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# alumni news

## SheppardMullin

SPRING 2019

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### STATS AND FACTS

876

Sheppard Mullin lawyers globally

15

Offices in  
5 countries

10

Practice Groups

29

Industry Teams

30

Blogs

1,488

Alumni in our network

## GREETINGS FROM THE CHAIR

### Clients First

Sheppard Mullin has always prized meeting – and exceeding – our clients’ needs above all else. General counsel and C-suite executives repeatedly stress the importance of “partnering”, “anticipating needs” and “responsiveness.” We listened and took action, launching our inaugural “Clients First” initiative in 2005. Client service is now part of Sheppard Mullin’s DNA.

To ensure we deliver a consistent, exceptional experience across every interaction that our clients have with our firm, we recently rolled out a “Clients First 2.0” update, outlining the client service expectations we place on every member of the firm.

Our goal has always been to foster a culture that values outstanding client service as much as providing the highest quality legal services. To anchor our enhanced program, we developed six service essentials:

- 1. It’s All About Relationships:** Make it personal, step into your client’s shoes
- 2. We “Get” Business:** Understand immediate goals and the big picture
- 3. Communication is Key:** Set and reset expectations, early and often
- 4. Collaborative Commitment:** Support each other to serve our clients
- 5. Values Matter:** Promote a culture of teamwork, using diverse talent
- 6. Ahead of the Curve:** Implement innovation that matters

We don’t just give lip service to client service. We have developed interdisciplinary client teams to better understand our clients’ businesses and to provide the very best service. We conduct client satisfaction surveys and act upon our findings. Every attorney and staff member has a plaque in his or her work space listing our client service essentials. We give “Clients First” awards to attorneys and staff members who “go the extra mile” for our clients. Client service is part of our culture and permeates everything we do.

Sheppard Mullin was recognized by corporate counsel for superior client service in BTI’s 2018 Client Service Survey, placing us in the top 10% of law firms serving large clients.

When you were here at Sheppard Mullin, your commitment to client service was key to our success. Now as alumni, we hope that you are the beneficiary of that commitment.



**Guy Halgren**

Chair

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# ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT INTERVIEW: THOMAS Y. LEE



**Thomas Y. Lee**

Senior Counsel, Wells Fargo

Formerly Sheppard Mullin Los Angeles  
Labor & Employment Group

We are delighted to profile former Sheppard Mullin lawyer Thomas Y. Lee, Senior Counsel, Wells Fargo, located in Los Angeles, California.

## Career Path

Thomas was born in Claremont, California and graduated from Pomona College with a degree in Philosophy and Politics & Economics. He obtained his law degree from Columbia Law School in 2007.

Thomas served as an Extern at the California Department of Justice in 2005, then worked as a summer associate in our Los Angeles office in 2006, joining our Labor & Employment Group in October 2007. He left in December 2014 to join Wells Fargo, starting there in January 2015.

## Current Roles and Responsibilities

Thomas works in the Employment Section of Wells Fargo's Legal Department. Wells Fargo's Legal Department has in-house counsel located across the United States with more than 20 attorneys in the Employment Section alone. With approximately 265,000 employees globally, Wells Fargo's employment attorneys are kept quite busy.

His background as a labor and employment lawyer was a natural fit for going in-house, as he provides advice and counsel on day-to-day operations as well as on longer term internal company initiatives. Thomas advises on investigations and policy changes, and he also manages litigation in employment law single plaintiff and class action cases that typically include wrongful termination, discrimination and harassment, whistleblower retaliation and wage and hour class claims.

Thomas supports Wells Fargo's Community Bank in the West Region (with the United States divided into West and East) and Wealth and Investment Management in California and other western states.

## Outside Counsel Tips

When asked about the ways that outside counsel can make his job easier, Thomas appreciates counsel who are proactive in the handling of cases and who take the time to learn Wells

Fargo's business. Outside counsel shouldn't just identify potential risks, but provide solutions and options. They should always be thinking about overall strategy and approach, such as trial themes and how to tell the employer's story.

The team from Sheppard Mullin (Tom Kaufman, Paul Berkowitz, Michael Campbell and Rachel Howard, all located in Century City) are great at doing this for him as a client.

## Innovative Approaches that Work

Billing arrangements continue to evolve and Thomas is seeing a broad range of different alternative fee arrangement proposals beyond just fixed fees, including blended rates, volume discounts, and phased models. The idea is to find the right balance between providing excellent client service and being competitive with fees.

Another area that gets his attention is firms that have sophisticated eDiscovery capabilities, with internal expertise that can help advise and guide a company through an efficient eDiscovery approach from the start of the case.

## Diversity Matters

Especially at Wells Fargo, diversity and inclusion is a big priority and one of its five primary values. Within the Legal Department, attorneys look at how they can better support diverse firms and work with diverse partners. When majority firms show a commitment to D&I and get lawyers with different backgrounds involved, that can have a meaningful impact.

Thomas is a Board Member of Asian Americans Advancing Justice Los Angeles, and Wells Fargo has been very supportive of his role and efforts in community outreach.

## Career Advice for Young Lawyers

For new lawyers in litigation, it's important to take your time and learn as much as you can about the process, as it takes a while to get a full picture of what it's like to be a litigator. It's hard to get a full sense of what your practice will be like in the early years.

A lot of the clichés you hear are true – #1 advice is to “do good work.” Especially as a junior associate, you are going to make mistakes, but be accountable and figure out how to be a problem solver who can come back with solutions.

You should also be proactive in your career by seeking out mentors – don't just rely on others reaching out, but try to develop relationships. Thomas was fortunate to have many excellent mentors at Sheppard Mullin, including Charlie Barker and Daniel McQueen. They were invaluable in helping Thomas be ready for his current in-house position.

## How the Firm Prepared Him for His Current Job

Working in Sheppard Mullin's Labor & Employment Group, Thomas received a lot of litigation experience early on and took on more advice and counsel opportunities over time. He was able to translate these skills into his in-house role and brought with him a broad skill set, making the transition easier. While at the firm, he had exposure to a variety of clients, with different styles, industries and business types. He was able to develop a breadth of experience that has helped him support different business units at Wells Fargo.

## Sheppard Mullin Memories

Thomas most misses the camaraderie at Sheppard Mullin, as the Los Angeles employment group was tight knit and he's still close to several people there.

He is grateful for his time at Sheppard Mullin and overall had a very positive experience.

## Life Outside of Work

Thomas recently married his wife Patricia, and they are enjoying the life of newlyweds. He loves to eat and travel, having been recently to Japan and Spain.

Thomas is also a big sports fan, particularly of the New York Knicks, but keeps it local in supporting the Dodgers. He's had the good fortune of enjoying the Sheppard Mullin box at the Staples Center to watch the Clippers (his wife's favorite team) and the Lakers, both as an associate and now a client of the firm.

•••••

We thank Thomas for taking the time to share his insights with us about his post-Sheppard Mullin career and wish him continued success. We hope that you will also keep in touch with us – and with each other. We'd love to hear from you.

# ALUMNI MOVES AND NOTABLE ACHIEVEMENTS

Below are a few recent in-house, governmental and other alumni moves. Let us know if you've changed jobs so we can feature your move in a future edition.

- **Truc Do**, now a San Diego Superior Court Judge appointed in Feb. 2018, was profiled in the Feb. 21, 2019 *Los Angeles Daily Journal*. The article discussed her rise from arriving in the U.S. as a Vietnamese refugee at age 3 to attending Stanford Law School and working in the Major Crimes Unit of the LA District Attorney's Office. She was an employment associate in our Los Angeles office from 1997 to 1999.
- **Tad Egawa** was recently appointed as General Counsel at the California Business, Consumer Services & Housing Agency in Sacramento. He had served as Chief Counsel at the California Department of Tax & Fee Administration since 2017, and was previously a real estate associate in our Century City office from 1996 to 1997.
- **Lisa Harris** is now Senior Counsel, Labor & Employment at Sempra Energy in Los Angeles. She was an employment associate, then partner, in our Century City office from 2013 to 2019.
- **Brett Leitner** is now Senior Corporate Counsel at Landmark Health in Los Angeles. He previously was a corporate associate in our Los Angeles office from 2017 to 2018.

- **Shanna Pearce** is now Senior Counsel at Epic Games (the maker of popular online videogame Fortnite) in Bellevue, Washington. She was a privacy & cybersecurity associate in our Del Mar office from 2013 to 2019.
- **Carrie Ross** is now Associate General Counsel at the United States Trade & Development Agency in Arlington, VA. She was a business trials associate in our Washington, D.C. office from 2013 to 2019.
- **Andrea Smethurst** was awarded the Association of Workplace Investigators Training Institute Certificate in 2018 and has been named to the Institute's faculty for 2019. Andrea was an employment associate in our San Francisco office from 1998 to 2001 before starting her own firm, where she specializes in workplace investigations.

A reminder that we regularly post in-house job opportunities from clients and friends of the firm on the Sheppard Mullin alumni site under "Career Opportunities." We welcome in-house job postings from your company; please send to [alumni@sheppardmullin.com](mailto:alumni@sheppardmullin.com).



## INAUGURAL SMRH ALUMNI IN-HOUSE PANEL DISCUSSION

Sheppard Mullin held its first annual Career Advisory SMRH Alumni Panel Presentation on March 7, 2019, with speakers live in Los Angeles, New York and Chicago, and video conferenced to other U.S. offices. The panelists discussed their career trajectory from Sheppard Mullin to in-house positions and lessons learned along the way.

New York partner and Diversity & Inclusion Committee Chair Rena Andoh moderated the panel with these alumni speakers (several of whom have been featured in our alumni newsletter), all hailing from different industries and geographies:

- Alison Kleaver, University Counsel, California State University
- Lara Mackey, VP Litigation, Sony
- Gabe Matus, General Counsel, Excel Sports Management
- Dan Rosenberg, General Counsel & VP, McHugh Construction

The panelists responded to questions including the best and worst parts of going in-house, tips for associates considering an in-house position, how to talk to partners about the desire to move in-house, what qualities their in house legal department looks for when hiring someone to join their team, and how they hire outside counsel.

We thank each of the alumni speakers for their interesting insights. The program is part of the SMRH Career Advisory Program, aimed at assisting associates and special counsel who are interested in exploring in house opportunities.

### Speakers:



**Alison Kleaver**

University Counsel  
California State University



**Lara Mackey**

VP, Litigation  
Sony



**Gabe Matus**

General Counsel  
Excel Sports Management



**Dan Rosenberg**

General Counsel & VP  
McHugh Construction



**Rena Andoh**

Partner  
Sheppard Mullin  
(Moderator)

## ESPORTS, OUR NEWEST INDUSTRY TEAM

Esports has become a global phenomenon, and it's estimated that 427 million people worldwide will be watching some form of esports in 2019. As esports continues to experience booming growth, the number and complexity of legal issues will increase. To help provide creative solutions, Sheppard Mullin recently launched an [esports industry team](#) focused on the legal needs of clients in the evolving multi-billion dollar industry.

The new esports team, led by partners Sid Fohrman (Century City) and Dan Schnapp (New York), has more than 20 attorneys firmwide. The team leverages the firm's deep industry knowledge across several complementary areas of expertise, including advertising and sponsorships, broadcasting and media rights, corporate and securities, mergers and acquisitions, on-line gambling, interactive gaming, labor and employment, talent, immigration, intellectual property, telecommunications, litigation, merchandise manufacturing and licensing, and real estate and stadium development.

Our esports team provides legal services to all segments of the esports industry: players, product providers, influencers, content creators, media companies, marketing companies, tournament providers and investors. We recently represented Mastercard in the negotiation of a multi-year sponsorship agreement with Riot Games, making Mastercard the first global sponsor of the studio's online multiplayer game, League of Legends. We also represented entrepreneur and philanthropist Nick Gross as the lead investor of ReKTGlobal's \$10.8 million Series A round. The proceeds will be used to finance, among other things, Team Rogue's franchise acquisition in the League of Legends European Championship.





## AHEAD OF THE CURVE

As the world changes due to disruptive technologies, so does the law. This column features new trends and practices that may intersect with your job responsibilities. As innovation is a major focus at Sheppard Mullin, our lawyers are able to stay on top of these trends through a program we call "Ahead of the Curve."

### California Consumer Privacy Act (CCPA)

California recently passed a sweeping new privacy law granting consumers more control over their personal information.

The California Consumer Privacy Act – which goes into effect on January 1, 2020 – is one of the most significant regulations overseeing the data-collection practices of companies in the United States. Pay attention, as we expect other states to follow California's lead by enacting their own versions of the CCPA.

Here's what you need to know today. The CCPA:

- Grants consumers the right to know what data companies are collecting about them, why they are collecting it, and with whom they are sharing it;
- Gives consumers the right to tell companies to delete their data and to not sell or share their data;
- Requires companies to give consumers who opt-out of data sharing the same quality of service;
- Makes it more difficult to share or sell data about children younger than 16;
- Makes it easier for consumers to sue companies after a data breach; and
- Gives the state's attorney general more authority to fine companies that don't comply with the new law.

Our recommendations for your organization include:

- Keeping a 12-month look-back of your data processing activities, including taking stock of what personal information is being collected and who your organization is sharing such data with;
- Including CCPA compliance in your 2019 and 2020 budgets.

Sheppard Mullin's [CCPA Team](#) can customize a compliance program that aligns with your organization's budget and goals. As one of the largest law firms in California, our experienced CCPA team can provide seamless service for companies throughout the nation.

## NEW PARTNERS

We are pleased to announce that 15 attorneys were promoted in our 2019 partnership class:



## TWO SHEPPARD MULLIN TEAMS NAMED LAW360 "PRACTICE GROUP OF THE YEAR"

Sheppard Mullin's Food & Beverage and Privacy & Cybersecurity Teams were named Practice Group of the Year by Law360 in its annual list of top practices published January 14, 2019. The publication [noted](#) that "Sheppard Mullin's standout cybersecurity and privacy team notched big wins this past year as the firm helped Sonic Drive-In navigate multidistrict litigation over a data breach and negotiated a \$4.3 million settlement for the fast food chain." They also [stated](#) that "Sheppard Mullin's food and beverage team showed its expertise in many legal specialties with transactional and litigation accomplishments that include securing a favorable outcome for Taco Bell."

## HELPING CLIENTS SUCCEED

Sheppard Mullin lawyers work on a broad range of litigation and transactions to help our clients succeed. Here are a few examples of our work during the last quarter.



**Deloitte** – We successfully defended the Department of Homeland Security’s (DHS) award of a \$65 million task order for professional services to our client Deloitte Consulting LLP. The protester alleged that DHS improperly rejected its quotation and issued a de facto sole source award to Deloitte. The Government Accountability Office denied all of their protest allegations, holding that DHS reasonably rejected the company’s quotation based on an unacceptable risk of unsuccessful performance. The matter was led by partner Keith Szeliga (Washington DC).



**OneWeb** – For the past two-and-a-half years, we have worked diligently with OneWeb on FCC, international regulatory and transactional matters, including agreements with their suppliers and partners, surrounding the launch of its multi-billion-dollar satellite constellation. The OneWeb constellation satellites will enable affordable broadband services to unserved and underserved communities and extend the reach of terrestrial networks across the globe. The first set of OneWeb satellites launched on February 27. OneWeb is the latest satellite venture of entrepreneur Greg Wyler, and it has obtained billions of dollars in financing from an investor group, including Softbank, Qualcomm, Intelsat and Virgin Group. This project is a game changer for affordable Internet access around the world. Partner Brian Weimer (Washington DC) led this matter.



**Opportunity Zone Fund** – We recently closed an Opportunity Zone Fund and related joint venture sponsored by LLJ Ventures Enterprises, LLC. The Opportunity Zone Fund invested in a qualified opportunity zone business which intends to develop a mixed-use project with traditional office, industrial and creative space in Portland, Oregon. The related joint venture acquired a parcel that will be packaged to sell in the future to investors seeking Opportunity Zone deals. The transaction closed less than six weeks after the IRS released the first set of proposed regulations on Opportunity Zones, making Sheppard Mullin one of the first law firms in the nation to represent a client in structuring, closing and funding an Opportunity Zone Fund and related acquisition. The deal was led by partner Amy Tranckino (Del Mar).



**Primal Nutrition** – We represented Primal Nutrition LLC, makers of Primal Kitchen branded products, in a \$200 million acquisition by The Kraft Heinz Company (NASDAQ: KHC), closing in January 2019. Primal Kitchen is a young, vibrant, better-for-you brand primarily focused on condiments, sauces and dressings including mayonnaise, salad dressings and avocado oil, with growing product lines in healthy snacks. Primal Kitchen will join Kraft Heinz under Springboard, which is Kraft Heinz’s dynamic platform created to partner with founders and brands that will disrupt the food industry. Partner Will Chuchawat (Los Angeles) led the deal.



**Tinder** – We represented Tinder, LLC (an IAC brand) in negotiating rights in connection with a music video for Tinder’s “Adulthood Can Wait” advertising campaign in India, featuring celebrity model, actress and singer Anjali Sivaraman. The campaign also includes the design, production and mass distribution of a special edition card game in partnership with various third parties, and the firm is also structuring Tinder’s copyright, trademark and other rights in connection with this component. The deal was led by partner Jason Mueller (Dallas).



**Union Bank** – The Los Angeles Superior Court recently granted our client Union Bank a complete denial of certification as to all of the plaintiffs’ claims and classes in a complex wage-and-house class action. The case involved two separate class actions that we consolidated in a coordinated action. The original proposed class included all non-exempt employees of Union Bank in California (more than 20,000 potential class members) and through discovery, we were able to force the plaintiffs to focus on just call-center employees. The plaintiffs’ main allegation was that they were forced to work-off-the-clock by booting-up and shutting down their computers and work applications when starting and ending their shift. This matter was led by partner Derek Havel (Los Angeles)

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Below are a few upcoming events the firm is hosting that are open to in-house counsel or HR professionals. To RSVP or for more information about all events including our lawyers' outside speaking engagements, visit the [Events](#) page on our web site at [www.sheppardmullin.com/newsroom-events.html](http://www.sheppardmullin.com/newsroom-events.html).

### Titans of the Industry On Their Plans to Achieve Gender Parity

New York Women Lawyers Group Panel & Reception  
April 11, 2019 | 5:30– 8:30 p.m. ET  
New York Yacht Club, New York  
*By Invitation Only*

### Breakfast With Your Labor Lawyer - Orange County

April 24, 2019 | 7:30– 10:00 a.m.  
Avenue of the Arts Hotel, Costa Mesa

### Breakfast With Your Labor Lawyer - San Diego

April 30, 2019 | 7:30 – 10:00 a.m.  
Hyatt Regency La Jolla, San Diego

### Global Compliance & Investigation Essentials with Bird & Bird

April 30, 2019 | 3:00 – 6:00 p.m.  
San Francisco Office  
*By Invitation Only*

### Breakfast With Your Labor Lawyer - Palo Alto

May 1, 2019 | 7:30– 10:00 a.m.  
Palo Alto Office

### Breakfast With Your Labor Lawyer - San Francisco

May 7, 2019 | 7:30 – 10:00 a.m.  
San Francisco Office

### Satellite Conference Reception

May 8, 2019 | 5:00 – 7:00 p.m.  
Baby Wale, Washington DC  
*By Invitation Only*

### Breakfast With Your Labor Lawyer - Los Angeles

May 9, 2019 | 7:30 – 10:00 a.m.  
Los Angeles Office

### Blockchain NYC CLE Panel Discussion

May 13, 2019 | 6:00 p.m.  
New York Office

### INTA Conference Reception

May 20, 2019 | 6:00– 8:00 p.m.  
Yotel, Boston  
*By Invitation Only*

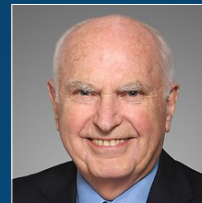
### Pacific Coast Builders Conference Reception

May 29, 2019 | 4:30 – 6:30 p.m. PT  
EPIC Steakhouse, San Francisco  
*By Invitation Only*

## IN MEMORIAM

### James Geriak

Sept. 16, 1934 - Dec. 30, 2018



We are sad to report that James ("Jim") Geriak, a Special Counsel in the Intellectual Property Group in our Costa Mesa office, passed away on December 30, 2018. He is survived by wife of more than 60 years, Suzanne, daughter Catherine, sons Timothy, Matthew and Andrew, and seven grandchildren.

Born in Brooklyn, New York, Jim learned the value of hard work during summers spent working on his paternal grandparents' dairy farm in Connecticut and later caddying at golf courses on Long Island. He graduated with a B.S. degree in Chemical Engineering from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in 1956 and obtained his J.D. from Georgetown University School of Law, attending at night while employed as an Examiner in the United States Patent and Trademark Office.

Jim was admitted to the California bar in 1960. His legal career in Southern California spanned 58 years during which he appeared as lead counsel in more than 100 intellectual property lawsuits and more than 30 appellate matters across a vast range of technologies. He was a partner of Lyon & Lyon, Orrick LLP and Dickstein Shapiro LLP. In 2013, he became Special Counsel at Sheppard Mullin, remaining here until he passed. Energy, keen analysis, humor and the highest ethical standards were hallmarks of his professional life.

Orange County Special Counsel Allan Jansen remembered him as a mentor and friend and recapped a few stories during his more than 35 years working with him, first at Lyon & Lyon and then at Sheppard Mullin.

"When Silicon Valley was first being formed, Jim was the 'go-to' lawyer for IP litigation. The emergence of a new breed of financial players, called venture capitalists, gave young entrepreneurs the chance to learn, explore new technologies and start new companies. At the time, there were two principal venture capital firms – Sequoia and Kleiner Perkins. Jim was the 'first-choice litigator' for both of these firms. Wilson Sonsini was just starting as a firm and would incorporate and structure the new companies. Soon after commencing operations, the new companies would get sued by the prior employers. Because the technologies were generally quite new, patents were not yet issued, so the cases generally involved allegations of trade secret theft."

"There will never be another like Jim – when God made Big Jim, he threw away the mold." A warrior in life and at law, Jim is now at peace.



## CONTACT US

For more information about our alumni program, to notify us of a job change, subscribe to a blog, or register for events, contact Alumni Program Manager Michelle O'Driscoll. We look forward to hearing from you and staying in touch.



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