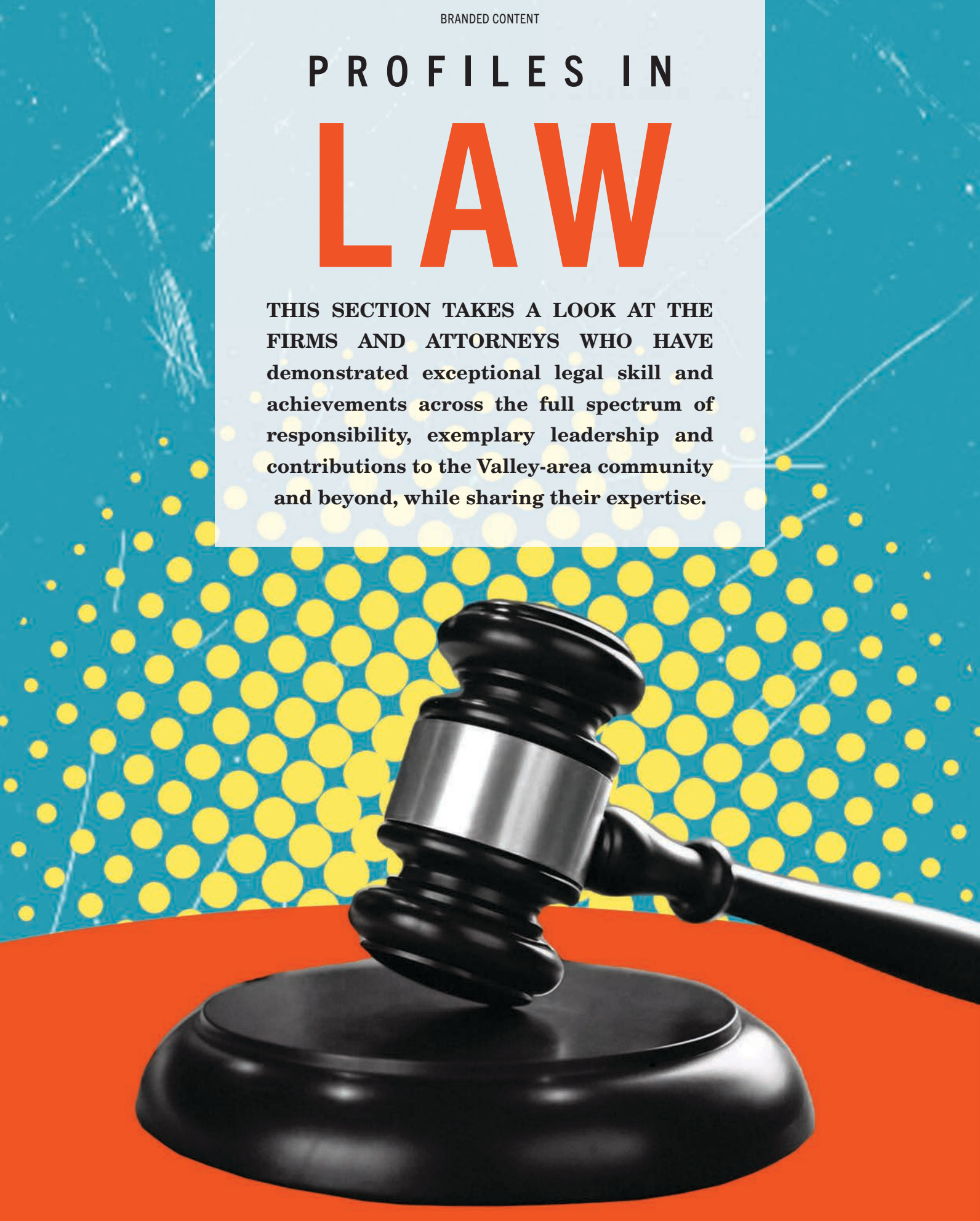
PROFILES IN LAW

THIS SECTION TAKES A LOOK AT THE FIRMS AND ATTORNEYS WHO HAVE demonstrated exceptional legal skill and achievements across the full spectrum of responsibility, exemplary leadership and contributions to the Valley-area community and beyond, while sharing their expertise.



A Conversation with the Experts

A Discussion with Richard Rosenberg and Katherine Hren of Ballard Rosenberg Golper & Savitt





What new laws, regulations or legal developments should business leaders be watching as we move into 2027?

There are several new AI related employment laws that go into effect in 2027. The "No Robo Bosses Act" (SB 947) is probably the biggest technology-related change for employers. Beginning July 1, 2027, employers using automated decision systems (including certain AI systems) may not rely solely on the system to make a decision whether to discipline or terminate an employee. Human review and verification is required. Another new AI-driven law (SB 951) impacts the information that must be provided to employees when a mass layoff, relocation or termination is caused by AI or automation. AB 1883 addresses more sophisticated AI surveillance. It generally prohibits employers from using AI-enabled workplace surveillance tools to collect certain data. The take-a-way: educate yourself on the many restrictions and requirements that come along with using AI tools in the workplace.

Which areas of legal practice do you expect to see the greatest demand or growth over the next year, and why?

Statistics on the number of cases filed show that labor and employment law is certainly one of them. The simple fact is that California is one of the most regulated states when it comes to employment relationships. Every year, the legislature adds new employee protections, which in turn creates more compliance challenges for employers to navigate. Labor law cases are fact intensive and require expert analysis of laws, regulations and legal precedents to steer clear of legal problems. A relationship with expert labor counsel can save the company countless dollars by avoiding or managing HR risk before it becomes a legal issue.

What should a business owner or executive consider when selecting outside legal counsel?

Outside legal counsel needs to understand your business, your company culture and your risk tolerance for making decisions. Counsel should understand the company's objectives, and commercial realities—not just the applicable law. The best selection process matches the company's particular legal needs, budget, risk profile, and working style with counsel who has the appropriate expertise and can provide practical, timely, and predictable advice. You want counsel to understand the results you are seeking, be creative and find a way to meet those goals.

What is one piece of advice you would give Los Angeles and Valley business leaders heading into 2027?

Stay abreast of the law and don't rely upon AI chat bots for legal advice.

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- Valley 200 Top Advisor List
- Most Influential Women in the Legal Profession
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Business Law: What Valley Leaders Need to Know

A Discussion with Jared Slater and Kenny Hsu of Ervin Cohen & Jessup

What are some of the most common employment related risks you are seeing for growing businesses, and how can employers address them proactively?

JARED SLATER: One of the most common risks we see with growing businesses is that hiring practices don't always keep pace with expansion. As companies add remote workers, they may classify them as independent contractors without fully considering whether the relationship actually qualifies. Misclassification can create significant financial and operational exposure, particularly in California, where the standards are stringent. Remote work also adds complexity because employees are generally subject to the employment requirements of the state and locality where they work. As businesses grow, they should build compliance into the hiring process from the outset—evaluating worker classifications, understanding local requirements and periodically reviewing existing arrangements as roles evolve.

How are workplace technology and artificial intelligence changing employers' legal responsibilities and risk?

JARED SLATER: AI is changing the workplace faster than many companies' policies and practices can keep up. Employees are increasingly using AI to question employment decisions or company practices, but AI-generated analysis can be incomplete or simply wrong, so employers should verify the underlying facts before reacting. At the same time, businesses are adopting AI tools for recruiting, hiring and performance management, creating potential exposure when those tools produce biased or discriminatory outcomes. The key for growing businesses is to treat AI as a tool, not the decision-maker, by establishing clear policies, regularly evaluating how the technology is being used and keeping meaningful human oversight in important employment decisions.

What types of business disputes are becoming more common, and what can companies do before a disagreement escalates into litigation?

KENNY HSU: As the Valley's business community grows in size and complexity, we are seeing more partnership and shareholder disputes, particularly among closely held and family-owned businesses navigating founder retirements, ownership transitions and succession. Contract disputes are also becoming more complex, often involving intellectual property, technology and AI, especially within the Valley's entertainment and creative industries. The best time to avoid litigation is before a disagreement begins. Growing companies should put clear agreements in place that anticipate how disputes will be handled, document important business decisions and address potential problems before positions become entrenched. When a dispute does emerge, early intervention can help business leaders understand their options, assess the economic impact and pursue a practical resolution before the disagreement becomes an expensive distraction.

What should growing companies be doing to better protect their intellectual property, brand and other valuable business assets?

KENNY HSU: For many growing companies, intellectual property and brand recognition can become some of their most valuable assets. The strongest protection starts early. As businesses develop new products, services, technology and brands, they should identify what is worth protecting and put the appropriate safeguards in place as they grow rather than trying to play catch-up later. That includes protecting trademarks, copyrights and patents where appropriate, as well as maintaining strong confidentiality practices with employees and business partners. Protection also requires ongoing attention. Companies should monitor the marketplace for infringement, counterfeit products and knockoffs and respond promptly when problems arise.

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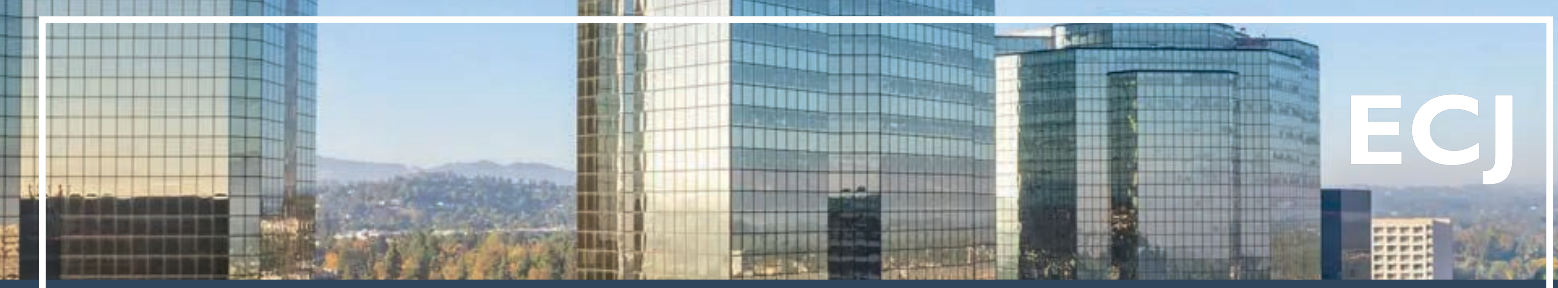
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AWARD MENTIONS OR RANKINGS

- Chambers Spotlight
- Daily Journal
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AREAS OF PRACTICE

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Since 1953, **Ervin Cohen & Jessup** has delivered innovative, highly skilled counsel to individuals and businesses. Today, the firm continues to thrive in a dynamic business environment through strategic, flexible, and tech-savvy representation. Kenny Hsu and Jared Slater bring that same approach to Valley businesses, drawing on their own deep roots and lasting ties to the community.

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- LA Business Journal: Women's Leadership Award Nominee
- LA Business Journal's Leaders of Influence: Thriving in Their 40s
- LA Business Journal Women of Influence Award
- Orange County Business Journal: Women In Business Award Nominee
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AREAS OF PRACTICE

- Special Education Law

The Accountability Paradox in Special Education

By JENNIFER CHANG,
Education Rights Attorney

SPECIAL EDUCATION LAW places the responsibility for providing an appropriate education on public school districts. Yet too often, parents must recognize when that responsibility is not being fulfilled, document the consequences, and fight for corrective action.

This disconnect raises a fundamental question about accountability: When families must continually advocate for services their children are legally entitled to receive, is the system functioning as the law intended?

WHEN COMPLIANCE ISN'T ENOUGH

Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), public school districts must provide eligible students with a free appropriate public education (FAPE) tailored to their individual needs. Procedural compliance alone does not establish that a district has provided an appropriate educational program.

Consider a student receiving specialized reading instruction under an individualized education program (IEP) whose assessments reveal serious literacy deficiencies and little or no progress. Even when the district provides every prescribed instructional minute, it must consider whether the program is appropriately designed to enable progress given the student's circumstances.

When a student's progress falls short, the district must review the educational program and determine whether changes are necessary. Yet when districts fail to address deficiencies, the burden of recognizing and challenging those failures may fall to parents without access to the information needed to recognize a potential violation of their child's educational rights.

HOW OVERSIGHT FALLS TO FAMILIES

School districts possess the educational records, assessment data, and professional resources required to identify and address deficiencies in a student's educational program. Parents, meanwhile, rely on those same institutions to explain whether the program is appropriate and their child is progressing. When districts fail to act on evidence of unmet needs, families may have to seek outside scrutiny to uncover problems the district should have addressed.

An independent educational evaluation (IEE) may identify needs that a district's assessment overlooked. A review of service records may reveal that the district never delivered required instruction. Such findings can expose failures that might otherwise remain unaddressed.

Establishing whether these failures constitute legal violations requires examining what the district knew, when concerns became apparent, and whether its response met obligations under IDEA.

THE BURDEN OF ENFORCEMENT

IDEA gives parents an essential role in their children's education, including the right to participate in decisions and challenge those they believe are inappropriate, and provides procedures for resolving disputes. But identifying a violation is only the first step in securing corrective action.

These protections provide an important means of holding districts accountable. However, resolving disputes can require extensive documentation, repeated meetings, independent evaluations, and legal proceedings, often at considerable expense to families. The time, resources, and persistence required to pursue these remedies can be substantial.

Parental advocacy should safeguard against institutional failures, not become the primary way to ensure districts fulfill their responsibilities. A student's access to an appropriate education should not depend on a family's resources, legal knowledge, or persistence in challenging the system that provides it.

JENNIFER CHANG
Special Education Attorney

PROTECTING THE RIGHTS OF CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS IN CALIFORNIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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- Services & Accomodations
- Eligibility & Assessment
- Behavior Support
- Due Process Proceedings
- School Bullying



"Families should not have to become legal experts to secure the educational support their children deserve. My role is to help them understand their rights, find their voice, and advocate from a position of knowledge and strength. Seeing families become confident advocates for their children while holding schools accountable for meeting their needs makes my work especially meaningful."

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A Q&A with Janice Miller

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AREAS OF PRACTICE

- Business Transactions
- Regulatory Compliance
- Corporate Real Estate
- Mergers & Acquisitions

Which areas of legal practice do you expect to see the greatest demand or growth over the next year, and why?

I expect continued demand for practical, business-focused counsel in areas involving contracts, corporate governance, and technology and regulatory compliance. Businesses, no matter the size and industry, are operating in an environment where rules and risks are changing quickly, and executives need legal guidance that helps them make decisions without slowing the business down.

AI will continue to create new questions around intellectual property, confidentiality, data use, and internal policies. At the same time, economic uncertainty may lead more companies to examine their internal processes, pursue strategic transactions, or resolve disputes before they become more costly. The greatest need will be for lawyers who understand how legal issues intersect with operations, finance, growth, and reputation.

What should a business owner or executive consider when selecting outside legal counsel?

Business leaders should look beyond credentials and technical legal knowledge. The right outside counsel understands the company's business model, priorities, and culture. Legal advice is most valuable when it reflects the realities of how a company operates.

It is also important to consider whether the relationship between attorney and client can become proactive versus reactive. Strong outside counsel should be willing to learn the business, anticipate issues, and raise concerns before they become larger problems. Ultimately, the best attorney-client relationships are built on trust and a shared understanding of the company's goals.

What emerging risks or opportunities do you believe businesses may be underestimating?

One area I believe businesses may be underestimating is how quickly AI is becoming a part of everyday operations. Employees are already utilizing AI tools to draft content, analyze information, and improve efficiency-–sometimes before companies have established clear policies governing its usage.

I can see both the opportunity and risk in that. AI can help businesses work faster, but it also raises questions involving confidentiality, data security, accuracy, and accountability. Companies should understand what information employees are putting into the AI platform, how AI-generated work is being reviewed, and where human judgement remains vital.

The goal is to use AI thoughtfully. Businesses that establish guidelines now, educate employees, and revisit those policies as the technology evolves will be better positioned to manage the legal and operational risks that come with AI use.

What is one piece of advice you would give Los Angeles and Valley business leaders heading into 2027?

My advice would be not to wait for uncertainty to disappear before making decisions. Business leaders will continue to face changing economic conditions, and shifting industry expectations. The companies that remain flexible while making timely decisions will be the ones best positioned for 2027.

That means understanding where the business is today, identifying the relationships and resources that are most important to its future and addressing potential problems early. Review key contracts, revisit strategic partnerships and talk with professional advisors before an issue becomes urgent.

I believe strongly in the value of relationships and connection. Los Angeles and the Valley remain highly relationship-driven business communities. Collaboration can create opportunities that companies may not find on their own. Leaders who stay engaged and look for ways to create value for others will be better prepared to navigate what comes next.



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