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Other  
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# SAN DIEGO BUSINESS JOURNAL



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Shareholder & CEO  
Pettit Kohn Ingrassia Lutz & Dolin



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San Diego District Attorney's Office



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Litigation  
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Shareholder  
Pettit Kohn Ingrassia Lutz & Dolin



**WINNER**

Rising Star  
**ELIZABETH REIN**  
Senior Associate  
Wilson Turner Kosmo



**WINNER**

Real Estate  
**HEATHER RILEY**  
Partner  
Allen Matkins



**WINNER**

Other  
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**NATHANIEL SISITSKY**  
Senior Vice President, General Counsel  
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NuVasive



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SAN DIEGO BUSINESS JOURNAL



LETTER FROM THE PUBLISHER



The San Diego Business Journal’s third annual **Leaders in Law Awards** honors San Diego’s top lawyers and in-house general counsel attorneys. The winners and finalists’ accomplishments and community involvement were impressive. On behalf of the San Diego Business Journal, I want to thank our presenting sponsor **Signature Resolution** and our judging panel; **Peter Callstrom**, CEO, **San Diego Workforce Partnership**, **David H. Crean**, Managing General Partner, **Coast BioVentures, LLC**, **Christina de Vaca**, CEO, **Corporate Directors Forum**, **Matthew Fehling**, President & CEO, **Better Business Bureau Serving the Pacific Southwest**, **Jennifer Jacobus**, PHRca, SHRM-CP, Director of HR Services, **San Diego Employers Association** and **Jason Paguio**, President & CEO, **Asian Business Association San Diego**. They join us in congratulating the 2021 winners.

— Barb Chodos, President & Publisher, San Diego Business Journal

THANK YOU TO OUR JUDGES AND SPONSORS



**PETER CALLSTROM**  
CEO  
San Diego Workforce Partnership

Peter Callstrom has led San Diego nonprofits for 30+ years and the San Diego Workforce Partnership since 2012, delivering workforce programs to thousands of job seekers annually. Recognized as the most innovative workforce leader. Peter was named “Nonprofit CEO of Year” by the San Diego Business Journal in 2021.



**DAVID H. CREAN**  
Managing General Partner  
Coast BioVentures, LLC

David H. Crean is Managing General Partner of Coast BioVentures LLC and a Managing Partner for Cardiff Advisory LLC providing venture investment, M&A and strategic advisory investment banking. Dr. Crean also serves in leading Board of Director roles for several public, private and non-profit companies. Dr. Crean has served as President of the Association for Corporate Growth (ACG) San Diego for the past two years.



**CHRISTINA de VACA**  
CEO  
Corporate Directors Forum

Christina de Vaca is the Chief Executive Officer at the Corporate Directors Forum (CDF). Before joining CDF, she served as the Director of Corporate Relations and Business Development for the Graduate School of Business at the University of San Diego (USD). In that role, she was responsible for building and strengthening USD’s School of Business relationships with the business community, as well as customizing executive education programs for corporate clients.



**MATTHEW FEHLING**  
President & CEO  
Better Business Bureau Serving the Pacific Southwest

By consistently challenging the status quo, Matthew Fehling has spent over 26 years pushing the boundaries to ensure Better Business Bureau (BBB) remains a trusted, top of mind brand. As President & CEO of BBB Pacific Southwest, Matthew has become a nationally praised leader for his reimagined, business-forward implementation of the BBB mission, amongst many other accolades.



**JENNIFER JACOBUS,**  
PHRca, SHRM-CP  
Senior Director of Operations  
San Diego Employers Association

Jennifer Jacobus has worked for the San Diego Employers Association since 1988 and is considered an expert in the field of Human Resources. Jennifer oversees the operations of the Association while still engaging with the SDEA members to further SDEA’s mission to be San Diego’s top Strategic HR Partner.



**JASON PAGUIO**  
President & CEO  
Asian Business Association San Diego

Jason Paguio is the President and CEO of the Asian Business Association San Diego. He brings vision and expertise across a multiplicity of sectors, including development of minority-owned business, establishment and coordination of high-impact multi-agency collaborative efforts, and advocacy for San Diego’s many diverse communities. Jason was recently named “CEO of the Year” by SDBJ and was the youngest person to be recognized as one of “San Diego’s 500 Most Influential People” while in his early 30s.





**LITIGATION**



**DOUGLAS PETTIT**

Shareholder  
**PETTIT KOHN INGRASSIA LUTZ & DOLIN PC**

**Doug Pettit** is an ultimate professional. He is a Southern gentleman with a passion for defending the truth. Rarely do you see attorneys as detailed and as committed to the seeking and upholding the law as Doug Pettit. His extensive law background, combined with his top-in-class professional attorney team means that Doug Pettit is coming to trial prepared, informed and ready to litigate for justice. Fair and firm, Pettit can bring almost anyone to their senses and he is always able to find a resolution that all parties can consider a "win-win."

"I feel very fortunate to be able to work with so many great clients and colleagues and am very honored to have received this recognition as a result of their support," Pettit said.

Pettit received his B.A., summa cum laude, from Bethany College and his J.D. from Washington & Lee University School of Law. He is a lecturer at the University of San Diego School of Law and is a member of the Washington & Lee Law Council.

He is active in the community. One example is his consistent participation in Feeding San Diego's Food from the Bar fundraising campaign in support of families in need of food assistance. He supports MANA de San Diego and their diverse programs which benefit Latina youth within the San Diego community.

Doug Pettit is the man you want in your corner.

**PETTIT KOHN**  
 PETTIT KOHN INGRASSIA LUTZ & DOLIN

**RISING STAR**



**ELIZABETH REIN**

Senior Associate  
**WILSON TURNER KOSMO**

**Elizabeth Chiba Rein** is a rising star and luminating leader propelling the legal industry forward. A senior associate at **Wilson Turner Kosmo**, one of largest certified women-owned law firms in Southern California, Rein is a leader in the firm's renowned Product Liability and Warranty practice groups. In her role, she predominately represents automotive manufacturers and Fortune 500 companies that are sued for damages in state and federal courts. With her career on an upward course, Rein manages her own cases from start to finish as well as supervises and mentors the firm's associates.

She is well-respected within the WTK team and the legal community at large for her thorough and early evaluation of cases that often results in finding an agreeable settlement for clients and avoiding unnecessary, costly and time-intensive litigation. Her skills and desire to ensure clients achieve the most favorable outcomes allow Rein to manage a high-volume caseload.

"Being included on the San Diego Business Journal's Leaders in Law list strengthens my resolve to continue ensuring that lawyers enter a field that celebrates and creates opportunities for diversity," said Rein. "Thanks to my Wilson Turner Kosmo colleagues for their support and to the SDBJ for this honor."

**WILSON TURNER KOSMO**  
 LLP

**REAL ESTATE**



**HEATHER RILEY**

Partner  
**ALLEN MATKINS**

**Heather Riley**, a partner at **Allen Matkins**, has worked on some of the most significant land use legal matters in San Diego in the past few years. She has shepherded controversial projects through the entitlement process and then defended those developments against litigation. She is at the forefront of the housing crisis dialogue, working with the Building Industry Association of San Diego and the city of San Diego to develop solutions that are practical and defensible.

Riley assisted the nonpartisan coalition in drafting the ordinance that would remove the Midway-Pacific Highway Community Plan Area from the 30-foot coastal height limit; she worked with the campaign to defeat Measure A, which would have limited residential development in the unincorporated county of San Diego for decades; and was part of the team that convinced the San Diego City Council not to down zone the Uptown Community. Piggybacking on the team's success in Uptown, she subsequently helped entitle two Greystar projects in that neighborhood that will help create more new homes, both market-rate and affordable, near jobs and transit in Uptown. And, she is working with a number of clients to reimagine their existing office/retail complexes as residences, mixed-use and other developments.

**Allen Matkins**



**Congratulations,  
 Nathaniel Sisitsky!**

Your commitment to excellence and leadership helps us fulfill our vision to change a patient's life every minute.



**Nathaniel Sisitsky**  
 Senior Vice President, General Counsel, and Corporate Secretary

SAN DIEGO BUSINESS JOURNAL



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**CONGRATULATIONS  
 TO  
 RODNEY J. HATLEY, J.D., LL.M**



On his selection as a "Leader in Law." Thank you, Rod, for helping families create their financial, intellectual & spiritual wealth legacy.

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Dallo Law Group

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Mintz

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# THE LIST LAW FIRMS

► Ranked by number of lawyers in local offices as of April 1, 2021

Rank (Previous year)	Firm Address Website Phone	Local lawyers: 2021 2020 % + (-)	Local staff: Legal secretaries Paralegals Other	Partners Associates	Offices: Countywide Nationwide	Area(s) of practice	Managing partner(s) Year est. locally	
1 (1)	<b>Procopio, Cory, Hargreaves &amp; Savitch LLP</b> 525 B St., Suite 2200, San Diego 92101 www.procopio.com 619-238-1900	 162 166 (2)	73 57	30 25 85	2 6	Business litigation, construction, corporate, health care, IP litigation/prosecution, labor & emp.	John Alessio 1946	
2 (2)	<b>Sheppard Mullin</b> 501 W. Broadway, 19th Floor, San Diego 92101 www.sheppardmullin.com 619-338-6500	 151 148 2	58 93	31 16 53	2 11	Corporate, intellectual property, labor & employment, litigation & real estate	Guy Halgren 1986	
3 (3)	<b>Robbins Geller Rudman &amp; Dowd LLP</b> 655 W. Broadway, Suite 1900, San Diego 92101 www.rgrdlaw.com 619-231-1058	 138 139 (1)	54 24	22 20 119	1 9	Securities	Darren Robbins 2004	
4 (4)	<b>Gordon Rees Scully Mansukhani LLP</b> 101 W. Broadway, Suite 2000, San Diego 92101 www.grsm.com 619-696-6700	 125 125 0	66 59	30 17 25	2 70	Commercial litigation, employment & labor, IP, environmental/toxic tort, product liability, insurance	Kevin Alexander Miles Scully 1990	
5 (7)	<b>Latham &amp; Watkins LLP</b> 12670 High Bluff Drive, San Diego 92130 www.lw.com 858-523-5400	 104 99 5	27 64	13 12 62	1 11	Capital markets, litigation, emerging companies, environmental law, insurance, IP, M&A, real estate	Cheston Larson 1980	
6 (5)	<b>DLA Piper</b> 401 B St., Suite 1700, San Diego 92101 www.dlapiper.com 619-699-2700	 95 101 (6)	43 32	16 11 77	2 29	IP & IP litigation, corporate, litigation, finance, real estate, labor & employment	Jeff Baglio 1927	
7 (6)	<b>Cooley LLP</b> 4401 Eastgate Mall, San Diego 92121 www.cooley.com 858-550-6000	 94 100 (6)	32 62	32 22 88	1 11	Complex commercial litigation, securities litigation, IP litigation, public companies, emerging cos	Michael Attanasio 1992	
8 (10)	<b>Legal Aid Society of San Diego Inc.</b> 110 S. Euclid Ave., San Diego 92114 www.lasdsd.org 877-534-2524	 83 66 26	0 0	6 45 35	3 3	Consumer, housing, SSI & public benefits, health	Gregory Knoll 1953	
9 (8)	<b>Higgs Fletcher &amp; Mack LLP</b> 401 W. A St., Suite 2600, San Diego 92101 www.higgslaw.com 619-236-1551	 75 78 (4)	50 25	25 20 20	1 1	Business litigation, corporate & securities, employment, family, real estate, trusts & estates, tax	Steve Cologne 1939	
10 (9)	<b>Mintz</b> 3580 Carmel Mountain Road, Suite 300, San Diego 92130 www.mintz.com 858-314-1500	 69 75 (8)	20 49	18 11 24	1 7	Corporate, litigation, intellectual property, employment, real estate, licensing, and privacy.	Daniel Pascucci 2006	
11 (11)	<b>Wilson Sonsini Goodrich &amp; Rosati</b> 12235 El Camino Real, Suite 200, San Diego 92130 www.wsgr.com 858-350-2300	 66 65 2	12 39	11 8 45	1 11	Corporate, mergers & acquisitions, intellectual property, litigation, technology transactions	Martin Waters Jeff Guise 2004	
12 (12)	<b>Tyson &amp; Mendes</b> 5661 La Jolla Blvd., San Diego 92037 www.tysonmendes.com 858-459-4400	 60 60 0	12 48	20 8 73	2 14	Defense litigation, including personal injury, employment, medical malpractice, construction defect	Robert Tyson Patrick Mendes 2002	
13 (13)	<b>Jones Day</b> 4655 Executive Drive, Suite 1500, San Diego 92121 www.jonesday.com 858-314-1200	 48 49 (2)	14 29	13 4 20	1 42	IP, labor, litigation, investigations, white collar, corporate, M&A, product liability, cyber	Steven N. Geise 2004	
14 (14)	<b>Knobbe Martens</b> 3579 Valley Centre Drive, Suite 300, San Diego 92130 www.knobbe.com 858-707-4000	 46 45 2	25 10	0 4 49	1 7	Copyrights, IP strategy, transactions & agreements, litigation, patents, trademarks, USPTO trials	Michael L. Fuller 1984	
15 (17)	<b>Wilson Turner Kosmo LLP</b> 402 W. Broadway, Suite 1600, San Diego 92101 www.wilsonturnerkosmo.com 619-236-9600	 46 38 21	16 30	17 13 11	1 1	Employment law, class action, product liability, business litigation	Claudette Wilson 1991	
16 (15)	<b>Morrison &amp; Foerster LLP</b> 12531 High Bluff Drive, Suite 100, San Diego 92130 www.mofo.com 858-720-5100	 40 39 3	11 28	7 26 24	1 8	Lit. (IP, comm. lit., product liab.), corp./emerging co., security, privacy, patent pros./counseling	Steve Rowles 1999	
17 (18)	<b>Solomon Ward Seidenwurm &amp; Smith LLP</b> 401 B St., Suite 1200, San Diego 92101 www.swsslaw.com 619-238-0303	 36 36 0	24 12	10 6 9	1 1	Litigation, real estate, corporate, business, trusts, estates, bankruptcy, insolvency, family law	Stephen Schreiner 1977	
18 (21)	<b>Kimball Tirey &amp; St. John LLP</b> 7676 Hazard Center Drive, Suite 900, San Diego 92108 www.kts-law.com 619-234-1690	 35 34 3	21 13	12 8 30	1 5	Landlord/tenant, collections, real estate/business litigation & transactions, fair housing defense	Ted Kimball Patricia Tirey Wendy St. John 1977	
19 (20)	<b>Perkins Coie LLP</b> 11452 El Camino Real, Suite 300, San Diego 92130 www.perkinscoie.com 858-720-5700	 35 35 0	15 16	12 9 22	1 17	Commercial Litigation, Business, and Intellectual Property	Mark Wicker 2010	
20 (25)	<b>Best Best &amp; Krieger LLP</b> 655 W. Broadway, 15th Floor, San Diego 92101 www.bbklaw.com 619-525-1300	 34 33 3	20 14	8 4 9	1 10	Business, litigation, trusts/estates, public agency, environmental, labor/employment, public finance	James Gilpin 1993	
21 (22)	<b>Fish &amp; Richardson PC</b> 12860 El Camino Real, Suite 400, San Diego 92130 www.fr.com 858-678-5070	 34 34 0	18 16	10 12 29	1 13	Patent, intellectual property litigation, trademark, copyright	Roger Denning 1995	

(NR) Not ranked  
na Not Applicable

Source: The firms.

In case of a tie, firms are ranked by number of local partners, and then alphabetically.

To the best of our knowledge, this information is accurate as of press time. While every effort is made to ensure the accuracy and thoroughness of

the list, omissions and typographical errors sometimes occur. Please send corrections or additions to the Research Department at the San Diego Business Journal. Eric Alderete, [aldere@sdj.com](mailto:aldere@sdj.com). This list may not be reprinted in whole or in part without prior written permission from the editor. Some companies have declined to participate or did not return a survey by press time. It is not the intent of this list to endorse the participants or to imply a firm's size or numerical rank indicates its quality.