legalish," that discusses celebrity-related family law issues for those facing similar challenges.



Congratulations to our Senior Managers, **Jing Shen** and **Karl Seitz**, on being named to the *Los Angeles Business Journal's Thriving in their 40s* list!

Thank you for your contributions to our business and our business community.

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Jing Shen
Senior Manager



Karl Seitz
Senior Manager

MHM (Mayer Hoffman McCann P.C.) is an independent CPA firm that provides audit, review and attest services, and works closely with CBIZ, a business consulting, tax and financial services provider. CBIZ and MHM are members of Kreston International Limited, a global network of independent accounting firms.

THRIVING IN THEIR 40s



BRIAN GRAY
Partner, CPA
Gursey Schneider LLP

Brian Gray joined Gursey Schneider LLP as a director in the tax and accounting department in 2012 and became a partner in January 2014. Before that, he held positions as a tax director at a national accounting firm and as director of finance and tax for a family office. He has extensive experience working with high-net-worth individuals and their estate planning attorneys to design and implement tax efficient estate plans. He also focuses on identifying the income tax savings opportunities that exist when asset-holding companies, family limited partnerships, trusts, and foundations are used to achieve the client's wealth transfer and philanthropic goals.

Gray has been instrumental at Gursey Schneider in building a 35+ member team focused on tax strategy for middle-market entrepreneurs. He has over 20 years of experience in this niche as well as other tax specialties.



ERIC GURNA
President & CEO
LA's BEST Afterschool Enrichment Programs

Growing up, Eric Gurna witnessed the impact of poverty on underserved communities. These experiences inspired him to dedicate his life to community service. Today, he is the president and CEO of LA's BEST, an afterschool enrichment program serving 25,000 students in Los Angeles, ages 5-12. He is a thought leader in the field of Expanded Learning, and has brought the afterschool community together to change California's conversation about afterschool funding.

Rather than fighting solely for LA's BEST to receive funding, Gurna believes in fighting to increase the overall funding amount for afterschool – a process he described as creating a larger pie instead of taking a bigger slice. As a direct result of his coalition-building efforts, the 2017-2018 budget included an increase of \$50 million for afterschool funding, the first of its kind in nearly 10 years.



BRANDY HAN
Senior Vice President and Group Head of Capital Markets
City National Bank

Brandy Han was recently promoted to head City National Bank's newly created Capital Markets group, responsible for nearly 30 colleagues among the bank's syndications team, foreign exchange desk, interest rate risk management team, and its international banking and trade finance team. She joined City National from UBS Securities, where she served as director of the bank's asset-backed securities origination and structuring team.

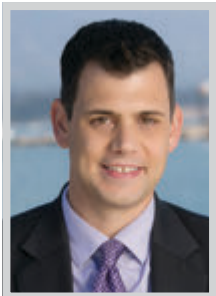
Prior to her current role, she built City National's syndications team from the ground up, hiring four colleagues in Los Angeles and New York, developing the team's credit processes and systems, and ultimately growing the business from \$0 to more than \$6 billion in managed commitments among hundreds of relationships. As head of the Capital Markets group, she plans to increase the bank's investment in foreign exchange technology, manage City National's interest rate conversion from LIBOR, and further develop the bank's supply chain financing product.



BRIAN HEGARTY
Principal, Managing Director, Los Angeles
Marsh & McLennan Agency

In a short three years since becoming the managing director of Marsh & McLennan's Los Angeles office, Brian Hegarty has driven growth by 150%, increasing revenue eightfold. In that time, under his direction, MMA's LA office has also proudly become the official insurance broker of the LA Clippers and LA Chargers. His fields of expertise include entertainment, healthcare, technology, and hospitality- three key business components of LA.

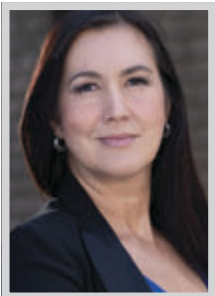
As an active member of the Los Angeles community, Hegarty has made it a hallmark of his efforts and his leadership to support and provide resources to local organizations. He and his team partner closely with the UCLA Anderson Economic Forecast Program, further enhancing their connection to the LA business community and helping provide learning opportunities to companies within LA's local economy and beyond.



BRAD HERREMA
Shareholder
Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck

Brad Herrema, who leads Brownstein's California Water Group, works with clients in California and the western United States to develop innovative strategies to secure and protect their water-related interests.

In the water-scarce climate of Southern California, Herrema understands the vital role that water supply plays in any project. From the development of groundwater sustainability plans, to identifying opportunities for water investment, to securing recreational water supplies, his approach integrates each client's unique business needs, key stakeholders and long-term objectives. Herrema serves as special water counsel to private corporations, private equity funds, renewable energy developers, water purveyors, resorts and golf courses, investor-owned utilities and large landowners developing innovative strategies to address issues such as water supply planning, water right permitting and adjudications, and environmental concerns. Skilled at negotiating, Herrema excels at developing water strategies that proactively anticipate potential issues.



SONNET HUI
Vice President and General Manager
Project Management Advisors Inc.

Born and raised in Hong Kong, and having lived in five countries, Sonnet Hui has spent her life at the crossroads of ideas, cultures and global experience, a perspective she brings to her day-to-day work, facilitating discussions and navigating the complexity of high-stakes real estate development projects. As a young architect working in Los Angeles and internationally, Hui rarely saw leadership roles filled by minorities or women, a problem that persists today. She forged her own path, becoming the role model she wanted to see and mentoring young women in the commercial real estate industry to achieve their career ambitions.

As a mentor, Hui has prepared numerous young women for the realities of working in the built environment while coaching them to stay true to their goals. This focus has bolstered Sonnet's professional achievements, which include brand-defining mixed use, luxury residential, healthcare, hospitality, and entertainment developments throughout the city.



KASH HUSSAIN
Partner
CohnReznick

Sometimes, what makes a great leader is less about what they do and much more about the way they do it. This could be said about Kash Hussain, CPA, the assurance partner-in-charge for CohnReznick's Los Angeles offices. As someone only in his 40's, Hussain has assumed a great deal of responsibility as a rising leader at CohnReznick. In addition to being the assurance partner in charge for two CohnReznick Los-Angeles area offices, he also leads the firm's Technology & Media practice in Southern California. In that role, he serves numerous clients in the technology, broadcasting, digital media, music, motion picture, and television production and distribution industries, along with many others.

CohnReznick clients rely on Hussain to help them resolve complex accounting, auditing and reporting matters, and he has managed a wide range of global audit engagements involving complicated capital structures.



SACHIN H. JAIN
President and Chief Executive Officer
SCAN Group and SCAN Health Plan

Dr. Sachin Jain currently serves as president and CEO at SCAN Health Plan. Throughout his career, Dr. Jain has focused on bringing a forward-thinking approach to the seniors care—prioritizing person-centered care and empathy to meet the diverse, ever-evolving needs of older adults across cultural and socioeconomic lines. This past spring, as the country became embroiled in the controversy surrounding the death of George Floyd, Dr. Jain emerged as an important and authentic voice on national issues of race, social justice and health equity.

Dr. Jain recently completed a five-and-a-half year-tenure at the helm of Anthem-owned CareMore and Aspire Health. Under Dr. Jain's leadership, CareMore's revenues grew from \$800 million to \$1.6 billion. Dr. Jain also led efforts to expand the companies' capitated, integrated care models into new territories, growing the organizations' service areas from four states to 32 states and launching new in-home and virtual clinical care models for frail and vulnerable populations.

THRIVING IN THEIR 40s



GRACE KANGDANI
*Senior Vice President; Business Banking Market
Manager for Los Angeles Metro
Bank of America*

Since the onset of social distancing, Grace Kangdani’s mantra has been “physically distanced, but socially engaged.” Through virtual gatherings, she has led impactful connections within her network leading to results that have positively affected countless Angelinos. For example, when a participant in her networking meeting mentioned essential healthcare workers were working extended hours and not always able to get a warm meal, she recognized an opportunity to support a campaign to purchase meals from the Latino Restaurant Association (supporting local restaurants), which then provide meals for essential workers at White Memorial Hospital, during their extended and often arduous work hours.

Connectivity is not an isolated event for Grace, but a part of her DNA. It is something she lives and breathes in every interaction, continually establishing genuine relationships that expand beyond business metrics.



NIKKI KATZ
*Chief Digital Executive, Wealth Management and
Head of Digital Products & Platforms
Bank of America*

Nikki Katz leads strategy and delivery of digital experiences for Bank of America’s Wealth Management clients, focusing on driving client acquisition, retention and development through the seamless integration of client interactions across digital and physical platforms. She is also responsible for creating and delivering Bank of America’s overall suite of leading-edge Mobile and Online Banking experiences to more than 65 million clients.

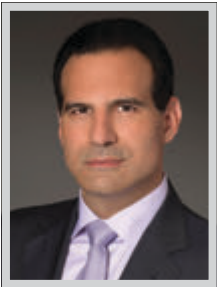
Under Katz’s leadership, Bank of America has implemented over 1,500 new digital features and enhancements in 2020 alone, contributing to consistently high Client Satisfaction in our Online and Mobile channels among the company’s nearly 40 million active digital users. Katz also played a pivotal role this year expanding the core Bank of America App to connect clients across the bank’s consumer and wealth management lines of business, integrating the Merrill Edge, Merrill Lynch, Private Bank and Benefits Online mobile applications.



DANILO KAWASAKI
*Vice-President and COO
Gerber Kawasaki Wealth and Investment
Management*

Danilo Kawasaki serves as Vice-President and COO of Gerber Kawasaki Wealth & Investment Management. In his role, he oversees the compliance and day-to-day operations of Gerber Kawasaki. He is also a member of the Gerber Kawasaki Board of Directors and the Investment Selection Committee.

Kawasaki started his career in the financial services industry joining SunAmerica Securities in 2002. He moved up the rankings in record time and was promoted to the branch manager position of the West Los Angeles office within two years by the tender age of 24. In 2010, together with Ross Gerber, he founded his own independent financial firm. Currently, Gerber Kawasaki Wealth & Investment Management has over 7,000 clients nationwide and manages over \$1.4 billion, with ambitious plans to eclipse the \$10 billion-dollar mark over the next five years.



MEHDI KHODADAD
*Partner
Sidley Austin LLP*

Mehdi Khodadad has always been fascinated by the intersection of law and technology. He was raised in Silicon Valley at the forefront of technology innovation. He tracked market trends, which, beginning in 2006, experienced a seismic shift in the flow of capital to private equity investments in later stage companies in the technology and other innovative sectors. As a result, he nurtured and built relationships, educated himself on the differentiating features of private equity and related best practices, and ventured into his first PE transactions while still an associate at Cooley.

In April 2019, Khodadad brought his entire team of partners, counsel and associates to Sidley to scale his practice to new heights. Over the past year, he and his colleagues have initiated, were in the midst of, or closed multiple transactions having an aggregate enterprise value of more than \$23.4 billion.

THE LOS ANGELES TEAM CONGRATULATES OUR COLLEAGUE

Emily Loupee
on her inclusion in the *Los Angeles Business Journal’s* Thriving in Their 40’s.



Congratulations, Emily, and we applaud your dedication to outstanding leadership.
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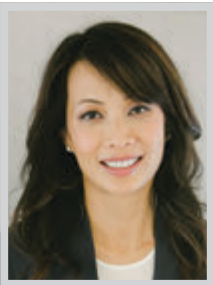
THRIVING IN THEIR 40s



JASON KIM
Counsel
Hunton Andrews Kurth LLP

As businesses face increasing litigation and regulation in the privacy and cybersecurity space, Jason Kim is well placed to advise them. As counsel at Hunton Andrews Kurth, Kim has developed a substantial practice with an impressive track record of high profile cases under his belt. He is involved in some of the most cutting edge disputes in cybersecurity litigation, having litigated multiple highly publicized data breach class actions, financial services class actions and consumer class actions for a broad spectrum of Fortune 500 companies, including MGM Resorts International, Walmart, L Brands, Facebook/Instagram, Loews Hotels, Under Armour, Yahoo!, and others.

Kim has also served as litigation counsel to one of the largest online services in the world in class actions involving the largest reported data breaches in history. Similarly, Kim has served as litigation counsel to a major apparel manufacturer in a class action involving a data breach impacting 100 million accounts.



ANN KONO
Founder and CEO
Leda Advisory Group

Ann Kono brings over 20 years of experience focused on operational scale and digital transformation for private and public companies. In founding Leda Advisory Group, Kono seeks to converge her passion for helping growth stage companies thrive while leveraging her experience to architect world-class business models.

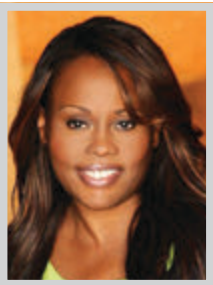
In addition to working with clients, Kono is currently on the board of Treehouse Real Estate and Stable Road Acquisition Company. She previously served as a partner, chief information and risk officer of Ares Management where she supported significant expansion of the platform. Prior to Ares, she was the head of application development at Western Asset Management. Kono currently serves as a board member of Junior Achievement in Southern California (JaSocal), a non-profit focused on entrepreneurship, financial literacy and work readiness for students in elementary through high school. JaSocal and its volunteers serve 50,000 students in LA annually.



JASON KREIN
Senior Manager, Tax Services
RSM US LLP

Senior manager of tax services at RSM US LLP, Jason Krein has actively worked to increase diversity and inclusion at RSM by actively participating in the firm's Cultural Diversity Program. He is the LA office leader of the employee network group PRIDE which supports LGBT RSM employees, clients and allies through recruitment, retention and business activity alignment with LGBT organizations. In this role, he has led the firm's involvement in the Los Angeles AIDS Fundraising Walk. This event raised awareness and generated support within the community and proceeds from the event went towards supporting initiatives to end the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

Krein also serves as an executive sponsor of Hola! which stands for the Hispanic Organization for Leadership and Achievement. It is one of RSM's largest employee network groups dedicated to hosting networking activities, and focusing on mentoring and helping its members excel.



HOLLY LAKE
Partner
DLA Piper

Holly Lake is one of the country's preeminent employment lawyers, representing both private and public employers in all aspects of employment law and related litigation, including discrimination, harassment, wrongful discharge, and wage-and-hour matters. A lifelong Angeleno, Lake has strong community ties and has consistently given back to the community by volunteering her time and mentoring others.

A 20-year legal industry veteran, Lake has extensive experience leading legal teams on large-scale class and collective actions, employment-related investigations, and compliance audits. She handles a portfolio of employment litigation cases for clients across varying industries, including: G6 Hospitality (which includes the brands Motel 6 and Studio 6); Chipotle Mexican Grill; and California Institute of Technology (which includes Jet Propulsion Laboratory). She also volunteers as a Judge Pro Tem for the Los Angeles Superior Court and serves as faculty and program director for the National Institute for Trial Advocacy.



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BRAD LARSEN

Managing Director, Market Executive
Bank of America Private Bank

Brad Larsen is responsible for the Greater Los Angeles market, one of the largest and highest performing markets nationally in the Bank of America Private Bank. Leading a team of 180 multi-disciplined professionals and managers across six offices including; Century City, DTLA, South Bay, Pasadena, Westlake Village and Santa Barbara, Larsen is responsible for the oversight of over \$27 billion in balances for clients and delivering services such as investment management, credit, banking and wealth structuring to help clients grow, protect and preserve and ultimately transfer wealth.

Larsen and his team are also responsible for recruiting, hiring, training and retention for the Greater Los Angeles market. As a Bank of America Private Bank Leader, he continues to successfully hire and develop diverse talent so that associates reflect the communities in which they serve.



SUSAN LEADER

Partner
Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP

Akin Gump litigation partner Susan Leader boasts an impressive track record of securing favorable verdicts for her clients in highly publicized, bet-the-company cases. It is her intense focus in these high-stakes matters, coupled with her well-honed trial skills, that make her a “go-to” lawyer for global players, including Southern California-based companies such as BYD America, DirecTV, Evans Hotels, PIMCO, Relevant Group and WME Entertainment. She has litigated and tried dozens of high-stakes cases and has deep experience in major arbitration.

Leader serves as the hiring partner for Akin Gump’s West Coast offices and chairs the hiring committee for those offices. Through this role, Leader is an ardent advocate for increasing diversity in the legal profession and helps steer the firm’s West coast efforts to recruit law students and attorneys who are women or identify as a racial and ethnic minority and/or LGBTQ+.



JOSEPH LEE

Principal Broker
The Elifant Group

Joseph Lee grew up locally and spent most of his life in the Pasadena area, where he attended the University of Southern California and graduated with a Bachelors in Business Administration: Real Estate Finance. After graduating, he returned to his high school alma mater and taught ceramics/art. His passion for the arts and education lead him to receive his Master’s in Education from Point Loma Nazarene University and a Masters in Fine Arts from Hong-Ik University in Seoul, Korea.

Returning back to Real Estate, Lee naturally incorporates his experiences as an educator and takes that opportunity to really consult and coach his clients through the lease/sales process. The Elifant Group, which he founded, is a commercial real estate brokerage that provides representation for small and medium size businesses in lease and sales transactions. While he also represents landlords, he primarily focuses on the representation of tenants and buyers.



AARON LEWIS

Partner and Vice Chair of the White Collar Defense
and Investigations Practice Group
Covington & Burling LLP

Aaron Lewis chose to join Covington’s Washington, DC office after law school in part because of the firm’s decades-long commitment to pro bono work and its tradition of encouraging government service. Such an opportunity arose in 2009, when Covington partner Eric Holder asked Lewis to join his staff following Holder’s nomination to serve as the Attorney General. Lewis served as a counsel in the Office of the Attorney General until 2011, focusing on issues of national security and civil rights, before becoming a federal prosecutor. In 2012, Aaron joined the United States Attorney’s Office in Los Angeles as an Assistant United States Attorney.

Lewis left the U.S. Attorney’s Office in March 2015, when Covington opened its office in Los Angeles. Since then, he has grown his White Collar Defense and Investigations practice, and helped steer the LA office’s growth from five lawyers on day one to more than 40 lawyers at present.

Congratulations,
**THRIVING IN THEIR
40s HONOREES**

including our very own **Brandy Han.**



Brandy Han
Senior Vice President and Group Head of Capital Markets,
City National Bank



THRIVING IN THEIR 40s



JAY-JAY LORD

Partner
Wolf, Rifkin, Shapiro, Schulman & Rabkin, LLP

Jay-Jay Lord is an entertainment attorney representing prominent record labels, music publishers, merchandise and live event production companies, recording artists, songwriters, composers, social media influencers, talent managers, music production companies, record producers and mixers in a wide variety of transactional matters. In addition, Lord works with various brand and IP rights companies in the licensing and exploitation of iconic properties in connection with restaurants, hotels, gyms and theme parks. His broad array of work has given him a reputation for being able to draw from his twenty-six years of experience in the entertainment industry to create intelligent solutions to complex issues and to guide his clients into making better decisions. Through his work and his attentiveness to his clients’ interests, he consistently pushes himself and the attorneys around him to be more generous with their time and to provide better service to their clients and the community at large.



EMILY LOUPEE

Senior Vice President, National Real Estate & Hospitality Professional Lines Co-Leader
Gallagher

Emily Loupee is a Bay Area native and Cal graduate (Economics) who recognized that the Los Angeles region afforded greater diversity and opportunity to expand her expertise in the highly specialized field of Professional Liability. She joined the insurance industry in 2007, and after distinguishing herself on both the brokerage side with Marsh and the underwriting path at ACE/Chubb, Loupee moved to Los Angeles where she joined Gallagher to rise to be the National co-practice leader of the Real Estate and Hospitality Professional Practice. Loupee is a passionate and devoted person and professional. Not only has she raised considerable money for The Navy Seals on behalf of her clients, but she is an active member of Girl Scout Troops and a committed member of Willow Elementary School’s Parent Reading program. Professionally, She mentors young associates through the PLUS (Professional Liability Underwriting Society).



CHRISTOPHER LOVRIEN

Partner
Jones Day

Chris Lovrien moved to Los Angeles in 2003, and was fortunate to bring his burgeoning legal practice with him – moving as an associate from Jones Day’s office in Washington, D.C., to its Los Angeles office. After five years, Lovrien was admitted to Jones Day’s partnership in 2008. His business acumen was immediately requested by firm leadership. He was given the monumental task of preparing a strategic plan for the firm’s growth and brand awareness across the entire state of California, in which the firm has five offices. As a result of his leadership, Lovrien was selected as the head of Jones Day’s Los Angeles office in 2011, making him, at 38, one of the youngest lawyers to ever lead one of the firm’s offices. In 2015, he was elevated to partner-in-charge of Jones Day’s California Region. He played a key role in Jones Day’s growth in the state.



ILYN MALLARI

Senior Accountant
The Accountancy, LLP

Ilyn Mallari joined The Accountancy in 2017 when Clement and Associates merged its practice with the firm. She earned her license as an enrolled agent in March 2019. Her newly found passion with helping clients deal with their taxes motivated her to take the IRS exam and get her license to better serve the needs of clients. She has experience with individual and business income tax returns and various federal and state return audits. Mallari holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Economics from The Pontifical and Royal University of Santo Tomas in Manila. She was a marketing officer in one of the top banks in the Philippines before she immigrated to the United States. Mallari is proficient in Filipino and loves to travel with her family. During her free time, she takes her kids to their scheduled matches and is their number one supporter from the bleachers.



We congratulate Nicole Janigian Simonian, partner and co-chair of Crowell & Moring’s International Trade Practice and International & Global Mobility Lead, on being named one of Los Angeles Business Journal’s “Thriving In Their 40’s.”



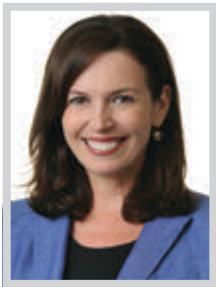
THRIVING IN THEIR 40s



BRIAN R. MICHAEL
Partner
King & Spalding

Brian R. Michael, a former federal prosecutor and senior in-house counsel in Los Angeles, represents entities and individuals in high-stakes white-collar criminal cases, securities and regulatory enforcement matters, internal investigations, crisis management, and complex litigation, as well as to advise on a wide array of compliance subjects, including FCPA and anti-corruption, cybersecurity and data privacy, FinTech, blockchain technology and digital currency, trade sanctions, and #MeToo/workplace conduct.

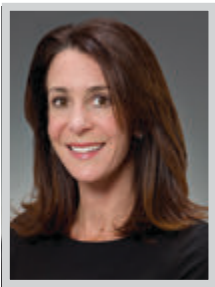
As a partner who a few years ago launched King & Spalding’s Special Matters and Government Investigations practice in Los Angeles, Michael draws upon more than two decades of public service as an Assistant U.S. Attorney in the Central District of California and the Southern District of New York, providing in-house counsel as Deputy General Counsel and Group Chief Compliance Officer at 21st Century Fox, and in private practice.



NICOLE MIHALKA
Managing Director
JLL

Nicole Mihalka started her career in commercial real estate without any of the typical connections or pedigree that many other young brokers have when entering the business. With a psychology degree from the University of Maryland and no immediate family in the business world (her mother was a nurse and father a professor), Mihalka was an outsider. Not to mention that at the time, only three percent of the brokers at her firm were women (the industry average at the time - in 2001 - was around 3-5%).

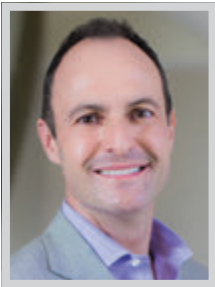
Mihalka leaned into these obstacles by developing business with music industry clients that had previously felt marginalized by the typical broker that dominated the field at the time. By 2006, she was the leading broker in sales of recording studios in Los Angeles. She also formed key relationships and became an expert in the Hollywood submarket early in her career.



ALISSA MILLER
Partner
Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP

Alissa Miller is widely recognized as a leader in her field for handling some of the industry’s highest-visibility deals between independent movie production companies and financial institutions, and for her innovative media and entertainment-focused pro bono practice. Miller is a top-shelf Hollywood dealmaker who handles sophisticated multimillion-dollar financing and other transactions, including projects for A24, Netflix and ABC Television, to name only a few.

In 2020, she has sought to tackle one of the most significant issues of the year—the COVID-19 pandemic—co-leading Akin Gump’s cross-practice efforts to assist a coalition of more than two dozen independent production companies in seeking COVID-19 relief aid. Miller also maintains an active pro bono practice, advising several organizations and nonprofits. This includes playing a key role on the team helping the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum to secure trademark clearances for multiple related media pieces, including historical film footage and photography.



EDWARD MOYZES
Chief Executive Officer
Strategic View Advisors

Edward Moyzes was born in Kiev before the fall of the Soviet Union, eventually immigrating to Denver with his family when he was five. After spending time at the Big Four public accounting firms and a dot com start up, he decided he wanted greater control over his professional future and started his career as a financial advisor.

Originally a solo advisor, Moyzes was a leader among his peers from day one, finishing first in the country among new advisors during three of his first four years. As his practice grew, he saw an opportunity to expand client impact by building a team of talented professionals whose values align with his own. Over the last five years Moyzes’ team, Strategic View Advisors, has doubled in size from five to ten team members, including five Certified Financial Planners.

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Congratulations to BDO’s Los Angeles Tax Office Managing Partner, Ben White as well as the other outstanding leaders, on being named one of LABJ’s Thriving in their 40’s.

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THRIVING IN THEIR 40s



SATPAL NAGPAL

Partner, Audit and Assurance Practice Leader
Green Hasson Janks

Satpal Nagpal is a partner at Green Hasson Janks. His commitment and passion for education stems from the belief that good education can provide a platform for an individual to succeed — regardless of circumstances and background. As a first-generation immigrant to the U.S. and first to graduate in his family, his success is the culmination of a long-term dream to be part of leadership in a firm with amazing culture and people. Green Hasson Janks clients are passionate entrepreneurs and mission-driven individuals. Nagpal is a trusted ally and adviser who helps them achieve their goals.

For over a decade, Nagpal has spent his time volunteering and sitting on the board of Synergy Academies, which does a tremendous job of closing the achievement gap in South Los Angeles. Nagpal also chairs the finance committee for Synergy Academies.



CANDICE NAKAGAWA

Director, Senior Wealth Advisor
The Private Bank at Union Bank

Candice Nakagawa started her career at Union Bank in 2000 as a management trainee, then held the roles of priority banking officer & manager, as well as private banker. In her current role as a senior private wealth advisor, Nakagawa partners with a team of specialists and works with high net worth clients to help them build, sustain, and transfer their wealth. She has deep ties to Los Angeles, as many of her clients are local business owners and families that are ingrained in the Los Angeles and surrounding communities.

Nakagawa consistently challenges herself to grow, including completion of an advanced graduate degree from the premier national graduate school of banking, Pacific Coast Banking School, in addition to her contributions to The Private Bank overall. Nakagawa is bilingual in Japanese and English. For years, she has collaborated with other colleagues to support them in their work with Japanese clients.



DAVID NEMECEK

Partner
Kirkland & Ellis LLP

David Nemecek is a corporate partner in Kirkland & Ellis' Los Angeles office. His practice focuses on representing private equity sponsors, portfolio companies, hedge funds, asset managers and alternative capital sources in complex financing transactions, including leveraged buyouts, liability management transactions, recapitalizations, restructurings and other special situation transactions. His transactions span the capital structure and vary in size from multi-billion dollar to middle market and lower middle market transactions. Nemecek specializes in helping stressed companies navigate turbulent times by developing and executing cutting edge financing transactions.

Nemecek has worked with a number of leading retailers and led the financing aspects of six out of the top 20 largest retail debt restructurings arising out of the pandemic. He has been a driving force for the firm and his expertise in special situations and complex liability management transactions have been both market leading and cemented his status as a thought leader in the field.



SHANE NIX

Partner
Venable LLP

Shane Nix has significant experience representing prominent entertainers and professional athletes, leading production companies, industry executives, financiers, technology companies, digital media businesses, branded merchandising and licensing firms, and internet companies.

Nix focuses on the business side of show business with a specialty in corporate and tax law. Many of the top entertainment law firms, talent agencies, and business managers use Shane and his team to provide specialty legal services for their talent clients' business transactional matters, ranging from mergers and acquisitions, financing transactions, investment funds, joint venture formations, investment activities, sweat equity endorsement and sponsorship deals, equity incentive plans, and tax planning, both on the domestic and international levels. A recognized and committed leader in the entertainment community, he maintains an active membership with the Motion Picture and Television Tax Institute.

Congratulations to
Jessica Babrick
for being recognized for this
well-deserved honor.



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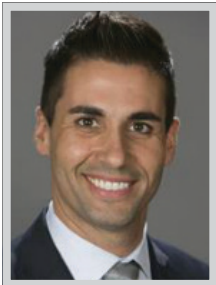


MAURICIO OLAIZ

Associates
Lee & Associates Pasadena, Inc.

Mauricio Olaiz has parlayed his experience in the financial industry to become Lee & Associates’ Pasadena office’s top producing associate in the last two years, using his keen eye for value when it comes to investment commercial properties. He has a passion for real estate finance, investments and development. He is a team player, always offering to help his fellow colleagues, especially during the pandemic. He is optimistic, humble, and a breath of fresh air in the highly competitive commercial real estate industry.

Every shareholder at Lee & Associates has had Mauricio Olaiz work with them on at least one project and knows that he is more than a great asset, he is a good person and an extremely well rounded, ethical commercial real estate agent.



MICHAEL ORMONDE

Los Angeles Region Bank President
Wells Fargo

During Michael Ormonde’s, 22-year career with Wells Fargo, he has spent his career-serving customers in San Francisco, Greater Philadelphia, Delaware, and Washington D.C. regions. In 2017, he was named president for Wells Fargo’s Los Angeles Region. This is the role he continues to serve today with oversight of 84 bank branches employing more than 1,000 financial services professionals across Greater Los Angeles.

Ormonde has demonstrated outstanding leadership and his continuous commitment to the communities he serves. He has established himself as a business leader and professional mentor to many. He provides unparalleled performance in team member development, coaching and mentoring. He provides opportunities for team members to work their way up through the company, demonstrating time and again the career opportunities available at Wells Fargo. Ormonde is also passionate about serving the local community and is most proud of his work to support the LGBTQ community.

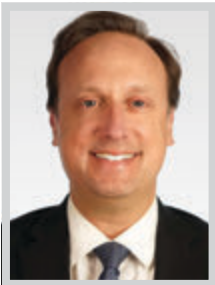


KEITH ORSO

Partner
Irell & Manella LLP

A partner with Irell & Manella for more than a decade, Keith Orso balances his role in firm leadership with a thriving patent law practice in the firm’s litigation and intellectual property groups. Orso is one of three partners on Irell’s Management Committee, which fulfills the function of a managing partner; serves as hiring chair of the firm’s Los Angeles office, and chairs Irell’s Mentoring Committee.

Orso is experienced in a wide variety of technologies, from pharmaceuticals and biotechnology to computer architecture and communications. He has leveraged his education and background to navigate the highly complex scientific and technological nuances involved in such matters, helping him secure significant victories for clients. He holds a graduate degree in chemical engineering and dual undergraduate degrees in engineering and economics. Orso’s passions include teaching and mentoring the younger generation of lawyers about intellectual property.



MATT OSTER

Partner
Wolf, Rifkin, Shapiro, Schulman & Rabkin, LLP

Matt Oster has been practicing employment law in Los Angeles since 1997. He has represented hundreds of small, medium, and large employers and spends dozens of hours each week helping his clients navigate California’s treacherous employment landscape. Oster is a trusted advisor and his clients routinely rely on him for more than legal advice. He treats their businesses as if they were his own and guides them through a wide variety of challenges.

Oster has successfully litigated more than ten large class actions or putative class actions in California on behalf of a wide variety of clients, most of which placed dozens or hundreds of millions of dollars at issue. These matters concerned such allegations as misuse of private information, false and misleading product labels, employment discrimination, wage and hour violations, inadequate disclosures on websites, technical statutory violations and unfair competition.

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BRIAN GRAY
PARTNER, TAXATION

ROBERT GARCIA
DIRECTOR OF I.T.

THRIVING IN THEIR 40s



DAVID PASSMAN
Founder
The Passman Group

David Passman founded the Passman Group in 2012. He has extensive expertise in the leasing and sale of all sectors of commercial real estate, including retail, office, industrial and multi-family. Passman has facilitated both sales and leases for some of the largest property owners, tenants and developers, and his clientele ranges from celebrity/entertainment businesses, to national and local landlords and business owners.

As a native of Los Angeles, Passman has lifelong knowledge of the trade areas, offering his clients a first-hand perspective on one of the most vibrant and volatile real estate markets. He is a graduate of the University of Arizona, a member of the International Council of Shopping Centers (ICSC), and is active in a number of charitable organizations, including the Jewish Federation, Jewish Family Service, the Lollipop Theatre Network, Camp Harmony and Guardians of the Los Angeles Jewish Home for the Aging.



ELISA PASTER
Partner and Co-Chair of Government & Regulatory
Glaser Weil

Elisa Paster is a committed advocate to the development of housing in Los Angeles, through her work as a land use attorney, her volunteer work with affordable housing organizations, and as a Planning Commissioner in the City of Santa Monica. She believes that safe and secure housing should be provided to those at every income level throughout our community.

Paster is committed – both in her career and volunteer work – to creating great projects, working to produce housing for all income levels, and building strong and effective relationships. In her day job as a land use attorney, she represents a mix of developers, family offices, institutions, affordable housing developers, and individuals with obtaining land use entitlements and approvals, compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act, and public policy and housing issues.



ANANT PATEL
Partner
Green Hasson Janks

Anant Patel, partner at Green Hasson Janks, is known for his leadership pushing forward the future of the accounting profession and the shift from compliance to advisory. With more than 25 years of public accounting experience, Patel leads both the firm's Advisory Services Practice and the Transaction Advisory Services Practice. As a member of the Executive Committee, he is a key figure of the firm and has several accomplishments, including advising in the area of mergers and acquisitions and providing financial due diligence consulting, such as quality of earnings, working capital analysis, EBITDA analysis and projections, and deal structuring.

Patel has assisted on deals ranging from \$20 million to \$500 million and is a Certified Merger & Acquisition Advisor (CM&AA). He is also the global chair of the HLB's (the worldwide accounting network GHJ is a member of) Transaction Advisory Group.



ANU RAO
Vice President
JLL

Anu Rao serves as vice president and market lead for JLL's Project and Development Services Los Angeles team where she provides leadership and project oversight for various entertainment, creative, and financial services clients. She is one of the region's premier expert in the execution of high-end commercial real estate space for businesses.

Rao is highly connected to the young team members of the real estate industry both within and outside of JLL and provides them with guidance and support on their career growth in the field of real estate. She is also involved in think tank groups that review the current processes and inefficiencies and see how it can be improved to deliver higher value to the clients as well as all teams involved. She fosters a team environment whether its project delivery teams or her JLL teams, encouraging a culture driven by diversity and inclusion.

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Congratulations to our own **Ilyn Mallari**. Thank you for going above and beyond in service to our clients, and for your continued pursuit of excellence in all you do.

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THRIVING IN THEIR 40s



SMITHA RAVIPUDI
*Chief Executive Officer, USC Care Medical Group
Keck Medicine of USC*

For the last 20 years, Smitha Ravipudi has served (and continues to serve) in leadership roles at several prominent healthcare institutions in Los Angeles County, including Kaiser Permanente, Children’s Hospital Los Angeles, and now Keck Medicine of USC. In these roles, she has brought forward models of innovation and new practice, to drive increased consumer satisfaction in healthcare, with emphasis on improving access and convenience to those in need.

Ravipudi has been responsible for opening numerous outpatient facilities across LA County and beyond, including USC Health Sciences’ campus’s Norris Healthcare Center, featuring 120 square feet of outpatient consultation in urology, breast health, transplant medicine, infusion therapy, and outpatient surgery. She is intentional, and remains focused bringing execution to vision, and works well with trustees, hospital executives, external partners, leadership teams, and physicians to ensure optimal engagement and influence along the way.



JENNIFER RICHARDS
*Managing Director
Crowe LLP*

Jennifer Richards leads Crowe’s effort in its Western region to serve higher education entities, private foundations, public agencies, and other charitable organizations, with a focus on the Los Angeles market. When California declared a state of emergency over the coronavirus pandemic, Richards helped advise not-for-profit clients during the crisis. This included providing tax and business advice, helping clients navigate the Paycheck Protection Program and related loans and understand the complexities of the CARES Act and other federal grant programs, and identify cybersecurity risks.

In addition, Richards has served as a nationwide trainer and recruiter on Crowe’s behalf at many of Southern California’s largest universities. This includes development of a mock audit activity that has been conducted by Crowe with students at local universities including University of Southern California and University of Redlands.



KARL SEITZ
*Senior Manager
CBIZ & MHM*

Karl Seitz is a tax manager with CBIZ & MHM, LLC. He gives back to his clients, colleagues, and community in a number of ways. At CBIZ & MHM, he is a member of the International Taxation Committee, as well as the Diversity & Inclusion Task Force as a member of the Building Diversity & Inclusion Network Committee.

Seitz has nearly 20 years of public accounting experience. His technical expertise is in international planning, succession and estate planning, tax consulting, tax return preparation, financial analysis and consulting, and mergers and acquisitions. He works with high-net-worth individuals, trusts, partnerships, corporations, and s-corporations in a variety of industries, including architecture, entertainment, real estate, wholesale and retail. He is also a current board member and treasurer of Los Angeles Danube Swabian (German) Group and past vice president of the charitable organization.



SABRINA SHADI
*Partner
BakerHostetler*

Sabrina Shadi, a partner in Baker-Hostetler’s Los Angeles office, has a full-spectrum labor and employment practice. Shadi advises a wide array of employers on issues ranging from overall personnel management strategy, regulatory matters, technical issues and disputes. Beyond just defending clients in litigation, she is always looking to achieve the best possible objectives for her clients.

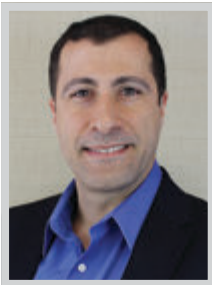
What sets Shadi apart from other many labor and employment attorneys is her immense knowledge of California and Los Angeles’ complex rules and regulations and her experience applying that knowledge in both a proactive business oriented way as well as in defense of her clients in regulatory disputes and litigation. With her granular knowledge of how to operate successfully in Los Angeles and throughout California, she helps employers enter the Los Angeles market from other states and from outside the U.S. and ensures they stay compliant with the ever-changing multitude of local and state laws.



Crowe congratulates Sam Aina and Jennifer Richards for being named to the Los Angeles Business Journal’s “Thriving in Their 40’s” list.

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THRIVING IN THEIR 40s



MICHAEL SHARON
Senior Vice President
illi Commercial Real Estate

Michael Haim Sharon has been specializing in commercial investment sales and leasing of retail and office properties for over 10 years. Prior to joining illi Commercial Real Estate from NAI Capital, Sharon led a successful career in commercial mortgage lending and now provides a unique insight to his clients about financing.

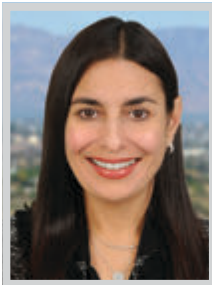
Sharon brings honesty, integrity, motivation and persistence to work when closing transactions for his clients. Sharon started his professional life as an engineer/entrepreneur and uses his business experience and problem solving abilities to the benefit of his clients.



JING SHEN
Senior Manager
CBIZ & MHM

Jing Shen is a tax senior manager with CBIZ MHM, LLC. She has nearly 20 years of experience in public accounting and tax services. She participates in Women Founders Network (WFN) events and has presented to WFN during the Female Founders Workshop in May of 2019. The workshop was titled “Startups: Pitching, Fund Raising & Survival” which provided advice on legal, IP, and finance to female founders of early-stage startups. Jing has also presented on the topic “Hidden Taxes: Avoiding Pitfalls.” WFN Chief Operating Officer Anne Plechner described her presentation as a “big hit,” teaching attendees “what they needed to know.”

Shen also participates in many Asian-American networking events to educate Asian investors and immigrants regarding the U.S. tax laws and helps them succeed in the U.S. She is also fluent in Mandarin Chinese.



NICOLE JANIGIAN SIMONIAN
Partner and Co-Chair, International Trade practice and International Employment and Global Mobility Lead
Crowell & Moring LLP

Nicole Simonian is an outstanding leader in both the business sector and the legal profession. She serves on the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors in addition to co-chairing Crowell & Moring’s International Trade practice and heading the firm’s International Employment/Global Mobility practice. In addition to her legal practice, Simonian is also a director of the firm’s China consulting subsidiary, CMI Shanghai, and serves on the Retail Task Force and Investigation Team at the firm.

Her leadership has impacted the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce, which represents more than 235,000 businesses across 35 industry sectors in L.A. County, including more than 1,400 members and 650,000 employees. In addition to serving on the board, Simonian has served on the World Trade Week Committee of the Chamber for the last three years.



GREG SKALASKI
Executive Vice President, West region
Shawmut Design and Construction

Before Greg Skalaski even moved to Los Angeles, he was already part of the city’s fabric, building some of the most iconic retail spaces including Louis Vuitton on Rodeo Drive. After working on projects in Los Angeles for 18 years and rising through the ranks at Shawmut Design and Construction to vice president of retail, Skalaski took the helm as executive vice president of Shawmut West at the end of 2018.

In the newly-created role, he oversees the Los Angeles, Irvine, and Las Vegas offices, setting the strategy to ensure continued growth across all sectors in the region—hotel, restaurant, retail, commercial ground-up, tenant interior, sports venues and luxury residential—and ensuring executional excellence and technical expertise to exceed clients’ expectations. In the first year under Skalaski’s leadership, the Los Angeles region specifically reached nearly \$300 million in revenue, driving a 260% increase in revenue over the past five years.



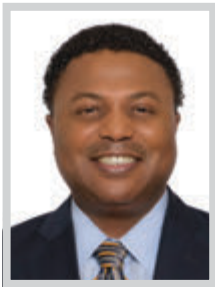
CONGRATULATIONS

David Passman on being named one of the Los Angeles Business Journal’s *Thriving In Their 40’s*

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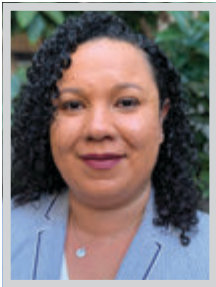


THRIVING IN THEIR 40s



ALFRED SMITH
*Chair of Water Practice Group
Nossaman*

Alfred Smith, chair of Nossaman’s Water Group, is a recognized expert in water and environmental law. A graduate of the Harvard Law School, he has successfully litigated multiple water right adjudications, and he has secured more than \$750 million worth of contamination settlements in favor of his clients. He is a trusted advisor on matters involving water rights, the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act, Colorado River and Pueblo rights, recycled water, water resource development, contamination remediation, groundwater adjudications, water transfers, desalination, conjunctive use, climate change, and regulatory compliance. Smith has also developed Urban Water Management Plans, water supply assessments and environmental impact reports for a wide range of residential and commercial developments. He is also an expert on all aspects of public agency governance, including the Brown Act, Public Records Act, ethics and political law compliance, CEQA, public contracting, construction claims and disputes, and related litigation.



MICHELLE SULLIVAN, PT, DPT
*Associate Administrator, Ancillary Services
USC Verdugo Hills Hospital*

After graduating from high school at the young age of 16, Michelle Sullivan attended San Diego State University where she received her Bachelor of Science in Kinesiology with honors. In 1999, she was accepted into the top-ranked physical therapy school in the nation, the University of Southern California. She graduated in 2002 with her Doctorate in Physical Therapy. Sullivan has always had a passion for helping others and is a natural born leader. She has been a physical therapist for over 20 years and has worked in the field of rehabilitation services in various skilled nursing facilities in the Los Angeles area. Currently, she is the Associate Administrator of Ancillary Services at USC Verdugo Hills Hospital in Glendale. She is a proven leader in her profession and serves as an expert consultant for the Physical Therapy Board of California.



JALAL TABY
*Senior Vice President
Comerica Bank*

Jalal Taby is a senior vice president with Comerica Bank based in Los Angeles with over 15 years of experience in the commercial banking industry. He is focused on originating and managing a portfolio of middle market sized privately held businesses in addition to private equity coverage in Southern California for the bank. What distinguishes Taby from others is his passion to help others around him succeed, from colleagues to clients, to friends. Taby is a board member for the Association for Corporate Growth Los Angeles Chapter, and chair of the Membership Committee. He is also a volunteer at various Junior Achievement events in Southern California. He also serves on the Parish Council for St. Jude Maronite.



ELLISEN TURNER
*Partner
Kirkland & Ellis LLP*

Ellisen Turner is an intellectual property partner at Kirkland & Ellis LLP. He is a well-known IP strategist and litigator who combines business acumen with a deep knowledge of intellectual property law to support his clients’ business goals and maximize the value of their technology. He has helped clients secure victories in patent and trade secret litigations that have led to billions in total client compensation, and has successfully defended matters with billions in revenue at stake. A seasoned negotiator as well, he completed more than \$320 million in patent licenses and technology transactions in 2020 alone. Lately, Turner has dedicated his intellectual property and product development skills to the pandemic response efforts. He has provided pro bono support to help a major manufacturer deliver the ventilation therapy essential to treat respiratory complications of COVID-19, maximizing the availability of ventilators and other respiratory support devices for the patients that need them most.

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Polsinelli congratulates **Daniel Bir** on his selection for **Thriving in their 40’s** by the *Los Angeles Business Journal*.

As a passionate champion of Los Angeles and respected leader within the legal profession, Daniel symbolizes the very definition of a top performer.

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THRIVING IN THEIR 40s



JAMES VERZINO
Managing Director
Northwestern Mutual

James Verzino is the managing director of Northwestern Mutual Los Angeles. When a childhood friend introduced him to Northwestern Mutual, Verzino discovered a place where he could truly lead and inspire people. Nearly a decade later, he has developed and influenced dozens of new financial advisors, while maintaining a successful practice. As a wealth management advisor, Verzino has impacted the lives of hundreds of clients, striving to build lasting bonds and human connection in a world of uncertainty.

As the managing director of Northwestern Mutual Los Angeles, Verzino oversees development and recruiting for the largest Northwestern Mutual District Office in the country while maintaining a lively wealth management practice. His career philosophy focuses on high standards of education and integrity, enabling his team to put the clients’ needs first while building his legacy of talented, educated, and dedicated financial advisors.



EMILY BURKHARDT VICENTE
Partner
Hunton Andrews Kurth LLP

In addition to defending Fortune 100 clients in complex labor and employment issues, Emily Burkhardt Vicente’s trajectory of success is marked by inspiring leadership and advancement of social justice and inclusion in the legal community. As co-chair of Hunton Andrews Kurth’s national labor and employment practice, Vicente helps companies develop forward-thinking compliance strategies that mitigate employment-related risks while achieving the client’s business goals.

Most recently, Vicente creatively advised a variety of businesses through workforce issues attendant to closing, reopening, and operating a business during the unprecedented challenges created by COVID-19. She has successfully led her own team through many of these same challenges. She also has spoken and written about the novel issues facing employers arising from the pandemic. Also, addressing what has been described as the second pandemic in our country – systemic racism and inequality – she serves as a co-chair of the firm’s Diversity & Inclusion committee.



ANDREW WALSH
Partner
Hueston Hennigan LLP

Andrew Walsh represents clients in complex civil business disputes, high-stakes environmental and entertainment litigation, and white collar criminal actions, in both state and federal court. He has represented Fortune 500 companies, governments, and individuals in a variety of industries, including environmental services, and media and entertainment. In every case, Walsh works to gain a thorough knowledge of his client’s organization or business to develop a legal strategy that makes business sense.

Walsh currently represents the Navajo Nation in federal multi-district litigation against the USEPA and its contractors for damages arising out of the August 2015 Gold King Mine spill. His determined strategy led to the decisive ruling that neither the United States, the EPA, nor the EPA’s contractors can escape liability for the spill through claims of immunity. Walsh also represents Southern California Edison in complex litigation arising out of the 2018 Woolsey Fire.



DR. HAL WEITZBUCH
Dermatologist
Calabasas Dermatology Center

Dr. Hal Weitzbuch is an award-winning, board certified dermatologist and member of the American Society for Mohs Surgery. An adjunct professor of medicine at UCLA, he specializes in diagnosing and treating diseases, tumors, infections and age-related changes of the skin, hair, and nails.

Dr. Weitzbuch is committed to giving back to his community. Dedicated to helping those in need, Dr. Weitzbuch has made two international medical mission trips to Ecuador and Nepal. He is also a volunteer attending physician at Olive View – UCLA Medical Center, an LA County hospital, where he helps treat patients with financial constraints while also teaching the residents in the clinic. Dr. Weitzbuch has presented at numerous national and local meetings, and has been published in multiple peer-reviewed journals. He has obtained a patent and grant for prior research and has been the recipient of many awards throughout his extensive career.

Magaly Gomez

“To Vaco’s clients and to my team of fearless leaders, thank you for our partnership through the years. I’m grateful for our relationship and the success we have built together. It’s humbling and I feel honored to be featured in the LABJ’s Thriving in their 40’s. Let’s continue to walk hand in hand for the duration.”

-MAGALY GOMEZ,
PARTNER, VACO



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LAURA WHELAN

Senior Managing Director, Project Management Services
Savills

Laura Whelan joined Savills in 2007 and currently directs project and construction management for clients in industries from healthcare to technology, advertising, media and information. In her 13 years with the firm, Whelan has completed over two million square feet of real estate transactions. She has managed projects for multiple biotech firms which more recently have included cancer research facilities and companies manufacturing cancer therapies.

Whelan has found a particular sense of accomplishment working on projects such as these – ones that benefit humanity and the greater good. In her view, it is so critical that these facilities get up and running quickly and efficiently, and her work representing these tenants can help enable clinical trials and literally save lives when done correctly. She loves being a part of something so meaningful in the bigger picture of the world.



BENJAMIN WHITE

Tax Office Managing Partner
BDO USA, LLP

Ben White is a partner in BDO's Core Tax Services practice. He is a tax professional with more than 22 years of experience in public accounting, including 17 years with the Big Four. He serves clients in the manufacturing, distribution, technology, gaming, hospitality, entertainment, and energy industries across the western United States. He has extensive experience in accounting for income taxes, tax department processes and technology, corporate tax matters, accounting methods, and tax consulting issues.

White's core competencies include tax provision implementation, ASC 740 (FAS 109) preparation and review, Uncertain Tax Position (FIN48) preparation and review, and ONESOURCE Tax Provision Implementation. He is a certified implementer of ONESOURCE Tax Provision, ONESOURCE Workflow Manager, and ONESOURCE DataFlow. White focuses his community efforts on CSUN, working with students on resume writing, mock interviews and discussions around opportunities within public accounting.



DARCY WILSON-JONES

Partner, Media and Entertainment
National Sector Leader
RSM US LLP

Darcy Wilson-Jones is a certified public accountant with more than 24 years of experience working with privately held and private equity owned clients. As the relationship lead for private global companies across various industries, including media and entertainment, industrial products, business and professional services, and consumer products, she leads cross-functional teams to deliver exceptional results through collaboration and advising clients on a wide range of business challenges.

Wilson-Jones serves as RSM's national media and entertainment industry sector leader and previously served as the West region business and professional services leader, West region industrial products co-leader, West region African American and Canadian Excellent leader, a member of the AACE national leadership team and Hispanic/Latino national partner advisory board, West region client experience/first-choice advisor committee leader, and Los Angeles First-Choice Advisor Journey coaching leader.

“At twenty years of age,
the will reigns. At thirty, the wit.
And at forty, the judgment.”

–Benjamin Franklin



Venable Celebrates
Shane Nix
2020 Thriving in their 40's

We are delighted to recognize the outstanding work of our colleague, and we thank him for his service to our clients and to the Los Angeles community.

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CONGRATULATIONS
ANN KONO
FOUNDER & CHIEF CATALYST,
LEDA ADVISORY GROUP

- + JASOCAL BOARD MEMBER
- + JA ALUM

on being selected as one
of the

**THRIVING IN THEIR
40'S...**

and for making sure
those who come after
you can be the same.

