

PROMINENT SAN DIEGO CORPORATE TEAM JOINS SHEPPARD MULLIN

Robert G. Copeland, James A. Mercer III and Michael S. Umansky have joined Sheppard, Mullin, Richter & Hampton LLP as partners in the firm's Corporate practice group. Copeland is based in the firm's San Diego/Downtown office, and Mercer and Umansky are based in Sheppard Mullin's San Diego/Del Mar office. Copeland, Mercer and Umansky most recently practiced with Duane Morris LLP in San Diego.

Copeland practices in the area of corporate law with an emphasis on corporate finance, securities, real estate and mergers and acquisitions. He is experienced in the representation of startup business ventures, private and public U.S. and offshore manufacturing, construction and service corporations, venture capital and private equity firms, media firms, real estate developers and syndicators. Copeland is regularly selected to handle M&A assignments for buyers and sellers, which are comprised of both clients as well as non-clients with existing counsel relationships.

Mercer practices in the area of corporate law, with an emphasis in representing emerging growth companies in securities and mergers and acquisitions. He assists clients in financing their businesses through seed capital, venture capital, IPOs, reverse mergers, PIPES, and secondary offerings. Mercer regularly counsels publicly traded companies in SEC reporting and compliance matters, including quarterly and annual reports, proxy statements and solicitations, tender offers and going private transactions. He also assists clients in the acquisition and sale of their businesses. Prior to Duane Morris, Mercer was general counsel and chief financial officer of publicly traded telecommunications software company TeraGlobal Communications Corp.

Umansky practices corporate law with a concentration on representing emerging growth and established technology and life sciences companies, venture capital and private equity investors, and entrepreneurs. He has extensive experience in venture capital financings, strategic collaborations, commercial transactions, technology licensing, mergers and acquisitions, public securities offerings, and public company reporting and counseling. Prior to Duane Morris, Umansky was vice president and general counsel for Linspire, Inc., a developer of Linux-based operating system software and services, and Gizmo5 Technologies, Inc., a venture-capital backed Internet telephony company.

"Bob, Jamie and Michael are top-notch dealmakers and considerably strengthen our corporate presence in the San Diego/Del Mar market. Bob is a stalwart of the San Diego corporate law community, and Jamie and Michael bring an incredible mix of private practice and in-house business experience. Their securities, emerging company, venture capital and M&A expertise complement our Corporate practice group capabilities, while significantly expanding it. Despite current economic conditions, our transactional pipeline remains steady and the addition of this group supports our drive to continue to grow the Corporate practice firmwide," said Guy Halgren, chairman of the firm.

Corporate partner Eric Klein joined Sheppard Mullin's Century City office in April. Klein most recently practiced as a leader of Katten Muchin Rosenman's West Coast Mergers and Acquisitions and Securities practices. Also in April, Corporate partner Riaz Karamali joined the firm's new office in Silicon Valley.

Commented Copeland, "Sheppard Mullin has an impressive Corporate practice group. I am looking forward to continuing to practice with Jamie and Michael, as well as the other San Diego-based transactional attorneys and those throughout the firm."

"I am excited about the opportunity to help build the firm's corporate practice in the San Diego offices with my former colleagues, as well as my new Corporate partners based in the Del Mar office," Mercer said. "Sheppard Mullin offers a strong platform for my practice, which includes the support needed to handle sophisticated emerging growth companies' securities and acquisitions representations."

Copeland received a J.D. from the University of Southern California School of Law in 1966 and a A.B. from Occidental College in 1963. Mercer received a J.D. from the University of Southern California School of Law in 1989, an M.B.A. from California State University, Fullerton in 1986 and a B.A. from University of California, Los Angeles in 1983.

Umansky received a J.D. from the University of California, Berkeley, Boalt Hall School of Law in 1993 and a B.S., summa cum laude, from University of California, Los Angeles (Phi Beta Kappa) in 1990.

Sheppard Mullin has 80 attorneys based in its San Diego offices (Downtown and Del Mar). The firm's Corporate practice group includes close to 100 attorneys firmwide.

About Sheppard Mullin Richter & Hampton LLP

Sheppard Mullin is a full service AmLaw 100 firm with more than 520 attorneys in 11 offices located throughout California and in New York, Washington, D.C. and Shanghai. The firm's California offices are located in Los Angeles, Century City, San Francisco, Silicon Valley, Orange County, Santa Barbara, San Diego/Downtown and San Diego/Del Mar. Founded in 1927 on the principle that the firm would succeed only if its attorneys delivered prompt, high quality and cost-effective legal services, Sheppard Mullin provides legal counsel to U.S. and international clients. Companies turn to Sheppard Mullin to handle a full range of corporate and technology matters, high stakes litigation and complex real estate, land use and finance transactions. In the U.S., the firm's clients include more than half of the Fortune 100 companies.