



The following section features attorneys who have demonstrated leadership qualities and have achieved the AV Preeminent rating by Martindale-Hubbell®.

Martindale-Hubbell®, the company that has long set the standard for lawyer ratings, has supplied ALM with a list of Top Rated Lawyers who have achieved an AV® Preeminent® Peer Review Rating, the highest rating in legal ability and ethical standards. To create this section, Martindale-Hubbell® tapped its comprehensive database of Martindale-Hubbell® Peer Review Ratings™ to identify lawyers who have been rated by their peers to be AV® Preeminent™.

Martindale Hubbell Peer Review Ratings are driven by the confidential opinions of lawyers and members of the judiciary who receive invitations from Martindale-Hubbell®, via an online survey or by mail, to provide reviews of lawyers of whom they have professional knowledge.

A complete directory of all AV® Preeminent™ lawyers can be found online at Lawyers.com® and Martindale.com, in the Martindale-Hubbell® Law Directory in print and CD-ROM formats, and online through the LexisNexis® services and at lexis.com. Attorneys shown do not constitute the full list of “Top Rated Lawyers”



TOP RATED LAWYERS

CALIFORNIA | SAN FRANCISCO

BROOKE OLIVER

Internationally respected, Brooke Oliver is a creative, rigorous, and scholarly IP, art, and entertainment lawyer. Admitted to the U.S. Supreme Court, she is rated: A-V “Preeminent” (since 1998), among the top 5% Intellectual Property lawyers nationally (American Lawyer, National Law Journal), and Northern California’s SuperLawyers, Top Attorneys, and Top Women Attorneys. Brooke has been described as “legendary”, a “copyright folk hero”, and practicing “law in service of soul”. A strategic thinker, Brooke has served as outside General Counsel for clients who produce entertainment events. She helps iconic clients secure their legacies with effective business and nonprofit structures and IP enforcement. She was the legal architect of Burning Man’s for-profit to nonprofit transition with multiple subsidiaries. She helped the Cesar E. Chavez Foundation and Dolores Huerta Foundation create lasting infrastructures.

Brooke successfully prosecuted the Dykes on Bikes’ trademark registration to the U.S. Supreme Court twice. Her copyright and trademark litigation in District Courts and 9th and Federal Circuits informs her transactional work. She is a foremost expert on the Visual Artists’ Rights Act, murals, and public art law.



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TOP RATED LAWYERS

CALIFORNIA

SAN FRANCISCO

MARY ALEXANDER

Mary Alexander was recognized as one of the Top 100 Attorneys in California in 2020 as a result of obtaining some of the largest verdicts and settlements in the state. Such cases include:

\$305 Million Settlement in Lead Paint Case – Mary Alexander was a lead attorney working tirelessly to negotiate a \$305 million settlement on behalf of ten California counties against several paint companies involved in the nearly 20-year lawsuit over lead paint in California. Ms. Alexander worked on this case for its entirety with the settlement ending two decades of litigation, which included a \$1.15 billion bench verdict.

\$32.7 Million Settlement in Premises Liability Case – Three-and-a-half years after the Ghost Ship Fires occurred, costing the lives of 36 people and injuring several others, the lawsuit was resolved in the summer of 2020 for \$32.7 million against the City of Oakland. 32 families, along with a survivor who suffered brain damage and burns, agreed to the settlement. The City had 100's of contacts with the Ghost Ship over more than two years, by police and firemen who knew that people lived there, but the City turned a blind eye. Ultimately, a fire occurred that cost dozens of lives, ruined numerous families and injured dozens of other people. Mary was Liaison Counsel for a team of highly skilled attorneys that obtained this tremendous result. The case also resolved against PG&E.

\$21.4 Million Jury Verdict in Benzene Case – Mary Alexander obtained a \$21.4 million jury verdict on behalf of the families of two brothers who died of cancer as a result of their exposure to the known cancer-causing chemical benzene. The trial lasted over four weeks with the jury deliberating for roughly 3 days. The families of Gary Eaves and his brother Randy Eaves filed a lawsuit against Union Oil which made the benzene-containing rubber solvent the brothers regularly worked with at their jobs in a tire manufacturing plant. The brothers were longtime employees of the plant and exposed to large amounts of benzene in their work. The jury sided with the plaintiffs who contended the oil company knew the solvents they sold contained benzene.



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TOP RATED LAWYERS

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STEVEN A. FABBRO

Steven A. Fabbro has over 30 years of experience specializing in personal injury, product liability, traumatic brain injury, premises liability and wrongful death cases involving individuals who have suffered catastrophic, life-changing injuries.

He works with highly experienced forensic experts in the fields of accident reconstruction, economic evaluation, mechanical engineering, medical care and physical rehabilitation to prepare and prove cases on behalf of his clients who are victims of tractor-trailer collisions, construction accidents, automobile accidents, or defective machinery and industrial equipment.

Mr. Fabbro has also handled several large mass tort cases involving hundreds of claims of toxic exposure, contaminated food products, defective medical devices, pharmaceutical products and vaccines, and food supplements.

His client base is comprised of individuals from across the Americas, Asia, and Europe. Mr. Fabbro is admitted to practice before the United States Supreme Court, the California Supreme Court, the United States Court of Appeals, the United District Courts for the Northern, Southern and Eastern Districts of California.

Mr. Fabbro accepts cases on a contingency fee basis. Office locations in San Francisco and Modesto serve the San Francisco Bay Area and Central Valley, California.



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CALIFORNIA SOUTH SAN FRANCISCO

HELENA S. YOUNOSSI

Helena Younossi, an Afghan-German U.S. national immigrated to the United States when she was 16 years old. From an early age, Ms. Younossi knew she wanted to practice immigration law as she experienced first-hand the struggles immigrants face when coming to a new country. Upon graduating law school, Ms. Younossi practiced in boutique immigration law firms in the Bay Area until in 1998, when she joined the largest corporate immigration law firm in the U.S. After a successful career as a managing attorney and later having achieved partnership status there, Ms. Younossi ventured out in 2005 to create an immigration law firm that prides itself on compassion, integrity, and accessibility.

Helena S. Younossi has extensive experience helping companies ranging from startups to Fortune 500 multinationals with their U.S. business immigration matters, including employee work authorizations, I-9 IRCA Compliance, M&A, LCA Compliance, Immigration Program and Policy development, as well as Consular and Global work visa coordination. She also represents individuals and families in their immigration related needs. Prior to opening her own firm she was a partner at the largest U.S. corporate immigration firm. Ms. Younossi has been invited to speak on immigration and legal ethics by organizations such as the American Bar Association (ABA), the Public Law Institute (PLI), the Sixth Annual Statewide Ethics Symposium and the Immigrant Legal Resource Center, to name a few. She is a Former Member of the State Bar Executive Committee of the International Law Section, the AILA National Ethics and Practice Management Committee, has served as the AILA NorCal Ethics Liaison, and is the former Vice Chair of the BASF Ethics Committee. Ms. Younossi has been peer selected for inclusion in The Best Lawyers in America and the Northern California Super Lawyers every year since 2010. She is a three-time recipient of the Wiley W. Manuel Award, is a native speaker of German and Farsi and is conversational in French.



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DAVID DERUBERTIS

David M. deRubertis, the principal in The deRubertis Law Firm, APC, has a statewide practice focusing on trying employment cases of all types for employees, including serving as last-minute, “eve of trial” trial counsel.

Mr. deRubertis’ honors include: “Trial Lawyer of the Year” by the Consumer Attorneys Association of Los Angeles (CAALA) (2014); “Best Lawyers - Lawyer of the Year - Employment Law - Individuals” (Los Angeles) (2014 and 2018); California Lawyer of the Year (CLAY Award) in Employment Law (2014); Joseph Posner Award from the California Employment Lawyers Association (CELA) (2011); Top 100 Southern California Super Lawyer from 2011 through 2019; California’s Top 100 Trial Lawyers by the National Trial Lawyers from 2008 through 2019; Top Labor & Employment Lawyer by Los Angeles and San Francisco Daily Journal from 2009 through 2019 (only plaintiff-side attorney to make list every year since inaugural year); and two-time Finalist for “Street Fighter of the Year” by Consumer Attorneys of California (CAOC) in 2014 and 2015.

Mr. deRubertis is an active member of the American Board of Trial Advocates (ABOTA) and has frequently participated in its “Masters in Trial” annual program. Having tried dozens of jury and bench trials with experience in both state and federal courts, Mr. deRubertis has secured multiple record-setting employment jury verdicts as lead trial counsel. In both 2014 and 2016, the Daily Journal recognized two different jury verdicts deRubertis achieved as lead counsel as among the “Top Verdicts” in California for those years. Demonstrating his versatility, in addition to his trial work deRubertis has personally briefed and argued many appeals in both state and federal courts, including serving as lead appellate counsel for briefing and oral argument in four separate matters before the California Supreme Court: (1) *Williams v. City of Chino* (2015) 61 Ca.4th 97; (2) *Harris v. City of Santa Monica* (2013) 56 Cal.4th 203; (3) *Roby v.*



McKesson HBOC (2009) 47 Cal.4th 686; and (4) *Lonicki v. Sutter Health Central* (2008) 43 Cal.4th 201.

Mr. deRubertis is currently a member of the Board of Governors of the Consumer Attorneys Association of Los Angeles and he previously served on the Executive Boards of the California Employment Lawyers Association, The Consumer Attorneys of California and was a Founding Director of the Los Angeles Trial Lawyers’ Charities.

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TOP RATED LAWYERS

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VAN BLOIS LAW

For more than 45 years, The Van Blois Law Firm has served as a powerful advocate in Northern California for persons who have been seriously injured, disabled or killed as a result of someone else's wrongdoing. With offices in Oakland, Walnut Creek, Stockton and Modesto, the firm effectively represents persons throughout Northern and Central California as well as the San Francisco Bay Area. The firm's experienced legal team is led by R. Lewis Van Blois, whose more than 150 jury trials in California have earned him a reputation as one of the state's most knowledgeable and revered injury attorneys. Certified as a civil trial specialist by the National Board of Trial Advocacy and the California State Bar for more than 35 years, Mr. Van Blois has achieved millions of dollars in awards and settlements on behalf of clients in various areas of personal injury and wrongful death. He has been selected by Best Lawyers as the Product Liability Litigation-Plaintiffs "Lawyer of the Year" in Oakland, California for 2018 and 2021 and as the Northern California Lawyer of the Year for Plaintiff Personal Injury Litigation for 2020.

Thomas C. Knowles, who has been practicing in California for more than 40 years and is rated AV Preeminent by Martindale Hubbell, specializes in product liability, construction site accident, and trucking accident cases. His experience as a former defense lawyer representing an auto manufacturer has provided the knowledge to effectively represent injured persons against manufacturers in product liability cases.

The firm's seasoned attorneys have several decades of injury law experience and know how to effectively settle as well as fight and win in court.

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R. Lewis Van Blois



Thomas C. Knowles

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DANIEL J. BERGESON

Daniel J. Bergeson is the founding partner of Bergeson, LLP, Silicon Valley's leading business litigation law firm. His expertise encompasses all aspects of complex business litigation and trial work for technology companies and individuals. He represents companies, founders, entrepreneurs, C-level executives, directors, and special committees in high-stakes litigation and investigations. Mr. Bergeson is the past President of the Board of Governors of the Association of Business Trial Lawyers (ABTL), Northern California Chapter and is also a Fellow of the American Bar Foundation (ABF). He is repeatedly in the elite group selected for inclusion in The Best Lawyers of America as well as Northern California Super Lawyers, as compiled in Law & Politics Magazine. Mr. Bergeson is listed among Silicon Valley's Top Attorneys in San Jose Magazine, and was recognized as a 2020 California Litigation Star by Benchmark Litigation. He has received the highest peer-review rating for ethical standards and legal ability from Martindale-Hubbell.



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TOP RATED LAWYERS

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SOLOMON B. CERA

Mr. Cera, the managing partner, has been litigating complex cases with the Firm for more than thirty years. He has been at the forefront of the Firm's nationwide practice in litigating complex class action and individual cases on behalf of plaintiffs. The Firm's principal areas of practice are securities, antitrust, and consumer litigation. Many of the Firm's cases are class actions. With unwavering commitment to its clients' interests, the Firm establishes a close working relationship from initial investigation through successful resolution. The Firm's nationwide class action practice, run from its San Francisco and Boston offices, covers a wide range of businesses and industries. The Firm's cases often involve alleged accounting manipulations, misstated financial results, price fixing, monopolization, and/or other restraints of trade. In addition to its class action cases, the Firm also represents individuals and small businesses in high stakes litigation in a variety of areas including ERISA litigation, *qui tam* and whistleblower litigation, churning and unsuitability claims, and for breaches of fiduciary duty by officers and directors and general partners. The Firm also undertakes representation of individuals and businesses in arbitration, and has vast experience in obtaining mediated resolutions of disputes.



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JOHN O'CONNOR

"Nation's Top Attorney Fee Expert" – TheNALFA.org

A versatile, highly experienced, complex case trial lawyer, John O'Connor has for over 35 years devoted a significant portion of his practice to attorneys and attorney fee disputes, both as an expert witness and as a litigator. From years of evaluating, assessing, and litigating fees, O'Connor brings a depth of expertise and context as an expert witness that only an experienced litigator can offer in fee disputes.

O'Connor has tried a wide variety of cases in federal, state and arbitration courts throughout the country, including not only professional liability, attorney fee, and law firm buy-out cases, but also intellectual property, anti-trust, civil RICO, ADA/disability discrimination, civil rights, employment, insurance coverage and bad faith, construction, product liability, toxic tort, defamation, fraud and contract, real estate, white collar criminal, and sports management, among others. This experience allows him to distinguish between efficiency and inefficiency in litigation management.

He has frequently associated with other firms to provide trial and deposition assistance, either on behalf of a separate co-party or as co-counsel, and often serves as local counsel. O'Connor and Associates prides itself on being cooperative, responsive, and efficient.



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GUY O. KORNBLOM

GUY O. KORNBLOM the Principal is Guy O. Kornblum, A Professional Law Corporation with offices in San Francisco and San Ramon, California. He has specialized as a trial and appellate lawyer for over 45 years. The firm specializes in a wide range of civil litigation, including serious injury and wrongful death, financial and physical elder abuse, and all aspects of insurance including "bad faith" claims. Mr. Kornblum himself has handled over 4000 litigated matters to conclusion and has several million dollar plus cases to his credit. He has represented hundreds of clients, small businesses, individuals, and large Fortune 500 corporations during his over 45 years of practice. He is highly regarded for his courtroom and appellate skills, and his representation of his clients in mediations, where he has a strong track record of successful settlements. www.kornblumlaw.com.

Mr. Kornblum is certified in **Civil Trial Law** and **Civil Pretrial Practice Advocacy** by the prestigious **National Board of Trial Advocacy**, and is a **Charter Fellow, American College of Board Certified Attorneys**. He is also a **Life Member of the Multi-Million Dollar and Million Dollar Advocate's Forum**, for those attorneys who have achieved multi-million dollar awards or settlements for their clients; is a **Charter Fellow of the Litigation Counsel of America Trial Lawyer Honorary**; and is a **"Top 100" Trial Lawyer**. He is listed in the **"Top 10"** in the **Personal Injury and Insurance Litigation** fields, and is listed in the **23d Edition of "The Best Lawyers in America."** He has been selected as a **Super Lawyer** each year since 2006, and is a **2017-19 Top Attorney in North America**. Mr. Kornblum is the author of *Negotiating and Settling Tort Cases: Reaching the Settlement*, published by the Thomson West Publishing Company and American Association for Justice, 4th ed, 2018., and co-author of two texts on insurance law and bad faith claims.

Mr. Kornblum has also qualified in both state and federal court as an expert witness on insurance claim handling, settlement value, negotiations, and on the standard of care applicable to lawyers in civil litigation.



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