

**BARON & BUDD, P.C.®**

www.baronandbudd.com

3102 Oak Lawn, Ave, Suite 1100

Dallas, TX 75219-4281

Tel: 214.521.3605  
Fax: 214.520.1181**Baron & Budd's Practice and Accomplishments****FIRM OVERVIEW**

Baron & Budd, P.C. is among the largest and most accomplished plaintiffs' law firms in the country. With almost 40 years of experience, Baron & Budd has the expertise and resources to handle complex litigation throughout the United States. As a law firm that takes pride in remaining at the forefront of litigation, Baron & Budd has spearheaded many significant cases for entities and individuals.

Since the firm was founded in 1977, Baron & Budd has achieved substantial national acclaim for its work on cutting-edge litigation:

- Shareholders Russell Budd and Scott Summy were selected to the 2014 edition of *The Best Lawyers in America*. Summy has been selected to *Best Lawyers* every year since 2006.
- In 2014 Baron & Budd was named to the list of America's Elite Trial Lawyers by *The National Law Journal* in partnership with Law.com. This illustrious list is comprised of 50 law firms that have achieved significant results on behalf of plaintiffs within the previous year and have an established track record of delivering impressive results.
- In 2013, Baron & Budd was a finalist for the Public Justice Trial Lawyers of the Year Award for the firm's work on a \$105 million settlement on behalf of hundreds of public water providers across the Midwest who are struggling with atrazine contamination in their source water.
- In 2013, shareholder Burton LeBlanc was appointed to the Plaintiffs' Steering Committee in litigation involving health issues linked to dialysis product GranuFlo and its sister product, NaturaLyte.
- In 2002-2006, 2008, 2011-2012, Baron & Budd was named to the *National Law Journal's* "Plaintiffs' Hot List" of exemplary plaintiffs' firms in the United States.
- In September 2010, Baron & Budd was one of only four firms chosen to serve on both the Plaintiffs' Executive Committee and the Plaintiffs' Steering Committee of the Multi-District Litigation in the Gulf Oil Spill litigation.

- In 2009, Baron & Budd was a finalist for the Public Justice Trial Lawyer of the Year Award for its recovery of more than \$400 million on behalf of more than 150 municipalities from 17 states regarding contamination of groundwater by the gasoline additive MTBE.
- In 2007, shareholders Russell Budd and Burton LeBlanc were among 14 attorneys nationwide to be honored with the Wiedemann Wysocki National Finance Council Award from the American Association for Justice in recognition of their commitment to the legal profession and their efforts to improve the civil justice system. LeBlanc was recognized for a second time with the award in 2010.
- In 2006, a team of Baron & Budd attorneys received the esteemed Trial Lawyer of the Year Award by the legal non-profit organization, Public Justice, for its work on Arizona groundwater contamination litigation that spanned 21 years, involved over 1,600 plaintiffs, and resulted in a total recovery of more than \$150 million.
- In 2004, *American Lawyer* named Baron & Budd one of the sixteen most successful plaintiffs' firms in the country.
- Baron & Budd has been repeatedly selected by *The Legal 500* as one of the country's premier law firms in mass tort claims and class action litigation.
- Baron & Budd is serving, or has served, on the Plaintiffs' Steering Committee's for the following: GranuFlo, BP Oil Spill, Transvaginal Mesh, Chinese Drywall and Takata Air Bags.
- Shareholder Burton LeBlanc served as president of the American Association of Justice (AAJ) in 2013. AAJ is the largest trial lawyer non-profit group in the United States.

Additional information about Baron & Budd is available on the firm's website, [www.baronandbudd.com](http://www.baronandbudd.com).

## SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT AREAS OF LITIGATION

### *FINANCIAL LITIGATION*

#### \$410 Million Bank of America Settlement Over Excessive Bank Overdraft Fees

Baron & Budd attorneys worked closely with other law firms in a class action lawsuit asserting manipulation of data by banks to increase revenue from overdraft fees. The firm helped achieve a \$410 million settlement with Bank of America, the largest bank involved in the bank overdraft fee litigation. The case alleged that Bank of America, along with many other major banks, intentionally reordered debit card transactions to promote overdraft fees. Not only did the case result in repayment of most of these charges, but it also led to widespread changes in the banking system. Because of this lawsuit, many large banks changed their overdraft fee policies, no longer "reordering debits" and not offering "courtesy" overdraft services without customer consent.

#### \$110 Million Settlement with JP Morgan Chase Over Overdraft Fees Plus \$150 Million in Business Practice Changes

Baron & Budd served on the plaintiffs' steering committee in a class action lawsuit asserting manipulation of data by numerous national banks in order to increase overdraft fee revenue. The firm led the negotiations in a \$110 million settlement with JP Morgan Chase regarding the bank's manipulative overdraft fee policies. The case alleged that JP Morgan Chase, along with a number of other banks, intentionally reordered debit card transactions to promote overdraft fees. Not only did the case result in repayment of many of these charges to consumers, it also led to widespread changes in the banking system, affecting virtually every American with a bank account. Because of the lawsuit, many large banks have changed their overdraft fee policies, no longer reordering debits and not offering "courtesy" overdraft services without customer consent. Also, as part of the negotiations, Chase agreed to not charge overdraft fees on debits of \$5 or less.

In 2012, Baron & Budd lawyers were selected as finalists for the 2012 Trial Lawyer of the Year Award by the legal non-profit organization Public Justice for their groundbreaking work on the bank overdraft fee litigation.

#### \$177 Million Settlement for Seven States Against Manufacturer GlaxoSmithKline

Baron & Budd represented the states of Kentucky, Maryland, Mississippi, New Mexico, South Carolina, Utah and West Virginia in litigation regarding the fraudulent marketing of the diabetes drug Avandia by manufacturer GlaxoSmithKline.

This result is the largest settlement of a pharmaceutical case ever recorded for several of the involved states. These seven states courageously chose to opt out of the 2012 multistate settlement and, as a result, each state received a much higher settlement than they otherwise would have received.

The lawsuit alleged that GlaxoSmithKline had misrepresented the safety and efficacy of the drug Avandia, stating that Avandia reduced adverse cardiac events, when actually it increases them.

Baron & Budd shareholders Russell Budd, Burton LeBlanc, Laura Baughman and of counsel Ann Saucer served as co-lead counsel in the litigation, alongside co-counsel and each state's Office of the Attorney General.

#### Predatory Credit Card Practices

Baron & Budd currently represents the states of Mississippi and Hawaii, and recently concluded its representation of the state of West Virginia, in litigation against national banks and other financial institutions regarding their unfair and deceptive marketing practices related to their credit card service plans, including payment protection plans. These defendants have preyed upon unsuspecting consumers, including the elderly and the disabled, by charging them for products ancillary to their credit cards when the consumers either did not authorize such charges or could never qualify to benefit from them. The firm settled the state of West Virginia's claims in this litigation in 2013 for more than \$12.5 million. In 2014, the firm settled the claims of the state of Mississippi with three defendants for nearly \$5 million. The firm also settled the claims of the state of Hawaii with four of the defendants for more than \$4 million.

#### Unlawful Default-Related Fees Charged to Home Mortgage Borrowers

Baron & Budd currently represents homeowners throughout the United States in three separate class action cases regarding unlawfully marked-up and unnecessary fees charged to borrowers who were late on their mortgage payments. The cases, which have been brought against Wells Fargo, JP Morgan Chase and Citi, assert that when borrowers fall behind on their mortgages, the banks assess fees for property preservation, maintenance and appraisal services. According to the lawsuits, however, in order to generate a profit, the banks add a mark-up to the cost of the services and they order them when they are unnecessary. Furthermore, the lawsuits assert that the banks use deceptive language on borrowers' statements to hide the true nature of the fees.

#### Manipulation of the London Interbank Offered Rate ("LIBOR")

Baron & Budd represents homeowners throughout the United States in a case regarding the unlawful manipulation of the London Interbank Offered Rate (the "LIBOR" rate) by sixteen different banks, including Bank of America, Citi and JP Morgan Chase. The LIBOR rate is one of the most popular benchmarks for adjustable rate mortgages. The case asserts that the banks' manipulation of the LIBOR rate caused homeowners to pay higher interest rates on their adjustable rate mortgage loans.

Stock Option Back-Dating

Baron & Budd achieved a \$20 million settlement on behalf of individuals who purchased Semtech stock. Firm shareholder Burton LeBlanc served as co-lead counsel in the case. Plaintiffs in the case alleged that Semtech manipulated grant dates for stock options, which resulted in understatement of Semtech's compensation expenses and overstatement of its reported income.

Protecting Shareholders' Interest in Corporate Transition

As co-lead counsel in *In Re: 7-Eleven, Inc. Shareholders Litigation*, Baron & Budd represented shareholders in negotiations to increase the amount of an offer in a transaction turning a publicly-traded company into a privately-held entity. Baron & Budd achieved a \$5 per share increase in the offer that provided an additional \$145 million to 7-Eleven shareholders.

Settlement of Mutual Fund Advisors' Breaches of Fiduciary Duties

Baron & Budd represented shareholders in recovering funds in various mutual fund families against the fund advisors for their breach of fiduciary duties for failing to file proof of claim forms in settled securities cases for which the funds were eligible. Baron & Budd reached a series of confidential settlements that resulted in money being returned from the fund advisor to the mutual fund.

Protecting Public Investors from Corporate Self-Dealing

In 2010, Baron & Budd successfully protected the interests of public investors in Affiliated Computer Services, Inc. (ACS). While ACS was being sold to Xerox, ACS's management and largest shareholder negotiated a better price for their own shares as well as remarkable future employment compensation packages. The insiders at the same time voted to sell ACS at a price well below its fair market value, which would have forced public shareholders to sell their shares for less. Working with other national law firms, Baron & Budd was able to obtain \$69 million in additional compensation for ACS public shareholders.

**PHARMACEUTICAL AND MEDICAL DEVICE LITIGATION**

Actos

Baron & Budd attorneys represented hundreds of individuals who were harmed by diabetes drug Actos. In April 2014, a landmark settlement was reached in this litigation, requiring Takeda Pharmaceuticals and Eli Lilly & Co. to pay a combined \$9 billion in punitive damages after a jury found that the companies hid the cancer risks associated with Actos use.

Avandia

Baron & Budd represented over 7,000 victims harmed by use of the diabetes drug Avandia. In addition, Baron & Budd represented the states of Mississippi, West Virginia, South Carolina, Utah, New Mexico, Maryland and Kentucky in their lawsuits against GlaxoSmithKline arising out of its fraudulent marketing of Avandia in those states. These states' claims were settled in 2013 for a total of \$177 million.

Fen-Phen

Baron & Budd played a leading role in representing people harmed by the diet drug Fen-Phen. The firm was instrumental in negotiating the Seventh Amendment to the AHP Settlement Agreement, which required the defendants to place an additional \$1.275 billion into a trust for those affected. In addition, Baron & Budd settled Fen-Phen personal injury claims for approximately 3,300 individuals.

Fluoroquinolone Antibiotics

Baron & Budd represents many men and women who developed peripheral neuropathy as a result of Fluoroquinolone use. Baron & Budd and co-counsel filed the first lawsuits in the country against Johnson & Johnson and Janssen Pharmaceuticals and Baron & Budd shareholders Russell Budd and Thomas Sims were appointed to the Plaintiffs' Steering Committee for *In Re: Fluoroquinolone Products Liability Litigation*, MDL 2642, and Russell Budd serves as Co-Lead counsel for Plaintiffs.

GranuFlo

Baron & Budd shareholder Burton LeBlanc was appointed to the Plaintiffs' Steering Committee in the litigation surrounding dialysis product GranuFlo and its sister product NaturaLyte. Baron & Budd also currently represents hundreds of individuals who were harmed by the use of GranuFlo in their dialysis treatments. Litigation is ongoing against the manufacturers of GranuFlo and NaturaLyte.

Inferior Vena Cava Filter (IVC)

Baron & Budd attorneys currently represent individuals with health issues related to faulty IVC filters. Baron & Budd shareholder Russell Budd has been appointed to the Plaintiffs' Steering Committee for *In re: Cook Medical, Inc., IVC Filters Marketing, Sales Practices and Products Liability Litigation*, MDL 2570; and *In Re: Bard IVC Filters Products Liability Litigation*, MDL 2641. Baron & Budd shareholder Laura Baughman and associate Daniel MacDonald work closely with other members of the PSC on many aspects of these two multi-district cases, including discovery assessments, document review and taking depositions.

Lipitor

Baron & Budd attorneys currently represent hundreds of individuals who developed Type II diabetes after taking the cholesterol-lowering drug Lipitor. Litigation is ongoing.

Risperdal

Baron & Budd represents men who developed abnormal breast growth after taking Risperdal, a medication that was frequently marketed for “off-label” uses. Baron & Budd has filed lawsuits for over 200 clients adversely affected by Risperdal use and litigation is ongoing in this matter. The firm’s attorneys are investigating potential claims on behalf of hundreds of individuals.

Transvaginal Mesh

Baron & Budd managing shareholder and co-founder Russell Budd serves on the Plaintiffs’ Steering Committee in litigation regarding transvaginal mesh. Baron & Budd attorneys currently represent hundreds of individuals who have been harmed by the use of transvaginal mesh. Litigation is ongoing in this case.

Xarelto

Baron & Budd represents individuals that suffered severe internal bleeding as a result ingesting the blood thinner Xarelto. Baron & Budd and their co-counsel are filing cases for clients and are investigating potential claims on behalf of hundreds of individuals. Baron & Budd shareholder Sindhu Daniel works with the Plaintiffs’ Steering Committee for *In Re: Xarelto (Rivaroxaban) Products Liability Litigation*, MDL 2592, on discovery and other issue affecting Plaintiffs nationwide.

Zofran

Baron & Budd attorneys represent children born with health issues and their parents as a result of the ingestion of Zofran during pregnancy. Baron & Budd shareholder Russell Budd serves on the Plaintiffs’ Steering Committee for *In Re: Zofran (Ondansetron) Products Liability Litigation*, MDL 2657. Baron & Budd shareholder Sindhu Daniel and associate Daniel MacDonald work closely with other members of the PSC on many aspects this case, including discovery assessments and document review.

Other Pharmaceutical and Medical Devices

Baron & Budd is at the forefront of pharmaceutical and medical device litigation and is continually adding new case areas to its litigation practice. Other areas of litigation include (but are not limited to): Benicar, Depakote, Defibrillator Implants, Eliquis, Essure, Metal on Metal Hip Replacements, Invokana, Low Testosterone, Power Morcellator, Pradaxa, Proton Pump Inhibitors, Talc, and Zolofit.

**ENVIRONMENTAL LITIGATION**

Lead Role in the BP Gulf Oil Spill Litigation

Immediately after the explosion that caused the massive BP Gulf Oil Spill, Baron & Budd got to work, helping individuals and businesses that had sustained economic and/or physical damages. Scott Summy, shareholder and head of Baron & Budd's environmental litigation group, serves on the Plaintiffs' Executive Committee and the Plaintiffs' Steering Committee in the oil spill litigation. The firm currently represents hundreds of individuals and companies in ongoing litigation.

\$420 Million National MTBE Settlement

In May 2008, Baron & Budd helped negotiate a \$423 million settlement on behalf of more than 150 water providers in 17 states regarding Methyl Tertiary Butyl Ether (MTBE) contamination in groundwater. The settlement, reached with many of the country's leading gas companies, requires gasoline refiners to pay water providers' costs to remove MTBE from public drinking water wells and for refiners to pay for treatment of qualifying wells that may become contaminated within the next 30 years.

Plaintiffs' cases were initially filed in their respective state courts before they were later transferred to a Multi-District Litigation (MDL) court in New York. Baron & Budd shareholder Scott Summy, who filed the first-ever MTBE case in the United States, served as national co-lead counsel. Baron & Budd shareholders Celeste Evangelisti, Cary McDougal, Laura Baughman, Carla Burke Pickrel, Stephen Johnston also represented the plaintiffs.

In 2009, the attorneys who were involved in the MTBE litigation were recognized as finalists for the Trial Lawyer of the Year Award, an annual award given by Public Justice, a non-profit legal organization, for outstanding contributions to the public interest.

\$105 Million Atrazine Settlement

Baron & Budd served as Class Counsel in litigation regarding the contamination of approximately 1,200 public drinking water systems by the chemical atrazine. Atrazine is a widely used agricultural chemical that is commonly applied to crops throughout the United States to control weeds. Despite the threat of water contamination and industry knowledge of the environmental risks, approximately 77 million pounds of atrazine are sprayed on U.S. crops each year.

The firm represented over thirty water providers primarily throughout the Midwest, including Missouri, Kansas, Ohio and Illinois. In 2012, the Court approved a \$105 million settlement for water systems that have detected atrazine in their water supplies to reimburse the costs of removing the chemical from finished water.



In 2013, the attorneys who worked on the atrazine contamination litigation were recognized as finalists for the Trial Lawyer of the Year Award by legal non-profit organization Public Justice.

#### Toxins in Schools

In 2014, shareholder Scott Summy filed a lawsuit against the Monsanto Company and its corporate successors on behalf of the Town of Westport and Westport Community Schools in Massachusetts regarding the use of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) in schools. According to the court documents, Monsanto allegedly knew about the dangers of PCBs for decades, but failed to warn people of these dangers. The goal of the lawsuit is to force Monsanto to pay for the removal of the PCBs from the schools.

According to the EPA, PCBs are probable human carcinogens and can have serious toxic effects on a person's immune system, nervous system, endocrine system and reproductive system, particularly in developing schoolchildren.

Unfortunately, thousands of schools across America likely contain PCBs. However, because there is no requirement to test, many schools aren't aware of its existence. Baron & Budd intends to fight for awareness and remediation.

#### Clean Air for Schoolchildren

In 2008, Baron & Budd shareholders Laura Baughman and Thomas Sims represented three San Francisco Bay-area environmental organizations in negotiating a settlement with Laidlaw Transit, Inc. In the settlement, Laidlaw agreed to invest a minimum of \$4.7 million dollars over five years to retrofit older buses in its California fleet with air pollution control devices to reduce harmful diesel exhaust. Laidlaw also agreed to invest \$23.6 million in its fleet over seven years to either retrofit additional buses or purchase new buses that meet the most stringent air pollution standards in the country, which would ultimately protect young children from being exposed to harmful diesel exhaust. The following year, Baron & Budd settled with two additional bus companies, which helped ensure that even more polluting buses would be replaced with newer, cleaner models or retrofitted with pollution control devices.

Clean Groundwater in California

In 2004, Baron & Budd shareholders Scott Summy and Laura Baughman negotiated a string of settlements on behalf of California non-profit Communities for a Better Environment (CBE) that required several major oil companies to upgrade gas station storage tanks, clean up groundwater contamination and take steps to prevent gasoline leakage from thousands of underground storage tanks in California. Monetary and injunctive relief granted in this case was valued at \$107 million.

MTBE Settlement on Behalf of the City of Santa Monica

In 2003, Baron & Budd represented the City of Santa Monica in a MTBE contamination settlement with several major oil companies. MTBE had contaminated five of Santa Monica's 11 wells, forcing the City to import water for \$3 million a year.

In total, the oil companies paid \$250 million, which provided funds for Santa Monica to build a water treatment system to clean MTBE from its supply, to continue buying water until the supply was deemed clean and to monitor groundwater quality during and after the cleanup.

The Exxon Valdez Oil Spill

In 1993, Baron & Budd was awarded the Public Justice Award for "outstanding contribution to environmental protection and public interest" for its work on the rehabilitation of the damage caused by the Exxon Valdez oil spill in Alaska's Prince William Sound.

The Exxon Valdez oil spill occurred in remote Prince William Sound, Alaska, on March 24, 1989 when the Exxon Valdez, an oil tanker bound for Long Beach, California, struck Prince William Sound's Bligh Reef, ran aground and spilled nearly 11 million gallons of crude oil.

Similar to the 2010 BP Gulf Oil Spill, the cause of Exxon Valdez spill can be pointed primarily at the oil company for neglecting to properly adhere to safety regulations. Exxon failed to repair the tanker's Raycas radar system, which would have warned the crew of an impending collision with the Bligh reef, because it was just too expensive to fix and operate. The tanker had been operating for more than a year without a functioning Raycas radar.

As a result of the Valdez spill, the Oil Pollution Act of 1990 (OPA) was passed, allowing those who lost income or profits because of an oil spill to recover compensation from those responsible for the spill.

Groundbreaking Water Contamination Case in Tucson, Arizona

In 1985, Baron & Budd filed a lawsuit on behalf of more than 1,600 Tucson-area residents against an aircraft manufacturer, the City of Tucson and the Tucson Airport Authority over TCE contamination of the community's groundwater. Since Tucson is the largest city in the United States that receives all of its drinking water from underground sources, the industrial solvents used at the airport and aircraft company were of particular concern. Spilled on the ground and seeping through the sandy soil into the groundwater, the invisible yet harmful contaminants caused several unusual forms of cancer and other diseases at almost epidemic levels, particularly among children in the area.

The firm's cutting-edge work on this case not only brought compensation to individuals to help them deal with the consequences of their injuries, it also helped define Arizona law on pollution coverage issues. The litigation spanned 21 years, involved more than 1,600 plaintiffs and resulted in a more than \$150 million total recovery for the people of Tucson.

As a result, the public interest legal organization Public Justice presented the Baron & Budd legal team with its Trial Lawyer of the Year Award in 2006. The award recognizes the trial attorney or attorneys who have made the greatest contribution to the public interest each year by trying or settling a precedent-setting case or group of cases.

***TOXIC EXPOSURE LITIGATION***

Closing Down the West Dallas Lead Smelter

In the West Dallas Lead Smelter case, Baron & Budd took on local environmental contamination to protect future generations of children from exposure to lead. One of Dallas' largest public housing projects sat in a low-income neighborhood directly across the street from a secondary lead smelter. For many years, the smelter converted used automotive batteries into lead components for resale. Particulate emissions from the factory smokestacks literally blanketed the surrounding community with lead-bearing soot.

Baron & Budd represented more than 200 families in a lawsuit that ultimately closed the lead smelter and paid sizable confidential settlements to court-supervised trusts for 445 children affected by lead poisoning. Although the neurological damage to these children was irreversible, the funds recovered in the settlement have enabled the children to move into adulthood with medical, rehabilitative and vocational assistance. Closing the lead smelter and requiring the company to fund a community soil clean-up project helped prevent future damage to other neighborhood children.

Settlement for Central Texas Residents Harmed by Lead Exposure

Baron & Budd shareholder Laura Baughman represented more than 130 people who were exposed to high levels of lead and other toxic substances while growing up in a small town in Central Texas. Baron & Budd obtained a sizeable confidential settlement for the firm's clients, providing them with the resources to help pay for rehabilitative, psychological and other medical expenses.

Settlement for Harms Caused by Chemical Leaks

Baron & Budd successfully represented more than 850 workers injured by exposure to ethylene dichloride (EDC) in Lake Charles, Louisiana as a result of the negligent and reckless conduct of Conoco, Inc., Condea Vista Chemical Company, and a number of contractors that caused one of the largest chemical spills in U.S. history. In addition to its status as a probable human carcinogen, EDC can cause serious damage to the heart, central nervous system, liver, kidneys, lungs, gastrointestinal system and commonly results in depression, memory loss and personality changes.

**CONSUMER RIGHTS**

Asbestos

Years ago, Baron & Budd led the fight for victims' rights in two landmark Supreme Court victories, *Amchem Products v. Windsor* and *Ortiz v. Fibreboard Corp.*, which are still widely recognized as among the most significant appellate decisions for consumer rights.

*Ortiz v. Fibreboard Corp.*, 526 U.S. 815, 119 S. Ct. 2295 (1999) was one of the last decisions handed down by the United States Supreme Court in 1999. The Court's 7-2 decision was reached after months of fierce debate over whether future claims by victims of asbestos exposure should be handled as a class action.

Baron & Budd led the charge to dismiss the Fibreboard mandatory class action settlement that would have severely limited the rights of people to pursue individual claims based on the severity of their specific illness and specific circumstances of their exposure.

Writing on behalf of the Court, Justice Souter questioned the fairness of the settlement because, if allowed to go forward, Fibreboard would essentially have had a "get out of jail free card." Fibreboard would have been able to settle all asbestos claims, including all future claims, with only \$500,000 of the company's own money, thus retaining virtually all of its net worth at the expense of the victims of its asbestos-containing products.

The *Ortiz* decision corroborated another significant Supreme Court decision in which Baron & Budd also fought for victims' rights: *Amchem Products v. Windsor*, 521 U.S. 591, 117 S. Ct. 2231, 138 L.Ed2d 689 (1997).

#### Food Product Litigation – Deceptive Advertising

Baron & Budd represents consumers in several cases concerning deceptive and misleading advertising practices committed by food and beverage companies. These cases include an action against a popular protein drink company, which asserted that its meal replacement drinks and bars were unlawfully labeled “healthy” when, in fact, they contained levels of fat and saturated fat deemed to be excessive by the FDA for products labeled as “healthy”, an action against a frozen potato company for allegedly misrepresenting that certain products were “all natural”, although they contained a synthetic chemical preservative; and an action against Abbott Laboratories, which asserts that its “Ensure Muscle Health” drink misleads consumers about the products’ promise that it contains an ingredient that will help the elderly rebuild strength.

#### Lancôme and Avon Anti-Aging Cream Multi-District Litigation – Deceptive Advertising

Baron & Budd attorneys are co-lead counsel for plaintiffs in class action lawsuits currently pending against Lancôme and Avon concerning certain anti-aging and wrinkle cream skincare products. According to the lawsuits, the companies market and advertise the purported unique age-defying benefits of the products to consumers using deceptive and misleading references to clinical studies, trials, tests, patents and other indicia of scientific credibility. But, as alleged in the complaints, the products do not, and cannot, provide the specific age-negating effects they promise to provide.

#### Vehicle Litigation

Attorneys at Baron & Budd represent owners and lessees of certain vehicles regarding the vehicle manufacturers’ misrepresentations and failures to disclose material safety information. Baron & Budd represents owners and lessees of certain Nissan vehicles in a case alleging that the company failed to disclose its knowledge of a defective engine component that could lead to catastrophic engine failure. Additionally, Baron & Budd represents owners and lessees of Ford, Lincoln and Mercury vehicles in cases concerning the MyFord Touch/MyLincoln Touch/MyMercury Touch systems, which use Microsoft’s “Sync” software, an in-car communication system thought to put drivers at risk of an accident.

#### Takata Airbags

Baron & Budd, along with co-counsel Labaton Sucharow LLP and Podhurst Orseck P.A., filed the nation’s first lawsuits in the Southern District of Florida and the Central District of California regarding the recall of Takata-brand air bags. Litigation is ongoing.

## THE FIRMS' SHAREHOLDERS

**Russell W. Budd** is a major force in the world of plaintiff's attorneys, having devoted his more than three-decade career to championing the rights of people and communities injured by corporate malfeasance. Currently Mr. Budd presides over one of the nation's largest plaintiff's firms, Baron & Budd, PC, headquartered in Dallas, Texas with offices in Austin, Texas; Los Angeles, California and Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

Mr. Budd, a shareholder of Baron & Budd since 1985 and president and managing shareholder since 2002, has expanded the firm from its cornerstone asbestos practice to a national firm capable of tackling the biggest defendants in areas as diverse as pharmaceutical and medical device injury, water contamination, the BP Gulf oil spill, financial fraud and various other areas of practice.

Over the last decade, Mr. Budd has played significant roles in asbestos litigation on a national level. As chair and member of several asbestos creditors' bankruptcy committees, Mr. Budd successfully resolved over 100,000 victims' claims with some of Wall Street's biggest companies. Mr. Budd was the chief negotiator of a \$4 billion national settlement with Halliburton that established a trust fund to protect present and future asbestos victims throughout the United States – the largest asbestos trust fund of its kind anywhere in the world. He was on the committee that negotiated a \$3.9 billion settlement with United States Gypsum to benefit asbestos claimants. And he participated in negotiations that led W.R. Grace to agree to fund a bankruptcy trust on behalf of asbestos claimants with nearly \$3 billion in cash and stock equity.

Under Mr. Budd's direction, Baron & Budd provided the initial funding for the launch of the International Pleural Mesothelioma Program at Brigham and Women's Hospital to research curative therapy for mesothelioma, a cancer caused by exposure to asbestos. The firm has also given generously to the Asbestos Disease Awareness Organization, Lung Cancer Alliance and to other asbestos awareness advocacy organizations.

Mr. Budd serves on the Board of Governors of the American Association for Justice (AAJ) and previously served on the Board of Directors and Executive Committee of the Texas Trial Lawyers Association (TTLA). He also served on the board of the National Comprehensive Cancer Network (NCCN) Foundation for two years.

On July 13, 2010, Mr. Budd was awarded the prestigious Harry M. Philo Trial Lawyer of the Year Award from the American Association for Justice (AAJ) at the organization's annual conference in Vancouver, BC. The award was presented in recognition of his dedicated and consistent leadership in protecting the rights of individuals through the civil-justice system. In 2007, he earned the prestigious Wiedemann Wysocki National Finance Council Award from the American

Association for Justice, an award honoring attorneys for their commitment to the legal profession and their efforts to improve the civil justice system.

Under Mr. Budd's leadership, Baron & Budd has won numerous awards. The firm was recently named by the *National Law Journal's* to its "Elite List" of plaintiffs' firms in the United States and has been included in the publication's Hot List eight times.

Mr. Budd and his wife are also involved in their local community. One of the causes closest to his heart is Habitat for Humanity, which gives hardworking Dallas families a chance at first-time home ownership. He has personally contributed generously to the "Building on Faith" project, a collaborative initiative between the Dallas Faith Communities Coalition (DFCC), the City of Dallas and Habitat for Humanity to build 100 affordable single-family homes in West Dallas. In addition, Mr. Budd has donated land to the City of Dallas that enabled the completion of a massive bike and hike trail.

In 2014, Mr. Budd, along with his wife, donated \$2.5 million to Southern Methodist University in Dallas to endow The Budd Center for Involving Communities in Education. The Center is a radical concept that works closely with numerous non-profit organizations to help children exit poverty through education. Though initially focused on West Dallas, the program hopes to create a template for the nation in promoting truly substantial change.

**Steve Baron**, Baron & Budd shareholder, is an accomplished litigator known for his tenacity in pursuing justice for victims of corporate misconduct. He currently heads Baron & Budd's mesothelioma and asbestos practice.

As lead of one of the nations' most aggressive litigation teams, Mr. Baron represents clients in cases that have resulted in some of the largest verdicts and settlements for people with mesothelioma and asbestos diseases, as well as clients who have been harmed by unsafe pharmaceuticals.

Over the past decade, Mr. Baron has been the lead negotiator on many of the firm's mesothelioma settlements and has also been the clients' representative on all major bankruptcy creditor committees. He has represented the firm's clients in major bankruptcy negotiations with asbestos companies including W.R. Grace, Owens Corning, Pittsburgh Corning, Babcock & Wilcox Co., and Halliburton.

Mr. Baron served as a lead negotiator in a landmark case against Halliburton that resulted in a \$4 billion settlement, helping to bring financial compensation to tens of thousands of asbestos cancer victims. The Halliburton settlement is still one of the largest asbestos settlements on record.

As the head of Baron & Budd's asbestos and pharmaceutical litigation teams, Mr. Baron has helped build the firm's reputation as a watchdog for consumer protection.

He was the lead negotiator on 17,000 Avandia cases.

Mr. Baron earned a business degree from the University of Texas at Austin (1986) and a JD from the University of Texas School of Law (1988).

**Dan Alberstone** co-manages Baron & Budd's Los Angeles office. He has nearly 30 years of broad experience prosecuting and defending complex litigation matters, including extensive jury trial experience. His practice focuses on financial and other business torts, consumer class actions, environmental contamination cases, real estate disputes and entertainment cases.

Mr. Alberstone has been selected as lead trial counsel by both institutional and individual clients in their most significant and high-profile matters, including partnership cases, real estate cases, breach of contract cases, entertainment cases, environmental cases and cases alleging unfair business practices.

In the real estate sector, Mr. Alberstone successfully prosecuted a case for the American Skiing Company, the owner of the Canyons Ski Resort in Park City, Utah, in an action to force the resort's landlord to agree to an assignment of ground lease in a \$123 million transaction. He also obtained a more than \$14 million award for a major real estate developer in connection with the purchase and sale of an historic bank building in downtown Los Angeles. Mr. Alberstone achieved a significant award for the owner of the Edison Bar in downtown Los Angeles in an action involving the purchase and sale of a large commercial building, and successfully defended the Estate of Jonathan Ritter in an action brought to compel specific performance of a contract to purchase three citrus farms owned by the estate.

In the entertainment area, he has successfully defeated an action by a union president and three board members against the Screen Actors' Guild and 41 other members of its national board and successfully defended screenwriters in work-for-hire actions brought by employers claiming ownership of screenplays. He also represented ESPN and Good Morning America reporter Erin Andrews in connection with the prosecution of a stalker who had surreptitiously videotaped Ms. Andrews in the privacy of her hotel rooms.

The *Los Angeles Daily Journal* recognized Mr. Alberstone for obtaining one of the top plaintiff's verdicts in 2009 and he was selected for inclusion in the *Southern California Super Lawyers* list from 2005-2007 and in 2010 (Thompson Reuters).

Mr. Alberstone earned a J.D. from the Southwestern University of Law in 1982 and a B.A. from the University of California, Los Angeles.

**Laura Baughman's** position at Baron & Budd calls upon her to exercise her knowledge both as an attorney and environmental engineer, most notably in California Proposition 65 pollution cases. And as managing shareholder of the



firm's Qui Tam litigation team, Ms. Baughman focuses on strategies to ferret out and litigate against those who have perpetrated fraud against the government.

Ms. Baughman manages the firm's pharmaceutical litigation filed on behalf of individuals and public entities. Ms. Baughman represented seven public entities (the states of Mississippi, West Virginia, South Carolina, Kentucky, Maryland, New Mexico and Utah) against GlaxoSmithKline regarding misrepresentations made in the marketing of the diabetes drug Avandia. This litigation recently settled for over \$170 million. Currently, Ms. Baughman represents individual personal injury and wrongful death victims and public entities regarding harm caused by GranuFlo, used during dialysis. Ms. Baughman is also active in Lipitor and Transvaginal Mesh litigation.

As managing shareholder of the firm's Qui Tam litigation team, Ms. Baughman focuses on strategies to ferret out and litigate against those who have perpetrated fraud against the government. Sometimes called "whistleblower" cases, Ms. Baughman's team handles a variety of cases in which the government has been defrauded of Medicare, Medicaid, defense and other monies. Ms. Baughman is a member of Taxpayers Against Fraud, a non-profit organization dedicated to combating fraud and educating taxpayers about the realities of fraud.

When Ms. Baughman was a small child living in New Jersey, there was an outbreak of childhood leukemia in her neighborhood. Ms. Baughman was hospitalized at the age of five. Her parents were told that she, too, had leukemia. It turned out that Ms. Baughman did not have the disease. The children in her neighborhood had been sickened from drinking water contaminated by a company which had dumped toxic waste onto the ground nearby. Ms. Baughman made a full recovery, but her parents were told that many of the stricken children would not live past their 20th birthdays. The experience left an indelible impression. From the time she was old enough to understand what had happened, Ms. Baughman wanted to become a lawyer so that she could help put a stop to the poisoning of people and natural resources by unscrupulous businesses.

Now Ms. Baughman leads the firm's work in California involving Proposition 65 litigation. She served as co-lead counsel in a California Proposition 65 water contamination case that required several major oil companies to clean up groundwater that had been contaminated by gasoline leaking from storage tanks and to take steps to prevent similar leaks in the future. The settlement was valued at \$107 million. Ms. Baughman settled another Proposition 65 case that required the retrofitting of school buses with devices to reduce diesel engine exhaust emissions, a known human carcinogen. Ms. Baughman is currently counsel on cases seeking to require the disclosure of elevated levels of lead in certain brands of children's fruit juice, canned fruits, baby food and protein supplements.

In addition to her legal advocacy, Ms. Baughman has a long history of community service. She has represented several clients on a pro bono basis through the Dallas Volunteer Attorney Program and over the years has served as co-chair of several committees for Attorneys Serving the Community. Formerly a member of the

Dallas Bar Association's Community Involvement Committee, she was the chair of the group's "Lawyers Have Heart" 5-K run benefiting the American Heart Association. While in law school, Ms. Baughman was vice president of Texas Law Fellowships, a non-profit public interest organization.

**David Cannella** is a shareholder in the Louisiana offices of Baron & Budd. As a member of the Mesothelioma Litigation Group, he serves asbestos victims across the gulf state. After graduating from Louisiana State University's Paul M. Hebert Law Center in 1999, Mr. Cannella served as a law clerk to the Honorable Pascal F. Calogero, Jr., Chief Justice of the Louisiana Supreme Court. Following his service to Chief Justice Calogero, Mr. Cannella served as Assistant District Attorney for Orleans Parish. While working in Harry Connick's office, Mr. Cannella was assigned to the Narcotics Screening Division and the Felony Trial Division. In addition, he served as an advisor to the Orleans Parish Grand Jury.

Since 2001, Mr. Cannella has focused on litigation pertaining to toxic torts, product liability, serious personal injury, and wrongful death, successfully handling multi-million dollar cases and numerous jury and bench trials, both in state and federal court. He continues to focus on mesothelioma and other product liability cases for Baron & Budd throughout the State of Louisiana.

In one such case, Mr. Cannella obtained a \$6.4 million verdict against an asbestos product manufacturer for a 60-year-old nurse who was diagnosed with mesothelioma. David Cannella speaks passionately about how small a sum such verdicts bring when weighed against the horrors of suffering a slow, suffocating death from mesothelioma cancer. "Twelve million, fifteen million...twenty-five million dollars cannot fill the terrible hole created in the lives of hard-working families whose loved ones have suffered and died as a direct result of the callous disregard that asbestos corporations held for workers. No one would exchange his or her health or the health of a loved one for twenty million dollars, knowing he, she or a family member will suffer the type of painful death caused by asbestos cancer."

**Christopher Colley** began helping asbestos victims and their families in 2001, primarily along the Texas coast. He participated in hundreds of asbestos cases representing various trades of construction along with chemical and oil refinery workers, including pipefitters, boilermakers, carpenters, electricians and certainly those involved with insulation materials.

Starting in 2006 Mr. Colley began to work almost exclusively in the state of Louisiana. He utilized his extensive experience from having worked with individuals in the industrial settings of Beaumont, Houston, Galveston and Freeport and put that to work representing asbestos victims who live and work along the lower Mississippi River. Since 2006 Mr. Colley has successfully litigated or settled hundreds of asbestos cases in Louisiana representing victims and their families from Baton Rouge all the way down the river to New Orleans.

Christopher Colley handles an active docket in Louisiana and appears in courts across the state. He has managed cases in East and West Baton Rouge, Ascension, St. James, New Orleans, Calcasieu, Morehouse, Ouachita, Caddo, Iberville, Point Coupee, and St. Bernard parishes. Mr. Colley strives to help his clients make sense of what has happened to them and their families through his experience and keen understanding of toxic tort law. “The best thing I can do as a lawyer,” he says, “is help people in the most difficult time of their lives to find answers and seek justice.”

**Sindhu Daniel** co-manages the Pharmaceutical Litigation Group at Baron & Budd. For the past 17 years, Ms. Daniel’s practice has been concentrated in complex personal injury litigation involving pharmaceutical drugs and medical devices.

Over the course of her career Ms. Daniel has played significant roles in complex multi-district litigation involving Vioxx, Fresenius Granuflo/Naturalyte dialysis products, Actos, DePuy Orthopaedics and Celebrex, to name a few. Among her work on numerous settlements, she was instrumental in negotiating the \$4.85 billion settlement in *In Re: Vioxx Products Liability Litig.* (E.D. La, MDL No. 1657), involving injuries of heart attack, stroke and sudden cardiac death caused by the pain killer’s blockage of an important blood pressure regulating enzyme in the body, a \$2.5 billion settlement in *In Re: DePuy Orthopaedics ASR Products Liability Litig.* (N.D. Ohio, MDL No. 2197), involving injuries caused by design flaws in hip implants, and a substantial settlement in *In Re: Fosamax Products Liability Litig.* (S.D.N.Y, MDL No. 1789), involving the injury of osteonecrosis of the jaw.

Ms. Daniel has also served as co-lead negotiator on behalf of a large group of plaintiffs in a case involving severe and permanent injuries caused by transvaginal mesh implants. She was instrumental in building consensus with other plaintiffs’ attorneys and actively led negotiations with defendants. In addition, Ms. Daniel has extensive experience in devising settlement matrices used to allocate funds in pharmaceutical and medical device mass torts. She has also successfully negotiated numerous confidential settlements in complex mass tort litigations.

In 2015, Sindhu Daniel was appointed as a Plaintiff’s Steering Committee (PSC) member by the Honorable Judge Eldon E. Fallon in *In Re: Xarelto (Rivaroxaban) Products Liability Litigation* (E.D. La., MDL No. 2592), involving uncontrolled bleeding and a tenfold increase in the risk of wound infection following certain surgeries. She currently holds positions as co-chairs of the Administrative Committee and Privilege-Log Subcommittee. Additionally, as a member of the Bellwether Committee, Ms. Daniel serves as the point person between plaintiffs and MDL Centrality, an online exchange portal that facilitates the assembly, organization, inventory, exchange, and analysis of massive amounts of data and documents, and provides an automated method to serve, store, monitor and use Plaintiff and Defendant Fact Sheet information. In this capacity, Ms. Daniel organizes and evaluates large amounts of data and provides critical case information to her respective plaintiff’s committees which is used to devise bellwether strategy and analyze cases for trial selection. In 2016, she was appointed as a PSC member by the Honorable Kathryn Vratil in *In Re: Ethicon,*

*Inc., Power Morcellator Products Liability Litigation* (D. Kansas, MDL No. 2652).

Ms. Daniel was also appointed by the Plaintiffs' Executive Committee to serve as co-chair of the Plaintiff's Bellwether Committee in *In Re: Fresenius Granuflo/Naturalyte Dialysis Products Liability Litig.* (D. Mass., MDL No. 2428), which involves sudden, fatal heart attacks caused by drugs used to neutralize the buildup of acid in the body during kidney dialysis. As part of her responsibilities on these important cases, Ms. Daniel has worked with her colleagues to develop case evaluation grids instrumental in tracking similar themes among large pools of plaintiffs.

Serving in these leadership roles, Ms. Daniel routinely navigates the intricate issues which frequently present themselves in complex mass torts. She works closely with other plaintiffs' attorneys to build consensus on a coordinated approach to litigation. With such extensive experience, Ms. Daniel is a frequent speaker and presenter at various continuing legal education seminars and webinars which deal with issues pertaining to emerging mass tort litigation. She has also been invited to share her knowledge by lecturing at national litigation seminars.

Ms. Daniel graduated from Temple University in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and Temple University James E. Beasley School of Law. She is licensed in Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Michigan.

**Celeste A. Evangelisti**, a shareholder in the Environmental Litigation Group at Baron & Budd, has devoted the bulk of her career to helping individuals, municipalities and water suppliers obtain recovery of costs to clean up contamination. A tenacious fighter for environmental responsibility, Ms. Evangelisti has been nominated twice for Public Justice's prestigious "Trial Lawyer of the Year" award (2009, 2013) and was named a "Texas Super Lawyer" for three straight years (Thompson Reuters, 2003-2005).

Ms. Evangelisti has devoted almost two decades of her career to representing individuals, municipalities and public water suppliers who seek to recover costs to clean up contamination from the companies responsible – those who put dangerous products into the stream of commerce without ensuring they will not cause extensive environmental contamination. Ms. Evangelisti currently represents plaintiffs in several states across the country who face a variety of contamination issues.

Ms. Evangelisti is a well-known figure in national litigation arising from contamination caused by the gasoline additive Methyl tertiary-butyl ether (MTBE), having been among the first lawyers to litigate cases against oil refiners who blended MTBE into gasoline.

Ms. Evangelisti started her career at a large defense firm, representing some of the biggest corporations in the world in product liability cases. In 1999, she used the knowledge she gained representing defendants in those cases and began working

with Scott Summy, who represented corporate victims of wrongdoing. Mr. Summy was then expanding his groundwater contamination practice to California and other states. Mr. Summy brought his team to Baron & Budd in 2002, ultimately forming and expanding what is now the Environmental Litigation Group. Throughout the years, Ms. Evangelisti has assisted in the representation of over 150 water providers in MTBE cases.

Ms. Evangelisti's knowledge and skill have been put to work in many other water contamination cases as well, including those involving perchloroethylene (PCE), Trichloropropane (TCP) and Atrazine. She is currently working on the firm's PCBs-in-schools cases, which inspire her every day. "I can't imagine a more important cause than to protect the nation's children," she says.

Hard-driving and tenacious, Ms. Evangelisti's legal prowess has earned her many professional honors and awards. She is AV-rated by Martindale-Hubbell, its top rating. She was a member of the legal team representing Communities for a Better Environment (CBE) which was named "Attorneys of the Year" for Environmental Law in 2001 by California Lawyer (Daily Journal Corp.) for the resolution of a precedent-setting case requiring major oil companies to clean up more than a thousand sites contaminated by the gasoline additive MTBE. She has been nominated twice for Public Justice's prestigious "Trial Lawyer of the Year" award (2009, 2013) for her work on MTBE and Atrazine respectively, and she was named a "Texas Super Lawyer" for three straight years (Thompson Reuters, 2003-2005).

Ms. Evangelisti has been a frequent speaker and presenter on legal topics concerning the prosecution of water contamination cases involving the gasoline additive MTBE and other contaminants of concern. "The lengths some polluters will go to increase their profits at the expense of the well-being of entire communities never ceases to amaze me," she says. "It is ultimately very satisfying to bring these companies to justice and protect the environmental integrity of our water supplies."

**John Fiske** has dedicated his career to "protecting what's right" in so many ways: mentoring youth, rescuing farm animals, and seeking justice for those whose health and homes have been decimated by polluters and the manufacturers of pollutants throughout the United States. Mr. Fiske represents large public entities including San Diego, Long Beach, San Jose, Oakland, Berkeley, Portland, Port of Portland, Spokane, Seattle and the State of Washington in environmental and public nuisance actions against Monsanto Company for polluting America's waterways with polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs). He has been appointed a Special Assistant Attorney General for the State of Washington in the case.

Mr. Fiske represents the County of Sonoma, the County of Napa, the County of Mendocino, the County of Lake, the County of Ventura, the City of Ventura, the County of Santa Barbara, the City of Santa Barbara, Montecito Water District, Fire Protection Districts and other public entities in both Northern and Southern California in litigation against PG&E and SoCal Edison for damages resulting

from the devastating wildfires of 2017. In addition to several public entities, Mr. Fiske represents thousands of families and businesses who lost everything due to the negligent maintenance, inspection, and operations of these investor-owned utilities. Mr. Fiske also represents Calaveras County in the Butte 2015 Wildfire, including claims for many tens of millions of dollars.

Mr. Fiske also represents the interests of approximately 10.5 million California residents through the California Opioid Consortium, a group of 30 counties in California who are suing the nation's largest pharmaceutical distributors and manufacturers for their role in creating the devastating opioid epidemic. The Consortium is comprised of the Counties of Butte, Calaveras, Contra Costa, Del Norte, El Dorado, Fresno, Glenn, Imperial, Inyo, Lassen, Madera, Mariposa, Mendocino, Merced, Modoc, Mono, Monterey, Nevada, Placer, Plumas, Sacramento, San Benito, San Diego, Shasta, Siskiyou, Sutter, Tehama, Trinity, Tuolumne, and Yuba.

Mr. Fiske also represents students and teachers exposed to toxic fumes by the multi-billion dollar aerospace company Ametek, Inc., which improperly dumped toxic chemicals into groundwater, creating one of the largest trichloroethylene (TCE) plumes in the state of California.

John Fiske earned his law license at age 23 from California Western School of Law, a private, non-profit law school located in San Diego which was founded in 1924. Mr. Fiske attended law school on a full scholarship and served as Associate Editor of the Law Review while there.

Mr. Fiske has been declared a Super Lawyer in 2015, 2016 and 2017. In 2013, San Diego Metro Magazine named John Fiske to its list of "40 Under 40" (people to watch). He was a 2012 "Top Influential" (The Daily Transcript), a 2009 "Top Young Attorney" (The Daily Transcript), and a 2007 "50 People to Watch" (San Diego Magazine). Mr. Fiske has also served as a Barrister with the Louis M. Welsh Inn of Court, an amalgam of judges and lawyers who come together throughout the year to improve the skills, professionalism and ethics of the bench and bar.

John Fiske is a past-president of the board of directors of the San Diego Brain Injury Foundation, getting involved after obtaining a \$10.8 million jury verdict for a brain injured client. He has also served as an advisory board member for the University of California San Diego's Bannister Family House, which acts as a home away from home for families of patients undergoing long-term care. In addition, Mr. Fiske has been a board member of Solutions: Exploring Success Post-High School, which provides an affordable way for high school students and their families to shape a clear, actionable vision of their post-high school path based on individual interests, aptitudes, and financial resources. On top of that, Mr. Fiske served as a "Red Coat" for the San Diego Bowl Game Association, a group of dedicated men and women who volunteer their time throughout the bowl's year-around events, leading up to and including the Holiday and Poinsettia

Bowl games in San Diego. And as if all that were not enough, Mr. Fiske mentored two young men in a very personal way, by having been a “Big Brother” to two “Little Brothers” in the Big Brothers Big Sisters of America organization.

When John Fiske is not discussing legal topics on television, including programming on Fox, ABC, KPBS, and KUSI, he spends time riding horseback, snorkeling, hiking and camping. He’s stays fit by racing in the Spartan Beast, Ragnar Relay and Tough Mudder competitions.

In 2016, Mr. Fiske founded the San Diego Farm Animal Rescue, a 501(c)3 non-profit organization dedicated to rescuing horses, pigs, hens, and roosters. As relayed by the Los Angeles Times and San Diego Union Tribune, SDFA Rescue educates people about the environmental impacts of large scale animal agriculture while providing a unique interactive experience for visitors. In 2016, San Diego Magazine named Mr. Fiske’s rescue organization San Diego’s “Best Animal Encounter Experience.” Baron & Budd is extremely proud to have this dedicated public servant and compassionate human being in our San Diego office.

**Ann Harper** has spent her career representing workers who have developed mesothelioma and other serious illnesses caused by exposure to asbestos. She is a shareholder in Baron & Budd’s settlement department, where she works through the issues necessary to get the firm’s clients compensation in their lawsuits and to pursue their claims through bankruptcy trust funds.

Ms. Harper says, “In my job, I am sometimes able to get people compensation that offers some security for their families and brings them some peace of mind. It’s wonderful when I can do something like that for a client.” When Ms. Harper is not working for her clients, she enjoys reading and traveling to new destinations.

**Stephen C. Johnston** puts his degree in Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences to good use as a shareholder with the firm’s Environmental Litigation Group, representing individuals and communities seeking clean-up costs for contaminated water supplies.

Mr. Johnston began his career with Baron & Budd in 1997 as part of the firm’s asbestos litigation group. Mr. Johnston’s time in the asbestos group was marked by his respect for the individual client and a reputation for thoughtful attention to their cases and their lives. His advocacy resulted in the recovery of millions of dollars for those injured by asbestos exposure.

Mr. Johnston brought his hard work and determined advocacy to the Environmental Litigation Group in 2004. Since that time he has represented hundreds of public entities seeking clean-up costs for water supplies contaminated by MTBE, Atrazine and TCP. He has also represented hundreds of individuals and businesses along the Gulf Coast impacted by the BP oil spill which resulted from the sinking of the Deepwater Horizon drilling rig.

For the past several years Mr. Johnston has led the firm's litigation arising from TCP contamination of drinking water supplies. Under his leadership the firm has successfully resolved numerous TCP contamination cases.

For Stephen Johnston, Baron & Budd was a good match for his goals to bring about justice to those who have been wronged through no fault of their own: "I saw in Baron & Budd a law firm committed to helping those injured by corporate indifference and greed. I wanted to help those who could not otherwise help themselves." His dedication to this mission and his legal talent earned him recognition as a Super Lawyers "Rising Star" (Thomson Reuters, 2006).

**J. Todd Kale** is a shareholder with Baron & Budd. He joined the firm in 2008 when the firm consolidated with Dallas-based law firm Silber Pearlman. Mr. Kale worked with mesothelioma sufferers and other victims of asbestos-related disease at Silber Pearlman from 1993 and continues that work at Baron & Budd.

Mr. Kale has dedicated his career to fighting the companies that knowingly exposed people to the deadly carcinogen known as asbestos. He enjoys partnering with patients and families and helping them navigate the legal process during the most difficult time in their lives. Mr. Kale works on the front lines with the firm's Asbestos Litigation Team. He meets with mesothelioma patients and their families across the country to gather the information necessary to successfully pursue their cases. More than any other aspect of his job, he enjoys meeting with these patients and their families. Through these meetings, Mr. Kale becomes part of each of these families and becomes involved in each family's specific struggles, needs and hopes. He is honored to be trusted by so many patients and families as they deal with the diagnosis and prognosis of mesothelioma. His 20 years of experience in this field make him a valuable resource for any information a client may need — both legal and medical.

For more than two decades, Mr. Kale has worked on numerous asbestos lawsuits, managing thousands of cases from start to finish. Through his many years as an asbestos lawyer, he has developed an in-depth understanding of the legal system and how to best navigate that system on behalf of clients. Since 1993, he has helped clients recover significant amounts in settlements. Mr. Kale has experience pursuing not only asbestos manufacturers, but also equipment manufacturers and employers who are responsible for a client's exposure to asbestos. Never one to back down from a fight, Mr. Kale is proud to have fought on behalf of mesothelioma and asbestos clients for his entire career.

Todd Kale earned his J.D. from the University of Tulsa College of Law in 1990 and his B.B.A. from the University of Texas.

**J. Burton LeBlanc** is a powerhouse advocate for individuals who have been harmed by corporate wrongdoing, having begun his legal career representing victims of toxic exposure and workplace hazards in his home state of Louisiana. His lifelong commitment to service through the legal system began as a child in



Louisiana, a state where danger in the workplace was common and expectations for most workers were of a life shortened by the necessity of making a living. Observing this, Mr. LeBlanc knew early that his life mission would be to seek justice for the downtrodden.

Today Mr. LeBlanc's passion for championing the rights of individuals extends to the national stage where he recently served as president of the American Association for Justice (AAJ). As president of AAJ, the largest trial lawyer non-profit group in the United States, Mr. LeBlanc advocated for protection of America's civil justice system and rallied resources when corporate interests attempted to infringe on individual rights. He is an adamant crusader for the abolition of forced arbitration and a supporter of the fundamental right to a trial by jury.

Mr. LeBlanc's appointment as AAJ president followed a long history of involvement on both the local and national levels of AAJ and its affiliate organizations. He previously served as president-elect, vice president, treasurer and parliamentarian of AAJ. In addition, Mr. LeBlanc has been a member of AAJ's Executive Committee and the Board of Governors, where he was awarded the Wiedemann Wysocki National Finance Council Award two separate times, most recently in July 2010. Mr. LeBlanc has been a member of the Board of Trustees of the AAJ PAC Committee, chairman of the AAJ National Finance Council, a sustaining member of the AAJ and a member of the Leaders Forum. He is also a member of the AAJ's Section on Toxic Torts and Business Torts.

Mr. LeBlanc has also served the Louisiana Association for Justice (LAJ) as past president, member of the Council of Directors, Board of Governors and the Committee for the Environmental Law/Toxic Tort Section. He currently serves on the Executive Committee of the LAJ.

Mr. LeBlanc's extensive accomplishments are equally renowned in the courtroom, paving the way for him to be named as one of the top 75 plaintiffs' attorneys in the United States by *The American Lawyer* (ALM Media, 2010). He was recently included in the Louisiana Super Lawyers list (Thomson Reuters, 2008, 2012-2015). In addition to his work representing individuals, Mr. LeBlanc has successfully represented many governmental entities, including the States of Hawaii, Mississippi, Louisiana, and West Virginia in complex consumer fraud litigation.

Today Burton LeBlanc concentrates his practice in the areas of pharmaceutical, environmental, securities and asbestos litigation.

Mr. LeBlanc is a member of the American Bar Association's (ABA) State Attorney General and State Department of Justice Issues Committee as well as a committee member of the ABA's Section on Toxic Torts. He is also a member of the National Association of Public Pension Attorneys (NAPPA) the National Association of Shareholder & Consumer Attorneys (NASCAT), the Texas Trial

Lawyers Association, Louisiana State Bar Association, Baton Rouge Bar Association, Texas State Bar Association, College of the State Bar of Texas, the Louisiana Bar Foundation and a supporting member of the Trial Lawyers for Public Justice Foundation. He is a frequent lecturer on the issues of environmental law, asbestos litigation, chemical exposure cases and the importance of access to the civil justice system.

Mr. LeBlanc and his wife are active in the Baton Rouge community and serve on multiple boards, including Cancer Services of Greater Baton Rouge, where he has served as president.

**Cary L. McDougal**, a shareholder with Baron & Budd, has served as lead attorney in more than 75 jury trials in state and federal court. Over the nearly two decades that he has practiced law, Mr. McDougal has proven to be a formidable trial lawyer with unflinching resolve to serve his clients. He has tried cases involving such diverse areas of the law as premises liability, product liability, general personal injury, medical malpractice, insurance litigation and environmental litigation.

For the first 14 years of his legal career, Mr. McDougal handled the defense of matters involving complex litigation throughout Texas and Oklahoma as a partner at two Dallas firms. He focused his practice on civil litigation, and he managed and tried all litigation for several North Texas health care agencies. He co-founded the law firm Aldous and McDougal, which gained recognition for its trial successes on behalf of plaintiffs in medical malpractice, contractual disputes and other matters. Mr. McDougal joined Baron & Budd in 2005.

A shareholder and manager of Baron & Budd's Environmental Litigation Group, Mr. McDougal currently represents over 200 municipalities and water providers across the country that are seeking clean-up costs for the contamination of their water supplies. His practice includes management of Baron & Budd's cases in the Multi-District (MDL) MTBE water contamination litigation, which is considered one of the most complex pieces of litigation in the country. He also manages other environmental contamination cases involving chemicals such as TCP, TCE and dioxin.

Mr. McDougal completed his law degree at the University of Texas School of Law and attained a Master of Public Policy degree from the University of Texas LBJ School of Public Affairs. He continues to serve as a consultant to the LBJ school on issues concerning public policy. He has authored numerous legal papers on civil litigation and trial practice and has spoken at seminars before health care professionals, consumer groups, the insurance industry and attorneys on issues relative to civil litigation.

Mr. McDougal has been inducted into the prestigious American Board of Trial Advocates (ABOTA), a recognition by his peers for his jury trial experience, commitment to the jury process, and ethics. He also holds the top rating from the

Martindale-Hubbell Law Directory and was named a Texas Super Lawyer (Thomson Reuters 2005-2006).

**Renée Melançon**, a shareholder with Baron & Budd's litigation group, focuses her practice on appellate work, drafting pleadings, and motion practice. Since joining the firm in 2001, Ms. Melançon has worked on a variety of toxic tort cases involving complex and novel legal issues, and she has successfully defended several multi-million dollar verdicts on appeal.

Renée Melançon has made it her life's work to represent plaintiffs who have been harmed by contaminants in the environment, most recently workers who have developed cancer from occupational exposure to asbestos. Through her diverse practice, she has had extensive experience in toxic torts, mass torts, multi-district litigation, and complex litigation. All of her practice has the common theme of representing individuals who have been wronged by big business. Indeed, Ms. Melançon says she selected Baron & Budd to pursue her career because "Baron & Budd has the resources, talent, and tenacity to zealously represent those who have been harmed."

Ms. Melançon has successfully defended on appeal multi-million dollar verdicts on behalf of plaintiffs who were afflicted with asbestos-related diseases. She has prevailed on appeals in several intermediate and supreme state courts, and in 2008 she argued a case before the Louisiana Supreme Court, whose opinion remains one of the most cited and relied-upon rulings on asbestos in that state.

Ms. Melançon was among a team of lawyers who received the 2006 "Trial Lawyer of the Year" award from Trial Lawyers for Public Justice for her work seeking redress for more than 1600 residents who were injured by contaminated groundwater in Tucson, Arizona. She has been named a "Rising Star of Texas Law" by Texas Super Lawyers and Texas Monthly magazine, a distinction awarded to less than 5% of Texas lawyers under the age of 40. In addition to her work at the firm, Ms. Melançon lectures at legal seminars, and in 2012 she gave a presentation on legal issues in asbestos litigation at Harvard Medical School. Her devotion to helping those in need extends beyond her legal practice. For example, she represented victims of the 9/11 attacks as a member of Trial Lawyers Care, Inc., a non-profit organization established by the Association of Trial Lawyers of America, and she volunteered in a program which helped Hurricane Katrina evacuees relocate to Dallas.

Ms. Melançon graduated law school Magna Cum Laude and Order of the Coif. Her law review note has been cited by the United States Supreme Court.

After law school Ms. Melançon clerked for the Honorable Martha Craig Daughtrey of the United States Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit and for the Honorable Robert E. Jones of the United States District Court for the District of Oregon. Before joining Baron & Budd, Ms. Melançon lived in Asia and Europe, where she volunteered with nonprofit organizations focusing on women's rights and environmental issues in developing countries. As she explains, "My work at

Baron & Budd is a natural extension of my lifelong interest in pursuing justice for others”.

**Andrew Miller** joined Baron & Budd’s Washington, D.C. office in 2018, where he focuses on bringing fraud and abuse litigation throughout the United States under such statutes as the federal False Claims Act, state False Claims Acts, the Anti-Kickback Statute and the Stark Law. A shareholder in our Washington D.C. office, Mr. Miller also represents clients with claims filed with the Whistleblower Offices of the Securities and Exchange Commission and the Internal Revenue Service.

Before Mr. Miller joined Baron & Budd, he was a partner at the Simmer Law Group in Washington D.C. He has significant experience representing whistleblowers in qui tam cases against drug manufacturers, healthcare providers, defense and other government contractors.

Prior to the Simmer Law Group, Mr. Miller defended government contractors against liability under the federal False Claims Act (FCA). He also represented government officials in Congressional investigations and participated in numerous internal investigations involving complex civil and criminal issues. Mr. Miller’s long experience at both ends of the FCA litigation spectrum makes him an invaluable member of the Baron & Budd team.

During law school Mr. Miller served as editor-in-chief of the Houston Law Review, in addition to being one of only four students who received the Distinguished Service Award for extraordinary contribution to the University of Houston Law Center. He also received the American Jurisprudence Award for Legal Research and Writing.

After interning for the Honorable David Hittner at the United States District Court for the Southern District of Texas in 2002, Mr. Miller clerked for the Honorable Harold R. DeMoss, Jr. at the United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit from 2003 through 2005. During that time, he also worked as an Adjunct Professor of Law at the University of Houston Law Center.

Growing up in West Texas, Mr. Miller knew from an early age that he wanted to dedicate himself to a career that would allow him to advocate for those who might not otherwise have a voice, whether they are individuals who bravely blow the whistle on fraud or are people being accused of misdeeds. Joining the legal profession gave Mr. Miller an ideal platform for ensuring that the rights of individuals are protected, no matter how powerful their opponents. “Knowing that I can help others stand up for what’s right is its own reward and serves as my motivation to come to work each day”, he says. This dedication is further reflected in Mr. Miller’s extensive pro bono work in child custody matters, where he has represented low income families and vulnerable children living with abuse, neglect and other difficult circumstances.

Mr. Miller resides in Northern Virginia, with his family. They enjoy traveling to the beach and cooking together. He also enjoys golfing. Mr. Miller serves on the Board of Directors of the child development center where his children are enrolled.

**Carla Burke Pickrel**, a shareholder with Baron & Budd's Environmental Litigation Group, began her legal career with the firm's appellate section. She has a gift for writing and oral advocacy that has been very persuasive in the MTBE Multi-District Litigation cases. Ms. Burke Pickrel has also authored and presented numerous papers and presentations on the topics of toxic tort and water contamination litigation and premises liability law.

After several years in Baron & Budd's appellate section, Ms. Burke Pickrel joined the Environmental Litigation Group in 2004. In her time with the Group, she has represented hundreds of public entities — villages, towns, cities, utilities, school districts, and states.

As one of the pioneers of the Group, she has worked to develop legal strategy for cases arising from MTBE, atrazine and PCE contamination of drinking water supplies. Ms. Burke Pickrel has played a critical part in nationwide litigation arising from MTBE contamination on behalf of more than 200 water providers in more than 20 states. She also played a major role in a nationwide class action settlement for providers whose water supplies are contaminated with atrazine, an agricultural chemical.

Putting her experience to work in new areas is an energizing part of Ms. Burke Pickrel's work. She is currently representing school districts whose buildings are contaminated with PCBs, chemical compounds found in some construction materials. This channels her deep respect for all those who work in the nation's public schools. "My mother worked for public schools for thirty years. She felt that she was a part of her students' and parents' lives and took that responsibility seriously. So do I."

Ms. Burke Pickrel's work has earned her recognition by professional organizations. She was named a Super Lawyers "Rising Star of Texas Law" (Thomson Reuters, 2006) and, with her colleagues, was twice-nominated for Public Justice's Trial Lawyer of the Year Award — in 2009 and in 2013.

While in law school at Southern Methodist University, Carla Burke Pickrel was on a team that successfully represented a disabled man whose lack of medical treatment while in the custody of the Dallas county jail amounted to cruel and unusual punishment. After graduation, she returned to SMU as an adjunct clinical instructor of law to brief and argue the appeal of *Lawson v. Dallas County*, 112 F.3d 257 (5th Cir. 2002) before the United States Court of Appeals for the 5th Circuit.

Ms. Burke Pickrel's work is motivated by the results she sees at Baron & Budd. "The work we do helps entire communities. Baron & Budd makes people's everyday lives better," she says.

**Mark Pifko** specializes in the prosecution of high-profile class action cases against multi-national corporations. Mr. Pifko is a staunch advocate of consumers' rights and recently, he was named a "Rising Star" by Law360, a national legal news publication. Law360's Rising Star award is given annually to top attorneys under age 40. In 2016, Mr. Pifko was one of 5 attorneys in the class action area and one of 179 attorneys nationwide, across all practice areas, to receive this recognition. Since joining the Los Angeles office of Baron & Budd in 2011, Mr. Pifko's efforts have led to the return of significant sums of money to victims of corporate wrongdoing and affected changes in the automotive, financial services, and food and beverage industries.

Prior to joining Baron & Budd, Mr. Pifko spent nearly a decade representing some of the world's largest companies in high-stakes litigation. In 2010, Mr. Pifko left his position at Arnold & Porter LLP so that he could devote his entire practice to his passion — representing the interests of plaintiffs. In connection with his corporate defense work, Mr. Pifko worked with advertising agencies who helped sell his clients' products and services and Mr. Pifko recalls that the tag line for one such agency was, "while life is busy happening, we get people to do stuff!" Corporations spend billions of dollars a year to get people to buy their offerings, but when things go wrong, Mr. Pifko wondered what individuals can do when they need to get recalcitrant companies to "do stuff," like refund money and stop unlawful practices from continuing.

Mr. Pifko believes class action lawsuits provide an important way for people to protect themselves from powerful corporations. Instead of one person taking on a billion-dollar company, class actions allow groups of people to fight back with a collective voice.

In addition to his litigation work, Mark Pifko has been called upon to be a speaker on class action topics at legal industry conferences, and Mr. Pifko is a talented writer whose articles on class action law and consumer advocacy have been published in *California Lawyer* magazine and the *Daily Journal* newspaper.

**Scott Simmer** founded the Simmer Law Group in Washington D.C., in 2014, but he's been practicing law for decades and is a seasoned expert at routing out deceit and fraud in hidden corners of government programs, education and healthcare industries. Joining with Baron & Budd in 2018 to form our Washington D.C. office, Mr. Simmer continues to represent whistleblowers bringing qui tam cases of fraud under federal and state False Claims Acts as well as IRS, Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) and Foreign Corrupt Practices Act (FCPA) whistleblowers. Mr. Simmer also continues to represent private health insurance plans in large-scale recovery actions under the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations (RICO) Act, federal anti-trust laws and state consumer fraud/deceptive trade practices statutes.

For more than thirty years, Scott Simmer has led the investigation and prosecution of numerous precedent-setting fraud and abuse cases on behalf of whistleblowers and private insurance payors. He has written and spoken widely on legal issues related to the federal False Claims Act (FCA), the Anti-Kickback statute, Employee Retirement Income Security Act (ERISA) and Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA); as well as on healthcare fraud and abuse, antitrust violations and issues related to Pharmacy Benefit Managing (PBM) contracting.

The son of a Methodist minister, Mr. Simmer grew up in Nebraska with a strong sense of social justice and respect for the underdog. He was teaching English in college academia when the desire to attend law school struck him. After considering a legal career in publishing, Mr. Simmer found his legal calling while managing health care fraud investigations as head of litigation for a major health insurer. When he learned that the federal government was investigating for-profit healthcare companies for submitting fraudulent Medicare and Medicaid claims, Mr. Simmer convinced his insurance colleagues that similar fraud was adding burdensome costs to private health plans. He subsequently designed legal approaches to combat such healthcare fraud, including building a consortium of health insurers to investigate and pursue recovery actions.

Mr. Simmer eventually left the insurance business to take on the representation of qui tam whistleblowers bringing claims on behalf of the government. At the same time, he began representing groups of health plans in large-scale recovery litigation. His zeal for doing what's right drives every case he takes on behalf of whistleblowers and every recovery action he undertakes for health insurers. "Scott Simmer is an outstanding attorney and I am pleased to welcome him to Baron & Budd," said President and Managing Shareholder, Russell Budd. "Scott and his team bring a strong record of success pursuing complex litigation which closely aligns with the breadth and scope of Baron & Budd's existing practice areas." Scott Simmer serves as a trustee for his undergraduate alma mater, Cornell College, in Mount Vernon, Iowa. Whenever he returns to Cornell for meetings in the fall, he makes sure to attend Iowa Hawkeye football games with his sons, their wives, and his granddaughter. Scott and his wife frequently plan family vacations to include a round of golf, a game of tennis or a Boston Red Sox game, another passion Scott shares with both his brothers and his sons.

**Thomas M. Sims** has spent much of his career at Baron & Budd litigating complex environmental cases ranging from water contamination to air pollution. Though he has recently expanded his practice to represent public entities in hotel occupancy tax cases and whistleblowers under the state and federal claims act, Mr. Sims continues to work on serious environmental cases such as the Gulf Coast Oil Spill.

He was lead counsel in one of the largest Proposition 65 cases in history. Proposition 65 is a California state law that permits private citizens to enforce certain environmental regulations on behalf of the public. Mr. Sims represented

three environmental groups in their efforts to reduce diesel exhaust emissions from school buses. Working as lead counsel, Mr. Sims was a driving force in securing a settlement in which the defendant agreed to invest more than \$28 million to replace or retrofit school buses that were built before 2003 with air pollution control devices.

Mr. Sims has worked on behalf of communities that were harmed by toxic releases from nearby industrial activities. In 2006 he received the Trial Lawyer of the Year award from the non-profit Trial Lawyers for Public Justice in connection with his work on a long-running insurance coverage dispute. Originally filed in 1985, the case involved groundwater contamination of public aquifers in Tucson, Arizona. As a result of the efforts of Mr. Sims and his co-counsel, the case finally settled in 2005. During the intervening twenty years, Baron & Budd won two trials and prevailed on three separate appeals. Mr. Sims also represented the Governor of the State of Louisiana in his efforts to secure natural resource damages resulting from the BP Oil Spill.

Mr. Sims has also represented whistleblowers under state and federal false claims acts. He currently represents two mechanics who allege that their former employer, the largest school bus operator in the country, consistently shortcut health and safety procedures in order to increase profits. In connection with his work on that case, Mr. Sims persuaded the California Court of Appeals to adopt the theory of implied certification as a basis for liability under the California False Claims, the first time a California court adopted this theory.

Mr. Sims currently devotes the majority of his time to seeking compensation on behalf of individuals and public entities that have been harmed by unsafe prescription drugs. He was part of the litigation team that helped seven states' attorneys general recover a \$177 million settlement against GlaxoSmithKline regarding its fraudulent marketing of the diabetes drug Avandia.

**Britt K. Strotzman** is a seasoned litigator who brings to Baron & Budd more than 17 years of experience as a powerhouse litigator in cases relating to high-stakes state and federal safety regulatory investigations, enforcement matters for energy companies, and other public entity matters. Ms. Strotzman has litigated more than 30 jury trials and participated in more than 60 state and federal administrative hearings in her role as "Giant Slayer," representing communities and public entities against the sometimes devastating malfeasance of powerful utility companies and energy firms.

Ms. Strotzman, one of California's most successful environmental legal advocates for public entities, joined Baron & Budd's Environmental Litigation Group as a shareholder in 2018. Numerous local, state and national recognitions track Ms. Strotzman's successful representation of many California cities and counties in pioneering litigation to win hundreds of millions of dollars from utility companies like the largest utility in California, Pacific Gas & Electric Company (PG&E), for deadly and catastrophic explosions and fires caused by the utility's failure to comply



with safety and recordkeeping regulations relating to its underground natural gas pipelines and aboveground electric power systems. Her previous clients in such matters include the City of San Bruno, County of Calaveras, Carmel-by-the-Sea, City of San Luis Obispo, City of San Carlos, and City of Goleta, among others. In addition to energy regulatory matters, Ms. Strottman brings to Baron & Budd extensive experience in municipal law special counsel issues, crisis management, whistleblower issues, and workplace investigations. Ms. Strottman's pioneering work on behalf of the City of San Bruno against PG&E regarding a deadly gas line explosion that attracted international news coverage, transformed California's utility regulatory landscape, and raised concerns about utility regulations across the United States.

Before joining Baron & Budd, Ms. Strottman served as Special Counsel to the City of San Bruno, California, handling legal, regulatory and crisis management issues relating to a pipeline explosion and fire that killed eight people, injured 58 others and destroyed or damaged 90 homes in 2010. She served as a member of the City's negotiating team that obtained a \$70 million settlement from PG&E to fund the City's community development trust and \$50 million to pay the City's expenses for physical recovery as well as its participation in state and federal legal and regulatory matters. Ms. Strottman also advised the City on non-profit and governance matters relating to implementing long-term local community support programs.

Ms. Strottman's previous work included serving as lead counsel in complex and high-profile evidentiary hearings before the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) which resulted in a record \$1.6 billion penalty against PG&E, the largest fine ever levied against a utility in the U.S. She also assisted the City in its federal regulatory investigation and hearings about the explosion before the National Transportation Safety Board. In August 2016, a federal court jury convicted PG&E of obstructing the federal probe of the blast and of knowingly violating pipeline safety laws before and after the disaster. In January 2017, a federal judge ordered PG&E to pay a maximum \$3 million fine, complete 10,000 hours of community service and serve five years of probation.

On March 28, 2017, PG&E agreed to pay \$86.5 million in penalties and fines over an overly cozy relationship PG&E officials had with CPUC regulators both before and after the gas explosion. The City of San Bruno was joined in the case by the City of San Carlos, another one of Ms. Strottman's clients, and both cities settled the matter with PG&E for \$6 million.

The information and evidence that Ms. Strottman uncovered and presented in state and federal administrative proceedings also led to claims of corruption and improper dealings resulting in the resignations of the CPUC president and executive director, as well as other senior CPUC staff. In recognition of the importance of Ms. Strottman's work to expose corruption through the City's Public Records Act lawsuit, the City of San Bruno received a James Madison Freedom of Information Award from the Northern California Society of Journalists.

In 2014, Ms. Strottman represented the City of Carmel-by-the-Sea before the CPUC regarding a catastrophic gas pipeline explosion in 2014 that led to a \$10.8 million fine against PG&E. Ms. Strottman assisted Carmel-by-the-Sea officials in successfully demanding that CPUC escalate its initial inquiry into a full-scale regulatory investigation of the blast, which resulted in the discovery that PG&E lost 12 years of gas-line repair records for a large section of the Bay Area. Ms. Strottman appeared before the CPUC on the City's behalf in evidentiary hearings relating to millions of dollars in potential fines against PG&E for record-keeping deficiencies on its gas distribution system in Carmel and elsewhere. In June 2016, the CPUC issued a decision by an Administrative Law Judge which imposed an additional \$24.3 million fine against PG&E.

The County of Calaveras retained Ms. Strottman in 2015 to assist with legal and regulatory matters against PG&E regarding the company's potential involvement in causing the 71,000-acre Butte Fire that year which killed two people and destroyed 921 structures, including 549 homes and 368 outbuildings. Investigations into the source of the fire included possible negligent and improper operation of PG&E's power lines and equipment, as well as failure to maintain vegetation clearance from power lines and electrical equipment.

Ms. Strottman also has significant jury trial experience and handled over 150 felony preliminary hearings while serving as a Deputy District Attorney at the San Mateo District Attorney's Office. She handled felony and misdemeanor cases involving gang crimes and special allegations, embezzlement, identity theft, welfare fraud, elder financial abuse, and three-strike cases. As a result of these experiences, Ms. Strottman understands the complex, sensitive, and ethical issues public agencies and companies face in highly-regulated industries. In addition to her work as a litigator, Ms. Strottman was Vice President at a renowned public relations firm, Van Prooyen Greenfield LLP, where she specialized in developing and implementing litigation and crisis communications marketing and public relations plans for public agencies, law firms, law schools and corporations.

Ms. Strottman has earned numerous honors for her expertise, results and leadership in the legal profession, including "Energy Trailblazers" (2017), "Top Women Lawyers" (2014, 2015, 2017), "Top 100 Lawyers" (2016, 2017), "Top 20 Under 40" (2015), and "Giant Slayer" (2015). These awards highlight Ms. Strottman's unique expertise in high-profile state and federal safety regulatory investigation and enforcement matters relating to the storage, transportation, maintenance and delivery of natural gas, as well as the generation, storage, maintenance and transmission of electric power. Ms. Strottman earned these awards through her tenacious challenging of the status quo at PG&E, for which the Daily Journal recognized her as PG&E's "chief nemesis."

When she is not slaying giants, Ms. Strottman enjoys traveling with her husband and three children. The family loves to ski. She and her husband make their own wine, which likely explains why the family dog is named "Caymus". She has belonged to the same book club for 17 years and is also the school board President

at her children's school. "My law school professors and experiences taught me how to have emotional intelligence, which is something a lot of lawyers don't have," she says. "Being a lawyer is not just about being book smart but also about interacting with people. To me, being a lawyer is about having a passion for the law and for helping people," a virtue Ms. Strottman has made a hallmark of her practice.

The City of San Bruno's City Manager, Connie Jackson, describes Ms. Strottman as a "smart and highly skilled lawyer who understands the law, is able to explain it in layperson's language, and demonstrates the highest level of integrity and an ability to apply the law to achieve her clients' interests." Baron & Budd Shareholder Scott Summy, who leads the firm's Environmental Litigation Group had this to say: "I am pleased to welcome Britt Strottman to Baron & Budd's Environmental Litigation Group. Her experience and tenacity for seeking accountability and taking on complex, high-profile issues is in direct alignment with Baron & Budd's national reputation."

**Scott Summy** is a shareholder at Baron & Budd, one of the largest and oldest firms in the United States that specializes in environmental litigation. Mr. Summy heads the firm's Environmental Litigation Group, which litigates complex environmental contamination cases all over the country. The Group represents public entities in litigation to recover costs of removing chemical contamination from public water supplies, governmental facilities, natural resources, and public property. Through this type of litigation, the Group seeks to shift the costs of remediation to the chemical manufacturers and suppliers responsible for the contamination — and away from public entities and taxpayers.

Mr. Summy and his Group represent large public entities including San Diego, Long Beach, San Jose, Oakland, Berkeley, Portland, Port of Portland, Spokane, Seattle and the State of Washington in environmental and public nuisance actions against Monsanto Company for polluting America's waterways with polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs). He has been appointed a Special Assistant Attorney General for the State of Washington in the case.

Mr. Summy represents the County of Sonoma, the County of Napa, the County of Mendocino, the County of Lake, the County of Ventura, the City of Ventura, the County of Santa Barbara, the City of Santa Barbara, Montecito Water District, Fire Protection Districts and other public entities in both Northern and Southern California in litigation against PG&E and SoCal Edison for damages resulting from the devastating wildfires of 2017. In addition to several public entities, Mr. Summy represents thousands of families and businesses who lost everything due to the negligent maintenance, inspection, and operations of these investor-owned utilities. Mr. Summy also represents Calaveras County in the 2015 Butte Wildfire, including claims for many tens of millions of dollars.

Mr. Summy regularly represents public water providers (e.g., municipalities, water districts, utilities, and school districts) whose water is contaminated by intrusive chemicals. On behalf of these clients, Mr. Summy seeks cost recovery for

treatment facilities, operation and maintenance costs, out-of-pocket expenses, and administrative costs. Mr. Summy also represents private well owners around the country whose wells are contaminated.

The Environmental Litigation Group has represented hundreds of public water providers in litigation arising from contamination of water supplies with MTBE, a gasoline additive. Mr. Summy has recovered significant dollars against major oil companies who decided to blend MTBE into gasoline knowing that it would likely contaminate water supplies. One set of cases involved approximately 150 water providers. Mr. Summy continues to file new MTBE cases across the country and currently represents the State of Vermont and a number of municipalities in new MTBE litigation.

Mr. Summy also represented all public water providers in the United States whose water was contaminated with atrazine, a common agricultural chemical used on corn and other crops. On behalf of these water providers, the Group brought claims against Syngenta, the company that makes atrazine and is aware that its normal use causes drinking water contamination. Mr. Summy negotiated a settlement awarding \$105 million to over 2,000 water providers.

Mr. Summy's experience with environmental litigation led to a leadership role in the litigation arising from the Deepwater Horizon explosion and oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico. In 2010, he was appointed to the Plaintiffs' Steering Committee and Plaintiffs' Executive Committee in the Gulf Oil Spill Multi-District Litigation in the Eastern District of Louisiana. In that capacity, he played a critical role in negotiating a settlement and claim procedure for the tens of thousands of individuals, businesses, and governmental entities injured by the oil spill.

The Group also represents public water providers and other public entities in litigation involving other chemicals that contaminate water supplies and property including TCP, TCE, PCE, and PCBs.

The Group's important work for public water providers has been recognized by the legal community on a number of occasions. His groundbreaking work for California communities affected by MTBE won Mr. Summy and his legal team the "Attorneys of the Year" award from California Lawyer in 2001. And Public Justice twice named Mr. Summy and his team as Finalists for the organization's Trial Lawyer of the Year Award — in 2009, for cases arising from MTBE contamination, and again in 2013, for cases arising from atrazine contamination. Mr. Summy was also included in The Best Lawyers in America (Woodward White, Inc., 2006-2015).

Mr. Summy is licensed to practice law in Texas, North Carolina and New York. He is AV-rated by Martindale Hubbell

**Roland Tellis** is head of Baron & Budd's Class Action Practice Group and manages the Firm's Los Angeles Office. His practice focuses on complex, high-

profile litigation, including consumer class actions, financial fraud, business torts, corporate misconduct, automobile defect, food labeling, false advertising, securities fraud and environmental contamination. He has held leadership roles in numerous multi-state, complex class action cases and has represented clients in many jury trials, including several involving hundreds of millions of dollars. His legal expertise and track record of success has placed him in leadership roles for some of the country's most high-profile cases, including:

- Appointed Co-Lead Counsel in *In re: Wells Fargo Collateral Protection Insurance Litigation*, a multi-state class action involving hundreds of thousands of consumers improperly charged for “forced placed” Collateral Protection Insurance.
- Appointed to Plaintiffs’ Executive Committee in *In re: National Prescription Opiate Litigation*, a multi-state mass tort action filed by governmental entities against the manufacturers and distributors of opioids widely believed to be the largest MDL case in U.S. history.
- Appointed to the Plaintiffs’ Steering Committee in *In re: Volkswagen “Clean Diesel” Marketing, Sales Practices, and Products Liability Litigation*, a multi-state class action involving hundreds of thousands of vehicles equipped with “defeat devices” designed to evade emissions laws. The PSC negotiated a settlement in excess of \$14 billion.
- One of three lawyers appointed to the Plaintiffs’ Steering Committee in *In re: Takata Airbag Products Liability Litigation*, a multi-state class action involving millions of vehicles equipped with a defective airbag inflator resulting in the largest consumer product recall in U.S. history. The PSC negotiated a settlement in excess of \$1.2 billion with certain automakers.
- Lead counsel in *Bias v. Wells Fargo Bank*, a certified nationwide RICO class action involving millions of mortgage loans. Negotiated a \$50 million common fund, non-reversionary settlement.
- Appointed to Plaintiffs’ Executive Committee and Co-Chair of the Class Action Plaintiffs’ Steering Committee in *In re: S. Cal. Gas Leak Cases*, JCCP No. 4861, a case involving the largest methane gas leak in U.S. history.
- Appointed to Plaintiffs’ Steering Committee in *In re: Chrysler-Dodge-Jeep EcoDiesel Marketing, Sales Practices and Products Liability Litigation*, a multi-state class action involving vehicles equipped with “defeat devices” designed to evade emissions laws. Co-Lead counsel in *In re: MyFord Touch Consumer Litigation*, a certified multi-state class action involving hundreds of thousands of vehicles equipped with a defective “infotainment system.
- Appointed to the Executive Committee in *In re: National Prescription Opiate Litigation*, a multi-state mass tort action filed by governmental entities against the manufacturers and distributors of opioids widely believed to be the largest MDL case in U.S. history.

In 2005, Mr. Tellis received commendation from the U.S. Department of Justice and the Federal Bureau of Investigation for his assistance in a successful parallel prosecution of a \$120 million securities Ponzi scheme perpetrated by foreign currency traders. Mr. Tellis also represented the City of Sunnyvale in environmental litigation concerning perchloroethylene contamination of a large

mixed-use development site and the California Water Service Company over the contamination of hundreds of drinking water wells throughout California. Mr. Tellis also represented the owner of a multi-billion dollar commercial real estate portfolio in a lengthy jury trial over claims of an oral partnership and the Screen Actors' Guild and members of its national board in a leadership battle.

Mr. Tellis has become a leader in representing plaintiffs in multidistrict class action litigation. He is lead class counsel in several complex class action cases, including cases in the financial services sector, the automobile industry and the food and beverage arena. His experience exemplifies the depth and breadth of resources that Baron & Budd provides for its clients.

Some of Mr. Tellis' consumer class actions include *Bias et al. v. Wells Fargo Bank*, a class action concerning fraud in the setting of default related bank fees; *Stitt et al. v. Citibank et al.*, putative class action concerning fraud in the setting of default-related bank fees; *Ellis et al. v. JPMorgan Chase et al.*, a putative class action concerning fraud in the setting of default-related banks fee; *Payne et al. v. Bank of America, et al.*, a putative class action involving manipulation of the LIBOR U.S. Dollar rate; *In re: Brazilian Blowout Litigation*, class counsel in the certified class action concerning issues of fraud in connection with the sale of Brazilian Blowout hair products; *Delacruz v. Cytosport, Inc.*, a putative class action concerning false advertising, fraud, and misrepresentations regarding dietary supplement products; *Aarons et al. v. BMW of North America, LLC et al.*, a putative class action concerning premature transmission failure in MINI Cooper vehicles and in *In re: Alexia Foods, Inc. Litigation*, a putative class action concerning false advertising, fraud and misrepresentations concerning frozen food products.

Prior to joining Baron & Budd, Mr. Tellis practiced with the international law firms of Bingham McCutchen LLP and Milbank, Tweed, Hadley & McCloy LLP, where he litigated complex cases on behalf of corporate defendants and tried multi-million dollar cases to verdict.

Mr. Tellis has been named among the *Best Lawyers In America* every year since 2014, a *Super Lawyer* every year since 2006 and was a faculty member of the Practising Law Institute and Chair of its annual program entitled "Taking and Defending Depositions." He was elected to serve on the Board of Governors of the Association of Business Trial Lawyers and was appointed to serve as a Lawyer Representative to the Ninth Circuit Judicial Conference. He was the Chair of the United States District Court for the Central District of California's Attorney Settlement Officer Panel Committee and was appointed by the Chief Judge of the Central District of California to the Board of Trustees for the Central District's Attorney Admission Fund. Along the way, he has devoted time to the pro bono representations of indigent clients and has mentored young lawyers and law students in association with the South Asian Bar Association.

Mr. Tellis served on the Board of Governors of the Association of Business Trial Lawyers and is a Lawyer Representative to the Ninth Circuit Judicial Conference.

Mr. Tellis is also Co-Chair of the Settlement Panel of the United States District Court for the Central District of California.

Mr. Tellis is a faculty member of the Practicing Law Institute and was Chair of an annual program entitled "Taking and Defending Depositions." He was recognized as a "Rising Star" from 2004-2007 (Thompson Reuters) and a "Super Lawyer" from 2008-2012 (Thompson Reuters).

Mr. Tellis earned a J.D. from the University of California, Hastings College of Law in 1996 and a B.S. from the University of California, Los Angeles in 1992.

#### OF COUNSEL ATTORNEYS

**Alicia Butler** has worked with Baron & Budd in numerous roles, ranging from major toxic exposure cases to widesweeping consumer cases. Currently, Ms. Butler focuses on pharmaceutical litigation, as well whistleblower/qui tam cases and Medicare fraud cases.

Previously, Ms. Butler worked on a variety of toxic exposure cases with Baron & Budd that impacted thousands of people harmed by dangerous toxins. She represented hundreds of residents in a Pennsylvania community contaminated by radiation from local nuclear fuel facilities. She has also represented more than 1,500 workers suffering from health problems associated with arsenic, asbestos, benzene, beryllium, lead, mercury, and silica exposure at a plant in West Virginia. Ms. Butler has experience working with public entities, as she helped achieve a major settlement on behalf of the City of Santa Monica to hold the oil industry accountable for MTBE contamination in the local water supply.

Ms. Butler currently serves as a pro bono legal adviser to the Workers' Defense Project in Austin, Texas in the area of occupational safety and health issues.

Ms. Butler earned her J.D., with honors, from the University of Texas School of Law. She also holds a B.A. in English and Sociology from Rice University, where she graduated magna cum laude.

**S. Ann Saucer** is an Of Counsel lawyer with Baron & Budd. She joined the firm in 2000 with almost a decade of litigation experience behind her in Louisiana and Texas, the previous five years of which were with the Dallas-based law firm Silber Pearlman, P.C.

Her practice focuses on appellate advocacy and briefing in complex litigation. She has successfully argued before the United States Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals, the United States Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, the Texas Court of Appeals, Dallas, and federal and state trial courts across the country.

Ms. Saucer was a key author of the federal court briefing defending the rights of Fen Phen victims when the American Home Products Corp. (AHP) class action

settlement was renegotiated. She has been a keynote speaker at Fen Phen litigation seminars.

Ms. Saucer has also spoken and published articles on federal procedure issues. Her background covers the spectrum of environmental law, consumer protection, product liability and toxic torts.

Ms. Saucer graduated first in her class from Loyola University School of Law, New Orleans, in 1991. During that time she edited articles for the Loyola Law Review. After graduation she clerked for the Honorable Henry A. Politz, Chief Judge of the United States Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals, before joining a private practice in 1992.

After serving as a shareholder at both Silber Pearlman and Baron & Budd, Ms. Saucer now works in our commercial section, where she devotes her time to arguing complex legal issues in federal and state court, writing legal briefs, conducting legal research, and strategizing.

**Irma Espino MacLean**, an of counsel attorney with Baron & Budd's Environmental Litigation Group, is proud to work for Baron & Budd, one of the largest and oldest firms in the United States that specializes in environmental litigation. As a member of the Environmental Litigation Group, Ms. Espino MacLean represents private and public entities in litigation to recover costs of removing chemical contaminants from public water supplies, governmental facilities, natural resources and public property. In this role, Ms. Espino MacLean is a tenacious advocate for clients impacted by environmental disasters and chemical contamination.

Contamination affects a broad spectrum of victims. As such, Ms. Espino MacLean represents a variety of private clients including real estate developers and small businesses, as well as publicly traded companies and others whose businesses and multimillion dollar investments suffered damage due to environmental contamination.

Through her tireless advocacy, Irma Espino MacLean fights from the start of case investigation through completion of the appeals process to ensure a satisfactory resolution for those harmed by environmental contamination. She has extensive experience in mass torts, multi-district litigation and class-action proceedings. In 2016, the Environmental Litigation Group and Ms. Espino MacLean were part of a legal consortium that reached a \$1 billion settlement to compensate cities, counties and local governments across the Gulf Coast for economic damages caused by the 2010 Gulf Oil Spill.

Through her work with the Group, Ms. Espino MacLean also represents public water providers and other entities in litigation involving chemicals that contaminate water supplies and property, including trichloroethylene (TCE), a nonflammable, colorless and highly toxic solvent, and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), a group of hazardous lubricants used in electrical equipment. In addition



to her tenacity as a litigator, Irma Espino MacLean's creativity in problem-solving has been an asset to her clients in helping to achieve satisfactory resolution of their cases. Most recently, Ms. Espino MacLean was part of a team that successfully attained a multi-million dollar settlement in an environmental contamination matter before a lawsuit was even filed.

Ms. Espino MacLean earned her juris doctor from the University of Miami School of Law in 2007, graduating cum laude, and her bachelor in arts from the University of Texas at Austin in 2002 with high honors. She has served as Chair of Communications for the Georgia Association of Women Lawyers (GAWL) and on the Board of Directors for the Georgia Bar Association's Young Lawyers Division. Ms. Espino MacLean has litigated cases in several federal courts, including the Fifth Circuit, Eleventh Circuit and Eleventh Circuit Courts of Appeals.

When she isn't fighting for the rights of her clients, Irma Espino MacLean enjoys testing her mettle with outdoor fitness challenges. She recalls a hike up Table Mountain in Cape Town, South Africa, as particularly dynamic. "My joy of the great outdoors reminds me why I fight so hard for preservation of the environment in my work".

#### **FIRM ASSOCIATES**

**Melinda Arbuckle** works in the Employment Law Group of Baron & Budd, representing workers who were not fairly paid or were not given proper notice that they would be let go from their jobs. As a former law clerk in the Northern District of Texas, Ms. Arbuckle enjoys the challenge of Federal employment cases. Now an associate attorney at Baron & Budd, she routinely handles complex multi-party and class action cases.

Ms. Arbuckle's practice with Baron & Budd's Employment Law Group centers on litigating cases that make a difference not only in the lives of specific individuals, but also in shaping policy for the better protection of workers at large. In trying cases under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and Worker Adjustment Retraining and Notification ("WARN") Act, Ms. Arbuckle values her role as an advocate for employees to be treated equitably.

Ms. Arbuckle received her Juris Doctor at Southern Methodist University. She chose law school because of her affinity for resolving problems. "I love the puzzle of complex cases. Learning rules, understanding complexities and simplifying them is my passion." While in law school, Ms. Arbuckle was a research assistant to Civil Procedure Professor Elizabeth Thornburg. She studied issues and assisted in the preparation of coursework relevant to the litigation surrounding the BP Oil Spill and Multidistrict Litigation generally.

After law school, Ms. Arbuckle worked for Baron & Budd prior to clerking for Federal Judge W. Royal Furgeson. While at Baron & Budd the first time, she represented clients who were harmed by asbestos products. The ability to help

those whose health had been detrimentally affected while working was extremely rewarding. During her clerkship, she drafted orders of the court regarding employment cases, particularly regarding workplace discrimination. She also observed and assisted with the Multidistrict Litigation Panel's hearing at Southern Methodist University, as Judge Furgeson was head of the Panel at the time. Ms. Arbuckle is pleased to return to Baron & Budd as an associate attorney. "I always knew I wanted to represent individuals, not companies. My clients are people who may believe they have only a quiet voice in law and in life. It's my mission to make sure their voices are clearly heard."

**Danae N. Benton** joined the Pharmaceutical Litigation Group at the Dallas offices of Baron & Budd in 2018. Throughout her career, she has focused her practice on pharmaceutical and medical device litigation, representing individuals whose lives have been egregiously affected by defective implants, harmful medical devices and dangerous prescription drugs.

Growing up on a ranch in a small central Texas town, Ms. Benton's parents taught her the value of hard work, integrity and humility. She reflects that as an adult she has fused the small-town values with which she grew up with her own "modern style" of activism. "I like to think of myself as a fighter for justice. I take pride in my work and feel honored to join a team that fights to protect what is right. Those values resonate with me and impact my law practice. The client comes first."

Ms. Benton earned her undergraduate degree from Baylor University in Waco, Texas, before graduating from Western Michigan University Cooley Law School in Lansing, Michigan, where she made the Dean's Honor List multiple times. While pursuing her legal education, Ms. Benton was an active member of Moot Court and competed on the school's National team.

At Baron & Budd, Ms. Benton is involved in every aspect of the client experience; from case acquisition and marketing, through client education and empowerment, to fostering compassionate client-staff relationships. From the start of her career, Ms. Benton has been dedicated to ensuring that her clients receive the highest level of representation, and to that end was named one of the Top Lawyers in Houston for 2015 by H Texas Magazine.

As a member of Texas Trial Lawyers Association's (TTLA) Board of Advocates, Ms. Benton works to protect the rights of plaintiffs in our civil justice system. She also serves as a member of TTLA's Women's Caucus and was a past Chair of TTLA's Houston Diversity Committee. Additionally, she serves as a member of the Board of Directors for the Houston Trial Lawyers Association (HTLA) and was a past Chair of the HTLA's Women's Caucus. In 2016, she received HTLA's Rising Star award. Ms. Benton is a council member of the State Bar of Texas *Women and the Law* section.

In addition to her work within the legal community, Ms. Benton is a proud supporter of the Baylor Bear Foundation and the Baylor University Scholarship Fund. She is an avid football fan who holds season tickets to the Bears' games.

Ms. Benton and her Sphynx, Gizmo, enjoy their frequent travels between Dallas and Houston, Waco and Austin to visit family, friends, and participate in the many legal support groups she belongs to.

**Jeremiah Boling** works at the Louisiana office of Baron & Budd. He is a member of the firm's Mesothelioma Litigation Group. Originally from the South, Mr. Boling is a Georgia native. He attended Mississippi State University where he received a degree in Political Science. He then moved to Louisiana to attend law school at Tulane University. During law school, he served as managing editor of the Sports Lawyers Journal.

After finishing his law degree, Mr. Boling began his career at Barrios Kingsdorf & Casteix where he gained experience working on Chinese drywall, Actos and Vioxx litigation. Now Mr. Boling is proud to be a part of the Baron & Budd team where he can continue giving a voice to those who have been victimized by the asbestos industry.

**Laura Cabutto** first joined Baron & Budd's litigation practice in 1999, representing victims of asbestos exposure, and has been advocating for clients harmed by exposure to asbestos ever since. The drive to obtain justice for innocent victims of corporate greed that she honed as a young attorney has continued to fuel her passion for representing individuals who may not have the resources to help themselves.

When Laura Cabutto joined Baron & Budd's litigation team in 1999, her practice concentrated on personal injury, product liability, toxic torts and wrongful death actions involving individuals who had been exposed to asbestos. Since 2005, she has focused exclusively on mesothelioma patients stricken by the aggressive and always fatal asbestos cancer. Mrs. Cabutto has managed and litigated cases in jurisdictions throughout the country.

Mrs. Cabutto returned to Baron & Budd in 2017 to continue her dedication to protecting those who have been harmed by companies that profit from failing to ensure the safety of others. She is honored to represent individuals and families through one of the most medically, emotionally and financially challenging times in their lives.

Laura Cabutto graduated in 1993 from the J. William Fulbright College of Arts & Science at the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville with a Bachelor of Arts degree in political science. In 1996 she earned her Juris Doctor from the Thurgood Marshall School of Law at Texas Southern University in Houston. When she is not busy at work representing mesothelioma patients, Mrs. Cabutto enjoys spending time with her husband and their 11- and 13-year-old sons, all of whom share a passion for baseball and other athletics in which they can engage as a family.

**Chris Campbell** joined Baron & Budd's Dallas Environmental Litigation Group in August of 2016. He works with our west coast environmental team representing

municipalities harmed by hazardous chemicals, such as polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and Trichloroethylene (TCEs), which have been allowed to leach into the soil and community drinking water systems by unscrupulous corporations.

Chris Campbell's affinity for the environment began at an early age, as he explored the riverbanks near his childhood home in Wichita, Kansas and later the wooded expanses near his Fort Worth area backyard, developing a love of the outdoors. After graduating from the University of North Texas in 2007 with a B.S. in Criminal Justice, Mr. Campbell enrolled in the Texas Wesleyan School of Law (now Texas A & M University School of Law), where he became vice president of the Sports and Entertainment Law Society and did pro bono work for Legal Aid of Northwest Texas.

After obtaining his law degree, Mr. Campbell honed his litigating skills by working in probate and estate planning, elder law, breach of contract, and employment law. He worked for a time at a firm in Corpus Christi representing vehicular accident clients whose cases had been turned down by other firms. Through his diligent and thoughtful investigation (talking to witnesses and police officers, carefully examining the opposing party's reckless driving and cell phone records), Mr. Campbell was able to establish solid cases and secure recoveries for many of those clients. "It felt good to know that I had obtained sizeable compensation for the suffering my clients had undergone through months of physical therapy and the stress of not knowing how they would pay their medical bills" he says. Mr. Campbell also gained experience in antitrust law, working on a Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) probe into a major oil and gas company executive who was being investigated for possible fraudulent business activities.

It was while Chris Campbell was working in Corpus Christi that he first experienced what it was like to live in an area where the municipal water was not fit to drink – or bathe or wash clothes in. Over the course of two years, from 2015 to 2016, the City of Corpus Christi was forced to issue multiple "water advisories" warning its citizens to boil their drinking water because it was contaminated with bacteria, including on one occasion E. coli, and on another by an asphalt emulsifier called indulin AA86, which no amount of boiling, freezing, filtering or treating could eradicate.

It was this exposure to the hardships a community suffers when a resource as vital and elemental as drinking water becomes contaminated that led Mr. Campbell to seek employment with Baron & Budd's Environmental Litigation Group. Now he coordinates discovery and e-discovery projects for our west coast environmental litigation team, helping the Group represent municipalities harmed by PCBs, TCE, TCB, MTBE and atrazine in groundwater and municipal water systems. He also leads document review teams hired by Baron & Budd on a contract basis.

When he is not fighting to clean up the water, air and soil, Chris Campbell still enjoys being outdoors more than anything else. As a youth he organized neighborhood sports leagues in football, baseball and basketball. He is a rabid

Texas Rangers baseball fan, traveling throughout the country to attend games whenever possible. But protecting the environment is never far from his mind. "As a boy I played in the woods near my home, exploring the wilderness and building forts. Now, I work to undermine the fortresses built by big corporations to shield themselves from liability for contaminating our precious resources."

**Brittany Clark** works closely with clients suffering from serious health problems after using various pharmaceuticals, such as Risperdal, Lipitor, Testosterone therapy drugs, Zolofit, GranuFlo, transvaginal mesh and several others. Ms. Clark remains at the forefront of the firm's pharmaceutical litigation practice, often spearheading investigation into new drugs or devices that may be causing serious physical harm to patients – and most importantly, what Baron & Budd can do to help these people.

Prior to her work at Baron & Budd, Ms. Clark represented tens of thousands of patients suffering from harmful pharmaceutical products against numerous multi-billion dollar pharmaceutical corporations. She worked closely with countless clients and their families throughout the litigation process to fully understand each client's needs, as well as fulfill the legal needs of each client's case.

Ms. Clark graduated *cum laude* with her J.D. from the Thurgood Marshall School of Law at Texas Southern University in Houston. She also holds a B.A. in Business Administration from Baylor University.

**Sterling Cluff** joined Baron & Budd after eight years of defending complex commercial, consumer and real estate cases, including multiple high-profile class actions and real estate cases. Sterling Cluff was excited to join Baron & Budd's mission to "protect what's right" as a part of the Firm's class action practice in our Los Angeles Office.

Sterling Cluff works in Baron & Budd's Los Angeles office, where he takes on large-scale litigation as a member of the Firm's class action practice. He brings an astute knowledge of complex California commercial, consumer and real estate law to our expert team.

Prior to joining Baron & Budd, Sterling Cluff worked in the Class Action and Commercial Litigation practice groups of a Los Angeles boutique law firm. There, he was exposed to complex commercial and real estate litigation, consumer claims and high-profile class action lawsuits involving millions of plaintiffs. In the process of defending large national class actions, Sterling Cluff saw firsthand how defendants can take advantage of individual consumers and the benefit that individuals gain in their fight against formidable corporations by banding together to form classes with the force of "what's right" behind them. Mr. Cluff's experience re-ignited his desire to help people who have suffered at the hands of unscrupulous corporations obtain just reparation for their distress.

During his undergraduate studies, Sterling Cluff was a witness to the overreach of authorities imposing their will on an individual, despite a presumption of innocence until proven guilty, by pressing exaggerated and superfluous charges, issuing arrest warrants and conducting redundant and harassing searches. The overbearing actions of the prosecuting agency, which caused anguish and hardship for the individual and his family, brought home to Mr. Cluff the importance of having skilled and aggressive advocacy to protect individuals' rights. This formative experience instilled in Mr. Cluff a keen desire to ensure that the rights of all individuals are protected.

During law school, Sterling Cluff was fortunate to work on the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals for Judge Arthur L. Alarcon, Sen., prior to his retirement. Judge Alarcon instilled in all of his clerks and externs strong ethics and a high regard for professionalism, with the goal of ensuring that every person coming before the court receive proper justice. Mr. Cluff heeded Judge Alcaron's mandate to use his legal training to ensure that individuals were not taken advantage of by powerful entities and were justly compensated when entities overstepped the boundary of legal business conduct. Throughout his career, these life events have intensified Sterling Cluff's drive to protect his clients from unprincipled individuals and ruthless corporations and to aggressively and efficiently pursue compensation for the harm they inflict.

After a full day at work, Sterling Cluff enjoys surfing in summer and snowboarding in winter. When he is at home, he likes to spend time in his garden growing vegetables and native California plants.

**Chris Cude** joined the Dallas office of Baron & Budd's Pharmaceutical Litigation Group in August 2017. He represents individuals whose lives have been detrimentally impacted by dangerous prescription drugs and defective implants and other medical devices.

Chris Cude first experienced the leverage many large corporations exert over consumers when he worked in medical sales prior to attending law school. Mr. Cude observed health care professionals pressured to prescribe "gray market" drugs (prescriptions manufactured for foreign markets that do not meet FDA requirements which, in turn, are then sold in the U.S.) because their patients and practices could not afford the sky-high prices some pharmaceutical companies charge for their drugs. Baron & Budd eventually provided a perfect platform for Mr. Cude to apply his exposure to corporate pharmaceutical wrongdoing in helping patients get the expert representation they need to obtain compensation for their injuries.

Mr. Cude received his B.A. in Business Administration from Baylor University, and subsequently earned his J.D. with honors from the University of North Texas Dallas College of Law, where he made the Dean's List every semester. While in law school, Mr. Cude interned for the Honorable Ed Kinkeade of the U.S. District

Court for the Northern District of Texas. While there, he evaluated decisions from the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals to establish leading cases in Kinkeade & McCulloch's Texas Penal Code Annotated. He also summarized 84th Texas legislative session bills for updated analysis.

In addition to an internship with the North Texas Tollway Authority, where he conducted extensive legal research on issues facing the agency, and an externship with the U.S. Trustee, where he worked to ensure bankruptcy filers did not abuse the system, Chris Cude found time during law school to volunteer with the Human Rights Initiative, an international group dedicated to helping abuse victims forge a path to safety, liberty, and opportunity. He also led a weekly mentorship program alongside local attorneys to raise awareness about domestic violence, and served as Acquisitions Editor for *On the Cusp*, the College of Law's digital law journal published by members of the UNT Dallas Law Review.

Outside of work, Mr. Cude excels in leisure sports involving a minimal amount of athleticism, including darts and shuffleboard. Additionally, he enjoys spending as much time as possible outdoors with friends and family, preferably on a patio or the golf course.

**Rebecca Currier** is an associate in the Employment Litigation Group at Baron & Budd, where she is responsible for advocating in collective and class actions lawsuits for clients to obtain payment of wages rightfully owed under federal and state laws. As a proponent for the protection of workers and their pay, Ms. Currier strives to ensure that hard working people have a strong voice in the arena of complex labor and employment litigation.

Rebecca Currier has always been intrigued with the way the world works, literally. In furtherance of her lifelong interest in the history of labor economics, Ms. Currier has traveled the globe to seek a deeper understanding of how business relationships are cultivated and how they affect our world economy.

After obtaining a degree in Industrial and Labor Relations from Cornell University in 2004, Ms. Currier chose to start her career with an internationally dispersed firm, where she worked with executive leadership to develop and implement human resource policy. Her experience working in corporate human resources sparked her interest in obtaining a law degree with a focus on employment law.

Ms. Currier began attending law school in the evenings while advancing her corporate career. In 2010, she graduated with her Juris Doctor from Texas Wesleyan School of Law (now Texas A&M School of Law), all while serving on the Law Review, placing in the top ten in Moot Court competitions, and completing a judicial externship. With Texas law license in hand, Ms. Currier left the corporate world to return to the town of her childhood in upstate New York where she prepared for the New York Bar exam. Following successful stints at a couple of civil litigation firms, Ms. Currier launched her own firm, where she established a profitable practice. Her practice concentrated on the areas of law that present everyday challenges for many people. Ms. Currier assisted individuals on

issues involving land-use violations, evictions, right of way disputes, land conveyances, probate, family law disputes, and criminal charges.

In 2014, after obtaining several favorable trial verdicts as a solo practitioner, Ms. Currier chose to relocate to Dallas, Texas with the intention of reprising her original interest in the practice of employment law. Ms. Currier returned to the Dallas-Fort Worth area to seek out a position where she could leverage her well-rounded experience in law and her industrial and labor relations background.

At Baron & Budd, Ms. Currier has a substantial motion practice in Federal Court over Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) wage and hour violations, Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) Act violations, and procedural issues such as class certifications and discovery disputes. Among other areas of labor law, she takes special interest in gender equality issues such as her representation of Dallas Cowboy cheerleaders in their quest for equal and fair compensation as female athletes.

Despite an enthusiastic devotion to her clients at Baron & Budd, Ms. Currier's global interests persist. In furtherance of her efforts to learn how the goals of those in power impact the world economy and our labor laws, she has visited six of the seven continents. Ms. Currier cultivates her interest in other civilizations by traveling internationally whenever she can. "I love experiencing other cultures: the food, the language, the art and architecture. The history of the laws by which other cultures govern themselves is a window into a deeper understanding of the world in which we live."

**Chris Edwards** joined Baron & Budd's Dallas office in August 2016. He works in the Environmental Litigation Group, assisting primarily in cases related to contamination of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) in school buildings, stormwater systems and natural resources. Prior to joining the firm, Mr. Edwards litigated consumer law cases and also managed complex electronic discovery projects.

Mr. Edwards has always enjoyed hiking, camping, hunting and fishing. As an ardent outdoor enthusiast, he has a deep appreciation for the lands and waters in which he spends almost all his time away from work. It is his fervent passion for the outdoors, combined with a keen affinity for public service, that drew him to Baron & Budd's mission.

Mr. Edwards was born and raised in Austin, Texas. He earned his law degree from Texas Wesleyan School of Law and also holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration from Texas Tech University. During law school, he clerked for the Appellate Division of the Tarrant County Criminal District Attorney's Office and also for Shannon, Gracey, Ratliff & Miller, LLP.

Mr. Edwards enjoys giving back to the communities in which he lives and works by advocating for clients through the Dallas Volunteer Attorney Program. He has represented clients pro bono in family law and probate matters and derives much



satisfaction from helping people in need and positively impacting the lives of others.

**David Fernandes** joined Baron & Budd's California office in August 2014. He represents clients across the United States in class action litigation involving automobile safety, fraudulent banking practices, and deceptive advertising.

Born and raised in Los Angeles, California, Mr. Fernandes earned his J.D. from Pepperdine University School of Law. He also holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration from the University of Southern California. While at Pepperdine University, Mr. Fernandes served as president of the Student Bar Association from 2010 to 2011. During law school, he also clerked at the Children's Law Center of California, which serves as appointed counsel for abused and neglected children who come under protection of the Los Angeles county juvenile dependency court systems.

Mr. Fernandes was heavily involved with Pepperdine's Geoffrey H. Palmer Center for Entrepreneurship and the Law, where he was an integral member of the Palmer Center's first Student Advisory Board from 2009 to 2010 and served as the board's vice-chairman from 2010 to 2011. Prior to joining Baron & Budd, he spent several years at a mid-size firm, representing clients in a variety of consumer fraud cases and residential construction defect actions.

Despite being well-beyond his law school years and fully involved in a rewarding career with Baron & Budd, Mr. Fernandes finds time to mentor first-year law students at his alma mater. As a preceptor at Pepperdine Law School, he works with a new group of first-year law students every year to provide mentorship regarding a variety of student decisions, from resume preparation to interviewing techniques. By giving his time to these students, Mr. Fernandes uses his experience to prepare future colleagues for successful entry into the legal field. "Providing substantive feedback and support to these promising law students is very rewarding and allows me to give back to the school which shaped my world view about the legal field and what is possible".

David Fernandes has committed himself to a life of purpose, service and leadership. His passion for public service and social responsibility drew him to Baron & Budd's mission.

**Farsheed Fozouni** is an associate in Baron & Budd's Employment Law Group, where he advocates for hard working people who are not properly paid for their labor or are let go from their jobs without fair notice. Mr. Fozouni received his law degree in 2015 from Southern Methodist University's Dedman School of Law in Dallas, Texas, where he served as the executive editor of the SMU Law Review.

Farsheed Fozouni joined Baron & Budd's Employment Law Group in 2016 because he felt a strong desire to help ordinary people fight for their hard-earned compensation and to protect workers from unlawful termination without notice. "I love representing industrious people who are the backbone of our country's

prosperity, and that prosperity derives in large part from receiving the proper compensation and continued employment these workers deserve.”

Mr. Fozouni did his undergraduate work at Austin College, where he received a bachelor’s degree in international relations. Though he spent most of his childhood and early college years planning to go to medical school, a sudden change of passion in wanting to advocate for people led him to law school, a decision he has never regretted. Mr. Fozouni received his law degree from the Southern Methodist University Dedman School of Law in Texas, where he won awards for his legal research and writing skills, as well as for his advocacy and speaking abilities.

While in law school, Mr. Fozouni served as Executive Editor of the SMU Law Review Association, a position to which he was elected to create and administer the writing competition that would select the next year’s staff editors. In addition to participating in various academic events such as the New York City Bar Association’s National Moot Court Competition, Mr. Fozouni interned for the Honorable Richard Schell of the Eastern District of Texas. This experience convinced him that litigation was the only path forward for his career.

A Dallas native, born and raised, Farsheed Fozouni is a first generation Iranian-American, fluent in Farsi, who is deeply passionate about his cultural roots and heritage. He remains actively engaged in the Iranian-American community and loves to travel. He is proud to join Baron & Budd’s team of dedicated advocates for the rights of workers.

**Bryan Green** devotes his practice to the representation of individuals and families who have suffered catastrophic injuries and the loss of loved ones as a result of accidents involving commercial motor vehicles. His in-depth understanding of the trucking industry, particularly from a litigation and legal standpoint, is an asset to his clients that separates Baron & Budd from other law firms.

Bryan Green joined the trucking litigation department at Baron & Budd in August 2015 where he serves as lead counsel in numerous cases involving catastrophic injuries and wrongful deaths. Simply put, he represents individuals and families who have been badly hurt by the wrongful acts of others, aggressively pursues justice for them, and ensures wrongdoers are held accountable.

Mr. Green brings to the table a wealth of knowledge of the trucking industry, particularly from a legal and litigation standpoint, as he previously spent years representing commercial drivers and trucking companies on the defense side. This experience gives him a unique perspective and understanding when it comes to case investigation and analysis and identifying breaches of the duties and standards of care owed by those in the trucking and commercial transportation industry. He uses that knowledge and experience to advance his clients’ cases and enhance the value of their claims. Mr. Green is also an accomplished trial attorney, having tried dozens of cases to verdict in courts throughout Texas.

In addition to trucking litigation, Mr. Green has extensive experience dealing with drunk driving accidents and the liability of bars and other dram shops for the unlawful service of alcohol to obviously intoxicated individuals, as well as the liability of governmental entities and police departments for the excessive use of force and violation of civil rights by law enforcement officers.

Mr. Green graduated from Texas Tech School of Law in 2009 and obtained his Texas law license that same year. He is also admitted to practice law in the U.S. District Courts for the Northern, Southern, Eastern, and Western Districts of Texas and is a member of the State Bar of Texas and the Dallas Bar Association. Prior to law school, he received his B.A. in International Studies from the University of Denver where he was a 2003 Academic All-Conference selection for the university's NCAA Division I Men's Soccer team.

When not practicing law, Mr. Green enjoys spending time with his family, is an avid fan of the Dallas Mavericks, and is a member of the Zion Lutheran School Board, currently serving as its Chairman.

**Matthew Haynie** is an attorney in Baron & Budd's Pharmaceutical Group, where he represents individuals who have suffered serious injuries after taking a dangerous prescription drug or having a defective medical device implanted. His litigation experience stems from cases involving transvaginal mesh, testosterone therapy, Risperdal, Xarelto, and several other prescription drugs and medical devices. Though Mr. Haynie developed a keen interest in representing mass tort plaintiffs in pharmaceutical litigation while he was attending law school, he knew early in life that he wanted to dedicate his career to helping others.

As an undergraduate student, Mr. Haynie interned for Andrew Laming, a Queensland House Representative in the Parliament of Australia, who was instrumental in gaining access to healthcare for indigenous Australians. Mr. Haynie also worked on an award-winning documentary about exiled Tibetans living in refugee camps and monasteries across India. Both of these encounters opened his eyes to the atrocities human beings experience and strengthened his resolve to pursue a career in law that would allow him to seek justice for those who are injured by the wrongful acts of others.

Mr. Haynie graduated with his Juris Doctor from Southern Methodist University's Dedman School of Law in Dallas, Texas. He also holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science and Journalism from the University of Arkansas, where he graduated magna cum laude and was a recipient of the Senior Honor Citation, an award given to the top graduating male and female student in each class.

**Jason Julius** has been an attorney in Baron & Budd's San Diego office since 2017. His practice centers on representing injured plaintiffs in toxic tort litigation, focusing primarily on contamination caused by Trichloroethylene (TCE), Trichloropropane (TCP), and Polychlorinated Biphenyl (PCB). Prior to joining the firm, Jason's practice focused on litigation of elder abuse claims, both physical

and financial, as well as personal injury, trust and probate, construction defect, and employment law matters.

Jason Julius cares deeply about the environment. That is what compelled him to join Baron & Budd's Environmental Litigation Group in 2017. Bringing the polluters and contaminators of our precious natural spaces to justice is what drives Mr. Julius' passion every day.

In 2002, Mr. Julius completed his undergraduate education at the California Polytechnic University San Luis Obispo, where he obtained his Bachelor of Arts degree in Business Administration with a dual concentration in management and marketing. He was an active member of the Cal Poly chapter of the American Marketing Association and served on the board as chapter representative to the AMA national conference. Following graduation, Mr. Julius worked in the private sector for several years before attending law school.

Jason Julius obtained his Juris Doctor, cum laude, from California Western School of Law in 2007. While enrolled, he was named to the Dean's List, was a board member of the Entertainment & Sports Law Society, and participated in international law programs in Prague, Czech Republic, and London, England. Mr. Julius is an active member of the San Diego County Bar Association, Consumer Attorneys of San Diego, and Consumer Attorneys of California. His time away from work is spent enjoying the beautiful Southern California weather with his wife and three children.

**Peter Klausner** is an attorney at Baron and Budd, specializing in consumer class actions cases involving unfair and deceptive practices. Over the course of his career, he has handled cases involving toxic torts, birth injuries, auto defects, surgical implantation devices, banking and mortgage frauds, pharmaceuticals, and wrongful deaths.

Peter Klausner has spent the entirety of his career representing and helping to restore the victims of fraud, malpractice and negligence. He has advocated on behalf of numerous injured clients at all phases of litigation, including multiple jury trials that have gone to verdict. The breadth of his career has spanned cases involving banking fraud, auto-defects, surgical implantation devices, hazardous materials (PCBs, lead, ethylene/propylene glycol ethers, tetragenic solvents), big pharma and birth injuries. More importantly, Mr. Klausner has had the honor of appearing in court while standing next to hard-working men and women from all over the country who would otherwise have found themselves overmatched by the moneyed interests that harmed them and now deny responsibility.

Mr. Klausner obtained his undergraduate degree from the University of Southern California and earned his J.D. from Loyola Law School of Los Angeles. In his second year at Loyola, he competed on behalf of the school's prestigious mock trial team, winning the 2009 AAJ regional tournament, while also serving as a chair of his school's Public Interest Law Forum, where he helped disadvantaged Los Angeles residents obtain their public assistance benefits. In his final year, Mr.

Klausner interned at the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office (hardcore gang division), while simultaneously competing on Loyola's Moot Court team, during which time he was ranked as one of the top three oralists in the nation at the ABA's 2010 National Moot Court Competition.

Following law school, Mr. Klausner worked as an associate at Waters, Kraus & Paul, LLP, where he represented numerous victims of toxic exposures and faulty surgical devices. In one such instance, he obtained a multi-million dollar verdict from a San Diego jury on behalf of a technician who had been exposed to asbestos while serving in the United States Navy. In addition, he obtained several multi-million dollar settlements in cases involving birth defects that resulted from mothers' exposure to industrial solvents, while also litigating on behalf of cancer survivors whose illnesses could be linked to PCBs manufactured by the Monsanto Company.

Mr. Klausner has continued handling cases in numerous fields, but always involving consumers and victims who have been injured through no fault of their own, and who would otherwise find themselves powerless in the fight against big businesses, negligent corporations and well-financed adversaries. He currently specializes in banking fraud, auto-defects and big pharma.

When not practicing law, Mr. Klausner enjoys marathon training, going to the movies, watching Laker games and exploring the cosmos with his telescope.

**Sangeeta Kuruppillai** first worked for Baron & Budd in 2010 as an attorney in our Environmental Litigation group, reviewing discovery documents for cases involving atrazine, an herbicide used for weed control in farm crops which has been linked to prostate and breast cancer and is thought to be causing declines of endangered amphibians. In 2012, Ms. Kuruppillai worked on pharmaceutical cases related to the drug Avandia, thought to increase the risk of serious heart problems in diabetes patients for whom the drug was prescribed. She specializes in the electronic review (eDiscovery) of documents in mass tort litigation.

Ms. Kuruppillai spent twelve years as an Assistant City Attorney at the Dallas City Attorney's Office in Texas, defending city management in race and other employment discrimination cases. She also worked as a Claims Attorney for Great American Insurance Group. Before joining Baron & Budd, Ms. Kuruppillai also worked as Manager of the Civil Division and Chief Deputy in the Dallas County Clerk's Office. At Baron & Budd, she also worked for a year and a half in our Employment group, preparing motions and performing pre-trial and trial work relating to the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), using the skills she honed as an assistant city attorney to represent clients at Baron & Budd who have been hurt by large companies.

In late 2014, Ms. Kuruppillai re-joined Baron & Budd's Environmental Litigation Group, where she currently reviews discovery documents for the MyFord Touch litigation, an in-car communication system thought to put drivers at risk of an accident, and Trichloropropane (TCP) cases, representing victims of groundwater

and soil contamination in several California cities. “I enjoy helping put the pieces of a puzzle together to establish a case against offenders of mass tort, like water contamination or defective products”.

Sangeeta Kuruppillai chose a career in law because she wanted to make a constructive difference in people’s lives. Her work in our Environmental Litigation Group allows Sangeeta to make a significant impact in the lives of our clients and to positively affect our fragile environment at the same time.

**Brett Land** is an associate in Baron & Budd’s Environmental Litigation Group. Since joining the Group in 2014, he has represented more than a hundred individuals and public entities harmed by toxic contaminants.

An integral member of the team representing the cities of San Diego, Long Beach, San Jose, Oakland, Berkeley, Portland, Port of Portland, Spokane, Seattle and the State of Washington, Mr. Land seeks to hold Monsanto Company responsible for pollution of American waterbodies caused by their polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), a group of hazardous chemicals used in a number of products, including caulk, paint, and electrical equipment. He has also represented a number of schools whose building products were contaminated by Monsanto Company’s PCBs.

Through his work with the Environmental Litigation Group, Mr. Land also represents public water providers and private well owners in litigation involving chemicals that contaminate water bodies and property, including trichloroethylene (TCE), a nonflammable, colorless and highly toxic solvent, and perfluorinated chemicals (PFCs), such as GenX, which was touted by its makers as a “safer” alternative to the original PFC, known as C8. Mr. Land represents private well owners and public water providers in lawsuits against DuPont and Chemours to address those companies’ pollution of the Cape Fear River and North Carolina drinking wells with PFCs. Mr. Land is also part of the team representing the State of Vermont and State of Rhode Island in litigation arising from contamination of groundwater with Methyl tert-butyl ether (MTBE), a gasoline additive.

Brett Land grew up in Midlothian, Texas, considered by some to be the “cement capital” of the state for its three gigantic cement plants providing a backdrop to practically every childhood memory of his hometown. Mr. Land recalls that when the cement company closest to his home billowed smoke from its towering smokestacks at night, the chimneys’ floodlights bathed a good part of his neighborhood in a thick, orange, otherworldly haze. As a youth, Mr. Land often wondered what might be in the smoke that filled the air he and his family were breathing. This concern instilled in him a keen desire to make sure that every manufacturer’s by-products are safe and, when they’re not, to stop those harmful contaminants in their tracks. Baron & Budd is proud to have an attorney on staff with such a passion for his craft and for the safety of our citizens and water supplies.

**Daniel MacDonald** is an associate with the firm who works primarily on litigation against manufacturers of dangerous drugs and medical devices, representing clients who have been harmed by the very things that should have made them well. Inspired by the example of his grandfather—a small-town lawyer who provided legal services to his neighbors—Daniel knew from an early age that he wanted to practice law with the goal of helping others.

Prior to joining Baron & Budd, Daniel MacDonald clerked for the Honorable Royce C. Lamberth of the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia. During his clerkship, Mr. MacDonald drafted numerous opinions in civil cases on complex legal issues, including claims against state sponsors of terrorism brought under the Foreign Sovereign Immunities Act and claims against the United States brought under the Federal Tort Claims Act.

Mr. MacDonald received his juris doctor from the George Washington University Law School, where he explored his interest in federal constitutional law through participation in GW's Institute for Constitutional History and the American Constitution Society. Mr. MacDonald received his undergraduate degree from the University of Texas at Austin, where he studied history and political science. Throughout his education, Mr. MacDonald undertook internships in all three branches of federal government, working for the House of Representatives, the National Archives, and the federal courts, learning just what it means to serve the people. Now at Baron & Budd, Daniel MacDonald works to give his clients that same devotion to truth, justice, and what is right.

**Jonas P. Mann**, an attorney in the class action group at Baron & Budd's Los Angeles office, has spent the majority of his legal career helping consumers who have suffered as a result of wrongful business practices. He represents clients nationwide in matters involving defective products, banking fraud, and false advertising. He has been selected for inclusion in "Super Lawyers – Rising Stars Edition" for six consecutive years (Thompson Reuters, 2011 – 2016).

Jonas P. Mann works in the firm's Los Angeles office representing clients in automotive defect, banking fraud, and other complex class actions. He has exclusively represented plaintiffs during his legal career. Mr. Mann discovered early on that representing people in class actions is especially rewarding because it helps to level the playing field for consumers, who typically would not be able to obtain justice individually.

Prior to joining Baron & Budd, Mr. Mann worked at a plaintiff's firm in San Francisco where he represented clients in a number of consumer fraud, employment, and data privacy class actions as well as pharmaceutical mass torts. He has successfully litigated numerous class action cases involving defective homebuilding materials, including shingles, siding, windows, and decking. Additionally, Mr. Mann has litigated consumer fraud cases against some of the biggest names in Silicon Valley and a false labeling case against one of the country's largest food companies.

Mr. Mann is a West Coast transplant; he was born and raised in Pennsylvania. He earned his J.D. from Temple University's James E. Beasley School of Law in Philadelphia where he was an editor of the Temple Political and Civil Rights Law Review and a Beasley Scholar. During law school Mr. Mann participated in the school's death penalty litigation clinical program and served as a research assistant. He graduated from law school in 2007 and was admitted to the bars of Pennsylvania and New Jersey that year. Following a clerkship at the Superior Court of New Jersey in Atlantic City, he moved to San Francisco and was admitted to the California bar.

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Before entering law school, Mr. Mann earned his B.A. in International Affairs *cum laude* and with Departmental Honors from the George Washington University in Washington, D.C.

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**Christine Mansour** has spent the better part of her career advocating for justice and working to protect the rights of the less fortunate. In 2017 she joined Baron & Budd's Pharmaceutical Litigation Group to bring her appellate advocacy and briefing experience to Baron & Budd's work on behalf of clients who have been harmed by the rampant opioid epidemic that has wreaked havoc on so many communities in the United States.

Prior to joining Baron & Budd, Chris Mansour worked for almost ten years at a Dallas non-profit representing immigrants who had been victims of violence. These included survivors of domestic violence, violent crime and child abuse, as well as those who had suffered human rights abuses in their home countries. Her accomplishments included numerous successful trials and appeals that led to hundreds of immigrants obtaining legal status in the United States. Before that, she spent seven years at major law firms in Wisconsin and Ohio practicing commercial civil litigation. During this time she cultivated her appellate and trial advocacy skills, obtaining significant experience authoring appellate briefs on a variety of topics and handling all aspects of litigation including drafting pleadings, conducting discovery, motion practice and preparing for trial.

Now Ms. Mansour has turned her attention to the national opioid crisis and is working with Baron & Budd's Pharmaceutical Litigation Group to help cities, counties and states hold the drug industry accountable for its malfeasance. She devotes her time to researching complex legal issues, writing briefs and developing litigation strategies.

Chris Mansour grew up in Rochester, Minnesota. She received her Bachelor of Arts in American Studies from the University of Notre Dame. After working as a journalist, she entered law school with the goal of using her skills to give a voice to those in need and achieve positive change in national policies that impact a wide range of people, especially those lacking economic or political power. Ms. Mansour graduated from the University of Michigan in 1998 after serving on the Law Review and representing neglected children in the Child Advocacy Clinic.



In her free time Ms. Mansour enjoys spending time with her family, running, cooking and traveling. She loves returning to the beautiful lakes of Minnesota every summer where she can water-ski and escape the Texas heat.

**Mitchell McCrea** is an attorney in Baron & Budd's Environmental Litigation Group. Mr. McCrea has always been intensely aware of the need for access to clean water. He grew up among farmers and ranchers in southern New Mexico, southern California and southwest Texas, where water was a scarce and precious commodity.

Although he loved ranch life, his family—aware of the inherent uncertainty of agriculture—encouraged Mr. McCrea to apply himself to his studies. After earning a bachelor's degree with honors in history from Principia College, Mr. McCrea earned a master's degree from the University of New Mexico, focusing on the history of the American West and culminating in his thesis, "The Cowboy and the Crow: Anglo Cattle Ranching on the Crow Indian Reservation." His studies cemented his belief in the importance of fair access to clean water.

"As I was listening to my family's struggles for water for their farming and ranching operations, witnessing and taking an active interest in the growing conflicts over water in the arid Southwest, and studying the history of Western agriculture and environment, I determined water was a—if not *the*—key to success," says Mr. McCrea. "Armed with a law degree, I could position myself to make a positive impact for those who depend on Earth's most precious resource."

Mr. McCrea earned his law degree cum laude from Texas Tech School of Law, where he met his future wife, Kim. Despite early plans to move to New Mexico to work in natural resources law, the couple moved to Dallas to begin their legal careers. With six years of litigation and trial experience under his belt, Mr. McCrea found the chance he had been waiting for to use that experience to pursue his passion.

"As part of Baron & Budd's Environmental Litigation Group, I am involved in litigation every day that motivates me deeply," says Mr. McCrea. "Every day, I fight for clients who endeavor to provide clean water to the public, and I can't think of a better way to spend my time."

But the legal fight hasn't completely subsumed Mr. McCrea's love of ranch life and the American West. In fact, he continues to run cattle and grow corn, alfalfa, and chili peppers with his brother in southern New Mexico. Mr. McCrea also serves on the boards of the Texas Stampede Rodeo, which is held each November and serves a network of children's charities in north Texas, and the Texas Horse Park, which is an equestrian center being developed near downtown Dallas as part of the city's Trinity River Corridor Project.

**David Jeffrie Mizgala** heads the appellate practice for the Asbestos Litigation Group in the Dallas offices of Baron & Budd. There he, along with the firm's other appellate lawyers, prepares and presents legal briefs to courts of appeals requesting extraordinary relief in original proceedings, including petitions for writs of mandamus and petitions for interlocutory appeals. In addition he coordinates, manages, and provides support in the pre-trial and trial phases of the Asbestos Group's cases, such as preparing case-dispositive motions, preparing jury charges, arguing jury charge conferences, ensuring preservation of error during trial, and preparing post-trial motions.

Before joining the firm in 2018, Mr. Mizgala enjoyed an accomplished appellate practice honed over more than fifteen years of work on many cases involving complex legal issues. He has successfully prepared and presented legal briefs to courts of appeals requesting interlocutory review of significant, non-final trial court orders, and defended or attacked, respectively, favorable or adverse trial court judgments in the appropriate supervising courts of appeals, which have included preparing and filing appellate briefs in, and presenting oral argument to, intermediate and supreme courts of appeals — both state and federal — with authority to review final judgments from lower courts in their jurisdictions.

Mr. Mizgala's nationwide civil appellate and Texas trial-court practices are the embodiment of a boyhood dream. The son of teachers employed by the U.S. Department of Defense at a large infantry base in southern Germany, David Mizgala knew, even as a precocious ten-year-old, his destiny lay in courts of law representing his clients' interests and protecting their rights — a fact he happily shared with anyone who would listen. Although no one in his sphere of influence was in the legal profession, "being a lawyer was just something I always knew I wanted to do", he says.

Growing up in Germany, and attending DoDDS schools from 1975-1991, Mr. Mizgala and his family took every opportunity to travel. By the time he was 19, Mr. Mizgala had been to more than 30 different countries on 4 continents. During that time, one of his most profound experiences was witnessing firsthand the Berlin Wall. "When the Berlin Wall came down, it was surreal to reflect upon the many times I crossed from West to East, passing through checkpoints where armed guards would stop our train to search for and confiscate camera film in order to ensure that their security was not compromised." These experiences formed in Mr. Mizgala an acute awareness that the rights and privileges Americans enjoy are far from universal and well worth protecting and fighting for. Indeed, the topic became the subject of his law school application's essay question.

After graduating Cum Laude from the South Texas College of Law Houston in 2001, Mr. Mizgala clerked first for the Honorable Jan P. Patterson at the Texas Court of Appeals Third District (Austin), and then for the Honorable Wallace B. Jefferson at the Supreme Court of Texas. Following his clerkships, he went to work for, and was mentored by, prominent Texas litigator Shannon H. Ratliff and his hand-picked team of highly skilled trial and appellate practitioners. Prior to

starting his own firm, Mr. Mizgala headed the civil appeals practice-group and practiced commercial litigation as a partner in the Dallas office of Munsch Hardt Kopf & Harr, P.C.

“Though no legal system is perfect, my world travels and experiences have engrained in my ethos a firm belief that America’s judicial system is the best in the world, even with all its limitations, flaws, and failings. Protecting people’s rights and privileges through the rule of law has always served as a driving force in my desire to become a lawyer and practice law. And it continues to inspire me in practicing law today.”

**Marty A. Morris** was an attorney with a well-known commercial litigation firm for several years before joining Baron & Budd in 1999. He now works with the firm’s asbestos litigation group, representing people with mesothelioma and other asbestos-related diseases and assisting with the oversight of the firm’s intake department and other firm-wide special projects.

As a Baron & Budd attorney, Mr. Morris values the firm’s teamwork approach to the practice of law and an opportunity to make a difference in society. “The firm is passionate about helping people and places that as its highest priority,” he says. “The clients I meet and the positive impact we can make on their lives is the best part of the practice of law for me.”

Mr. Morris was honored with the distinguished Order of the Coif for his outstanding academic record in law school, where he was also a member of the South Texas Law Review and the Advocacy Program. He also provides pro bono legal assistance through the Dallas Volunteer Attorney Program. Mr. Morris is an avid Texas Rangers fan who also enjoys golf, tennis, and Batman trivia.

**Lydia Murphy** is an attorney in Baron & Budd’s Pharmaceutical Litigation Group, where she advocates for clients who have been seriously harmed by prescription medications or medical devices. Ms. Murphy offers compassionate and dedicated representation inspired by her work with indigent clients and immigrants from around the world.

Lydia Murphy is an attorney in Baron & Budd’s Pharmaceutical Litigation Group, where she advocates for clients who have been seriously harmed by prescription medications or medical devices. Ms. Murphy offers compassionate and dedicated representation inspired by her work with indigent clients and immigrants from around the world.

Lydia Murphy earned her Juris Doctor from Western Michigan University Cooley Law School. While at Western Michigan University, Ms. Murphy served as secretary of the Hispanic Latino Law Society and worked closely with the non-profit organization “Justice For Our Neighbors” in order to provide legal services to immigrants throughout the Midwest. During law school, she was awarded the

Certificate of Appreciation for her service in the Access to Justice Clinic for her advocacy on behalf of indigent clients facing a variety of family law matters.

Prior to joining Baron & Budd, Ms. Murphy practiced family-based immigration law where she represented immigrant survivors of domestic violence seeking benefits under the Violence Against Women Act and helped many families stay together by successfully proving eligibility to remain in the United States under the Immigration and Nationality Act §212. As a result of her work in family and immigration law, Ms. Murphy has witnessed firsthand how compassionate legal representation can transform lives and change the trajectory of generations to come.

Today, Lydia Murphy is committed to advocating for clients who have been harmed by unsafe pharmaceuticals. As a member of the Pharmaceutical Litigation Group at Baron & Budd, Ms. Murphy is truly honored to be part of a dynamic team of talented attorneys who sets out to change lives and right wrongs every day.

**Staci Olsen** is a member of Baron & Budd's Environmental Litigation Group, where she specializes in the management of electronic information and people in mass litigation. This skill makes her a critical part of the Group, which focuses on large-scale complex environmental torts. She particularly enjoys putting her talents to work for public entity clients facing contamination issues: "Organizing all the evidence to support a client's case is rewarding because I know that my work provides a tangible result for the client."

Ms. Olsen has accrued several years of experience dealing with compiling the evidence necessary to make a solid environmental case. She has worked on atrazine, PCE, and TCP cases, and she works closely with clients who have been harmed by the 2010 Gulf Oil Spill. In addition, she is currently working on MyFord Touch litigation.

Ms. Olsen wanted to be an attorney ever since she was a young girl growing up in rural Colorado on a ranch where water and the environment impacted her daily life. She has traveled extensively, including in law school when she lived in Mexico and attended a summer course to learn the Mexican legal system. Ms. Olsen loves the outdoors and spends her summers in Alaska fishing. She also devotes a lot of time to charity work, including her favorite charity, C.A.R.E., a local organization dedicated to saving exotic large cats.

**Shreedhar "Shree" Patel** is an attorney in the Labor and Employment Group at the Dallas offices of Baron & Budd. In that capacity he represents clients in complex commercial, business, labor and employment litigation. Mr. Patel drafts pleadings, motions and briefs in support of our clients' cases, in addition to advising them on the strengths, weaknesses and potential outcomes of their lawsuits.

In 2007, Mr. Patel obtained dual undergraduate degrees in Psychology and Business Administration from the University of Houston. He received his law degree from Tulane University Law School in New Orleans, Louisiana, in 2010. During his legal studies at Tulane University, Mr. Patel joined the Tulane Environmental Law Clinic where he gained valuable experience working on environmental issues, and submitted an appellate brief to the Arkansas Supreme Court. He also competed on the interschool Ruby R. Vale Appellate Moot Court team, and was an active member of the Tulane Inn of Court, a group focused on ethics, civility and professionalism in the practice of law. He also served as research assistant to one of his professors. At the time he received his J.D., Mr. Patel was also awarded a certificate in International and Comparative Law.

Following law school, Shree Patel worked for a boutique litigation firm in the Houston area, where he honed his skills in environmental and commercial litigation. He then served as law clerk to the Honorable Judge Rebecca F. Doherty of the United States District Court for the Western District of Louisiana. During his clerkship, Mr. Patel was the law clerk on Multi-District Litigation (MDL) No. 2299, *IN RE: Actos (Pioglitazone) Products Liability Litigation*, a group of more than 3,000 civil actions arising from allegations that the diabetes drug Actos increased the risk of bladder cancer in plaintiffs to whom the drug was prescribed, and that defendants concealed their knowledge of the risk and failed to adequately warn users.

Over the course of his career, Mr. Patel has successfully represented employees in Federal Labor Standards Act (FLSA) actions. In a decertified collective action spanning across Texas, Oklahoma, Georgia, Missouri and Alabama, he obtained an award of more than \$154,372.00 in wages for employees. He second-chaired a federal court bench trial on behalf of plaintiffs in a FLSA collective action against a steakhouse, assisted in representation of tipped-employees in FLSA collective actions in the Western District of Texas, assisted in representation of a corporate client in a California wage and hour class action, successfully represented a corporate client in employment discrimination arising from an alleged violation of Americans with Disabilities discrimination action in the Southern District of Indiana, and successfully represented a client in a Title VII discrimination claim before the EEOC.

Mr. Patel is actively involved in the legal community, serving as a member of the Houston Young Lawyers Association Leadership Academy Class and as a member of the Garland Walker Inn of Court. In 2015, he co-authored a publication for the State Bar of Texas on employment law, and the same year served as a panelist in a roundtable discussion focusing on practice in federal court.

Born and raised in Houston, Texas, Shree Patel enjoys a fanatical passion for all things sports. He also knows his way around cars, having had his highly modified import nationally recognized in several automotive publications. Just as he brought exacting perfectionism to customizing his car while in college, so, too, Mr. Patel brings a razor-sharp focus to his cases. "I know the law is a very

powerful tool,” he says, “and I enjoy using my knowledge of the law to change the lives of our clients at Baron & Budd.”

**Thomas J. Poulin**, formerly with the Simmer Law Group in Washington D.C., joined Baron & Budd in 2018. Mr. Poulin has been practicing law for over twenty years, representing those victimized by corporate wrong-doing. He brings to Baron & Budd a diverse whistleblower (qui tam) practice targeting a wide array of industries alleged to have committed fraud, including healthcare, financial institutions and private equity firms, as well as recipients of government grants and contracts. Mr. Poulin’s law practice targets brand and generic drug companies, biopharmaceutical companies, specialty, retail and mail-order pharmacies, pharmacy benefit managers, drug distributors and wholesalers, clinical, pathology and drug testing labs, medical device makers, medical providers, and skilled nursing facilities. The financial institutions on his radar include some of the largest banks and mortgage lenders in the country.

Mr. Poulin also represents whistleblowers in important public policy matters, including, for example *United States ex. rel. Ken E. Williams v. City of Brockton & City of Brockton Police Dept.*, which alleges the misrepresentation of eligibility for grant funding under the federal Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) program, from which the Brockton Police Department received grants. In a case involving the intersection of whistleblower and civil rights laws, called “groundbreaking” by the *Corporate Crime Reporter*, Mr. Poulin argues that police departments with a pattern and practice of civil rights abuses can potentially lose federal funding and be forced to repay prior grants, such as those obtained through the COPS program, when they are found to have violated grant eligibility mandates requiring that they comply with civil rights laws. “The False Claims Act has proven highly effective in using the leverage of federal funding to combat illegal behavior in other industries. We believe that it can be equally effective in fighting racially biased policing”, Mr. Poulin says.

Thomas Poulin’s practice also includes representation of Blue Cross Blue Shield and commercial health plans in litigation seeking redress for economic harm caused by healthcare fraud. For example, he is currently representing Medical Mutual of Ohio in a class action alleging fraudulent marketing of testosterone replacement therapy drug products – *Medical Mutual of Ohio v. Abbvie, Inc., et al.* – which is pending in Chicago federal court. Bringing suit alleging conspiracy and fraud under the Racketeering Influenced and Corrupt Organizations (RICO) Act, Mr. Poulin intends to prove that the defendants fraudulently marketed their testosterone-replacement therapy drugs, causing unnecessary increased payments by Managed Care Organizations (MCOs).

A military veteran, Mr. Poulin served proudly in the United States Air Force as a Communications Security Specialist working at bases under the umbrella of the USAF Strategic Air Command. Charged with maintaining accountability, control

and dissemination of classified documents supporting SAC's mission, he became one of the youngest enlisted personnel to oversee the 2032<sup>nd</sup> squadron's COMSEC (Communications Security) vault.

A native New Englander who grew up in rural Maine, Thomas Poulin is the proud father of three grown daughters and recently welcomed his first grandchild. An avid fan of the Boston Red Sox, he finds that frequent trips to Massachusetts to work on his major cases there provide him opportunities to catch a baseball game and spend time with family who live in New England.

**Kathryn Pryor** joined Baron & Budd's Mesothelioma Litigation Group in June 2015. The focus of her career has been representing individuals across the United States who have been diagnosed with preventable asbestos-related diseases.

Ms. Pryor was born in Barrington, Illinois, and raised in Dallas, Texas. She attended college and law school in Tulsa, Oklahoma, after being accepted into the University of Tulsa's six-year B.A./J.D. joint degree program. During law school she served as Attorney General and Delegate of the Student Bar Association. Ms. Pryor started her legal career in 2009 at Simon Greenstone Panatier Bartlett, working on behalf of individuals who have been injured when companies placed profits over safety, specifically in asbestos and pharmaceutical litigation. Ms. Pryor is proud to be a part of Baron & Budd's Litigation Group, where she can continue that important work.

"I enjoy being able to provide some peace of mind to our clients in what is arguably one of the most difficult times of their lives", says Ms. Pryor. "Knowing that manufacturers, distributors and suppliers of the asbestos-containing products to which our clients were exposed are being held accountable for the injuries they caused and, more importantly, that they could have prevented, gives me immense satisfaction."

**Natalie Rabenhorst** joined the Dallas office of Baron & Budd in 2008. While working for a plaintiff's firm during her undergraduate studies, she became intrigued with the litigation process. Ms. Rabenhorst quickly realized she had a passion for the practice of law and for helping injured workers who might not always have the resources or means to help themselves.

Ms. Rabenhorst works in Baron & Budd's settlement department, helping asbestos victims and their families navigate the sometimes complicated lawsuit settlement process. Every day, in ways big and small, she is part of the difference Baron & Budd makes for its clients.

Ms. Rabenhorst was a dean's scholarship recipient at Southern Methodist University's Dedman School of Law. While at SMU, she was selected to the Oxford Summer Program which allowed her to spend a semester studying international law at University College of Oxford in the United Kingdom. After graduating from law school, Ms. Rabenhorst was certain Baron & Budd was the

place she wanted to be. “I knew Baron & Budd was a reputable firm with the resources and expertise to truly make a difference and protect those who have been wronged,” she says. “If I can play even a small role in helping rebuild the families affected by a corporation’s misconduct, I know my work has been a success.”

**Allison C. Reppond** joined Baron & Budd’s Dallas office in March 2017. Ms. Reppond brings a long-standing passion for justice for injured individuals to the firm’s Mesothelioma Litigation Group, where her practice is devoted to appellate work and pleading and motion practice. Prior to joining Baron & Budd, Ms. Reppond focused her career on representing individuals in a variety of cases, from advocating on behalf of people harmed by dangerous products and the negligence of others, to litigating on behalf of employees who suffered discrimination or retaliation at the hands of their employers.

As a member of Baron & Budd’s Mesothelioma Litigation Group, Allison Reppond continues a career devoted to zealous advocacy on behalf of injured individuals. Ms. Reppond works primarily with men and women who have been seriously harmed by exposure to asbestos. She has always had a big place in her heart for humanity. Her desire to help others has led Ms. Reppond to devote her legal career to representing people who have been harmed by others’ negligence and malpractice and by their employers’ discrimination and retaliation. Ms. Reppond has had the privilege of seeking justice for men and women from all walks of life and backgrounds through her thoughtful and compassionate representation.

Prior to joining Baron & Budd, Ms. Reppond gained valuable experience in plaintiffs’ practice, where she represented individuals in a wide variety of cases, from personal injury, product liability and medical malpractice matters to employment discrimination and retaliation disputes. Ms. Reppond has been honored to stand alongside her clients as she fought for fair compensation for their harms and damages. She has advocated on their behalf in state and federal courts, including arguing before the United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit in a case alleging violations of the Family and Medical Leave Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Ms. Reppond was born and raised in West Monroe, Louisiana. She received a Bachelor of Arts degree in Religion from Baylor University in 2009. Ms. Reppond continued her education at Baylor and went on to receive her Juris Doctor with honors from Baylor University School of Law in 2013. Ms. Reppond honed her advocacy skills through participation on moot court teams at the Federal Bar Association Thurgood A. Marshall Memorial Moot Court Competition and the Chicago Bar Association Moot Court Competition, at which her brief earned the Third Best Brief award. Ms. Reppond also gained invaluable legal research and writing skills as a member of the Baylor Law Review from 2011 to 2013, where she served as an Associate Editor, Technical Editor and, eventually, as a member



of the editorial board in the capacity of Senior Notes and Comments Editor and Senior Articles Editor.

In addition to her passionate advocacy in the courtroom, Ms. Reppond serves the Dallas-Fort Worth community through her membership with the Dallas Bar Association and the Dallas Association of Young Lawyers. Ms. Reppond has also been fortunate to provide encouragement to students through her volunteer work with regional and state-wide mock trial competitions for Texas high school students. She has also devoted her time to supporting future generations of attorneys by volunteering in nationwide moot court and mock trial competitions for college and law school students.

**Anna Rol** has been dedicated to giving a voice to those not in a position to speak for themselves since the start of her legal career. During law school, Ms. Rol was awarded the 2012 Squire Patton Boggs Public Policy Fellowship for her work with The Nature Conservancy's policy department, where she researched best practices to mitigate habitat damage caused by energy development. Since relocating to Texas, Ms. Rol has volunteered with the Dallas Volunteer Attorney Program and Clemency Project 2014, a working group of lawyers and advocates providing pro bono assistance to federal prisoners who would likely have received a significantly shorter sentence had they been sentenced today. Since joining Baron & Budd, Ms. Rol continues to speak out for those in need by representing people who have been gravely harmed by drugs and devices manufactured by large corporations.

Anna Rol is dedicated to holding pharmaceutical corporations accountable for putting dangerous drugs and/or devices on the market. Her first encounter with a prescription drug company that put profits over patients was long before she decided to earn a law degree. In the early 2000s, Ms. Rol's mother was prescribed Vioxx, a drug that was the subject of major litigation and global recall due to severe cardiovascular side effects that caused thousands of deaths. Fortunately, Ms. Rol's mother was not among those harmed by the drug. Nevertheless, this early experience fueled Ms. Rol's drive to represent those individuals who have suffered at the hands of pharmaceutical products – and continues to motivate her to give a powerful voice to medical consumers. Since joining Baron & Budd, Ms. Rol has worked on a variety of pharmaceutical cases, including Transvaginal Mesh, Xarelto, Essure, and Talcum litigation.

Outside the office, Ms. Rol enjoys spending time with her family in Virginia and Texas and living a sustainable, vegan lifestyle.

**Cristina Sanchez** had originally planned to go to medical school, but her work at a small plaintiffs' firm after college inspired her to instead pursue a career in law. She works primarily with clients who have been harmed by the BP oil spill that severely impacted her hometown of New Orleans.

Ms. Sanchez joined Baron & Budd in 2005 to follow the firm's mission in protecting public and individual rights. She carries out that mission daily in her

work as an attorney with the firm's Environmental Litigation Group. Ms. Sanchez' work at Baron & Budd draws on her background in science. As an undergraduate, she majored in biological sciences and minored in chemistry.

Ms. Sanchez currently leads the Group's work helping Gulf Coast businesses and individuals harmed by the 2010 BP oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico. In addition to helping individual victims, she represents a variety of businesses, including a number of complex publicly-traded companies. Working on the BP oil spill litigation has been a way to serve those in the community and the surrounding area where she grew up.

Ms. Sanchez has also represented hundreds of municipalities and public water providers, as well as private well owners seeking solutions for polluted drinking water supplies in cases arising from MTBE, TCP, and PCE contamination.

Ms. Sanchez has been named a Texas Rising Star by Super Lawyers Magazine (a Thompson Reuters organization) for the years 2012, 2013, and 2014. According to Super Lawyers magazine, this honor is for the top 2.5% of attorneys practicing in Texas who are under the age of 40.

While at Southern Methodist University, Ms. Sanchez was recognized as a nationally ranked moot court competitor. In 2002, she was the national champion for Best Brief and was the second place Oralist in the Hispanic National Bar Association Moot Court Competition. She also won the SMU Client Counseling Competition in 2001 and served as Chief Counsel for SMU's Criminal Defense Legal Clinic in 2002.

In addition to her law practice, Ms. Sanchez served as the 2005 Region XII Deputy of the Hispanic National Bar Association, Co-Chair for the 2005 Hispanic National Bar Association Moot Court Competition and Midyear Conference, and Silent Auction Committee for Attorneys Serving the Community in 2009.

**Zach Sandman** joined Baron & Budd's Dallas office in September 2015. He currently works in the Environmental Litigation Group, assisting in complex torts ranging from water and air contamination to negligently caused wildfires. Prior to joining the firm, Mr. Sandman spent the summer of his second year at law school working as a law clerk for Baron & Budd, helping state governments and city municipalities recover damages from big oil companies for Methyl tertiary-butyl ether (MTBE) water contamination.

Zach Sandman was born and raised in Boston, Massachusetts, where he attended law school at Boston College. Following his second year of law school, Mr. Sandman joined Baron & Budd's Environmental Litigation Group as a summer associate. In this role he assisted in several of the nation's largest water contamination cases, representing public entities, both at the state and city level, in

water contamination litigation. Mr. Sandman also helped secure payment from the BP claims department for many fisherman affected by the BP oil spill.

After law school, Mr. Sandman eagerly re-joined Baron & Budd as an associate and returned to working in the Environmental Litigation Group. He immediately began assisting with a groundwater case in California involving the exposure of hundreds of students and faculty to the toxic substance Trichloroethylene (TCE) and other dangerous heavy metals. Following the historic Butte Wildfire, which burned more than 7,000 acres and destroyed nearly 500 homes near San Andreas, California, Baron & Budd sent Mr. Sandman into the heart of fire country to meet with those devastated by an apparent failure of Pacific Gas and Electric to properly maintain their electrical wires in thickly wooded areas. Mr. Sandman successfully filed the first Butte Wildfire lawsuit in San Francisco in November, 2015, and expects to file many more claims in the coming months.

While living in China working as a writer for the China Economic Review between undergrad and law school, Mr. Sandman was deeply disturbed by the Chinese Government's indifference to the widespread pollution that plagued Shanghai. Although Mr. Sandman had always planned on attending law school, seeing one of his favorite cities in the world caked in soot and debris inspired him to pursue a career in environmental law. Mr. Sandman hopes to one day use his experience at Baron & Budd to assist in pro-bono environmental advocacy in China.

In addition to his law degree, Mr. Sandman holds a B.A. in Political Science from Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennessee, where he graduated with honors in 2009.

**Torri Sherlin** brings a lifelong passion for the outdoors to Baron & Budd's Environmental Litigation Group in San Diego. Joining our Ecolawyers unit in 2018, Ms. Sherlin shares her enthusiasm for safeguarding the environment by representing numerous California counties in their claims against negligent utility companies for their role in the devastating wildfires that scorched so much of California in 2017.

Born and raised in San Diego, Torri Sherlin infuses her environmental law practice with a fervent love of nature. Growing up, she spent most of her free time hiking, running, surfing, camping and playing soccer. Her zest for being immersed in all things outdoors fostered a keen desire to dedicate her life and career to protecting the environment and ultimately led her to join the San Diego office of Baron & Budd's Ecolawyers Environmental Litigation Group.

Torri Sherlin's ardent drive to protect the environment fuels the enthusiasm with which she strives to get results for our clients. Ms. Sherlin represents several public entities, including the counties of Mendocino, Napa,

Calaveras, Sonoma, Ventura, Santa Barbara and Lake, as well as the cities of Santa Barbara and Ventura and the Fire Protection Districts of Montecito and Carpinteria-Summerland, in wildfire litigation as a result of the destructive wildfires that ravaged California in 2017. As the first reports of fires emerged, various emergency dispatchers received calls reporting downed power lines and transformers exploding. Multiple power company equipment failures raised questions about local utilities' maintenance of their property and devices and revealed that a failure to remove trees in the path of power lines may have been a contributing factor. Torri Sherlin is committed to protecting the rights of communities which have lost lives, property and value in wildfires caused by the negligence of utility corporations. By representing counties and cities against Pacific Gas & Electric Company and other electric corporations, she is sending a strong signal to utilities that they will be held accountable for their negligence.

Prior to joining Baron and Budd, Ms. Sherlin represented businesses in the hospitality industry. It was there that she honed her skills in fostering a service-oriented approach to litigation. As a result of her background in labor-related proceedings, Ms. Sherlin understands the passion and devotion it takes to exceed her client's needs and get the results they deserve.

The steadfast determination Torri Sherlin now brings to protecting the environment once drove her competitive spirit as a college athlete. Ms. Sherlin competed in the Women's Soccer, Cross Country and Track teams at Concordia University in Austin, Texas, concluding her athletic campaign with a conference championship, regional rankings and individual all-conference awards. Ms. Sherlin's coaches consistently characterized her as tenacious. That dogged persistence now propels her dedication to providing top quality legal representation to the communities and public entities she represents at Baron & Budd.

**Desiree Slaybaugh** is an attorney in Baron & Budd's settlement department, where she represents workers who have suffered from mesothelioma and other serious illnesses as a result of exposure to asbestos. She advocates through bankruptcy trust funds to obtain compensation for the firm's clients.

Ms. Slaybaugh joined Baron & Budd's settlement department in 2015 after graduating from the University of Texas School of Law with her Master of Laws, an advanced law degree for JD graduates who desire further study. She represents workers who have suffered from mesothelioma and other serious illnesses as a result of exposure to asbestos. Through bankruptcy trust funds, she works to obtain compensation for the firm's clients.

Before her matriculation at Texas Law, she worked at a firm in Fort Worth, Texas. There, she advocated for compensation for victims with severe medical complications resulting from the use of recalled hip replacement and transvaginal mesh devices.

Ms. Slaybaugh grew up in Fort Worth and, through her love of travel and a lifetime of exposure to diverse cultures, developed a deep interest in international human rights and humanitarian law. She presented her research on freedom of religion through expression under international law at the American Society of International Law's Research Forum in 2016 and frequently provides pro bono services to non-profit organizations that support human rights and humanitarian efforts.

While working her way through college at fine dining restaurants, Ms. Slaybaugh developed a love of and interest in wine and winemaking. Her article, *A Twisted Vine: The Aftermath of Granholm v. Heald*, analyzed direct shipping restrictions on wine and was published in the *Wesleyan Law Review* in 2011. Today, she spends a few nights a month working for a Fort Worth winery.

Ms. Slaybaugh and her husband are law school sweethearts who enjoy traveling to new places as often as they can. They reside in the Dallas/Fort Worth area with their cat.

**Claire Vaho** is an attorney in Baron & Budd's Pharmaceutical Litigation Group where she regularly takes a stand against corporations that have caused grievous harm to individuals who took their medicines or used their medical devices believing they were safe and effective. Ms. Vaho's drive to represent victims of Big Pharma stems from a long-burning desire to help those who are not in a position to help themselves.

Ms. Vaho joined Baron & Budd's Pharmaceutical Litigation Group in 2017 out of a wish to help people who have been lied to and hurt by pharmaceutical companies. But it was her experience as a teacher fresh out of college that first ignited a fire within Ms. Vaho to advocate for those less fortunate than she.

After completing her undergraduate work at Louisiana State University in 2009, from which she received a bachelor's degree in sociology, Ms. Vaho became a high school literature teacher in her hometown of Denver, Colorado. As part of the instruction she provided, Ms. Vaho served as a "reading interventionist", during which she worked extensively with individual students to help them address specific literacy needs when regular classroom instruction was not sufficient. In this role, Ms. Vaho realized the positive impact she could have on an individual's life, as she watched a high school student who was reading several levels below her grade transform herself, with Ms. Vaho's help, into an eloquent, vibrant and confident young woman who not only gave a top-notch senior address but presented Ms. Vaho with a homemade certificate for having helped improve her reading comprehension so much.

The root of Claire Vahos' advocacy work stems from an intense yearning to effect positive change in the lives of others. She draws on fond memories from her teaching career to keep the fires of advocacy burning brightly. In a handwritten note penned long ago by one of her middle-school students, Ms. Vahos reads the words: "I'd like to thank you for a few things, but first, for always giving me a chance...". Ms. Vahos likes to think that her firm but gentle influence helped shaped that student and others like him into responsible, compassionate adults.

After four years as an English, reading and history teacher to high-school and middle-school students, Ms. Vaho sought an avenue toward making even more of a difference in the lives of others. She decided to enroll at the University of Texas School of Law in Austin. While in law school, Ms. Vaho competed on the law school's Interscholastic Mock Trial Team, where she honed her advocacy skills. In her second year of law school, Ms. Vaho joined the staff of the Texas Journal of Civil Liberties and Civil Rights, where she served variously as Associate Editor, Notes Editor and Managing Editor. She participated in the school's extensive clinical programs, during which she performed legal research and writing, conducted investigations and prepared for hearings on cases as diverse as capital punishment, civil rights and children's advocacy. She also spent a summer clerking for the Texas Civil Rights Project, during which she gained valuable experience working on lawsuits brought under the Americans with Disabilities Act.

In her spare time, Claire Vaho volunteers with the Big Brothers Big Sisters program, where she and her young match engage in happy, creative activities such as taking painting classes and attending UT football games. Ms. Vaho is an accomplished singer and musician who plays violin and piano and has produced an album of Christmas music for family and friends.

**Allen Vaught** is a decorated U.S. Army veteran and former Texas State Representative. A member of the U.S. Army Reserve from 1997 to 2005, Mr. Vaught took leave from Baron & Budd in 2003 to serve in Operation Iraqi Freedom. He commanded one of the Army's first units to enter Fallujah and served as the city's de facto mayor. As an attorney at Baron & Budd, Mr. Vaught heads the firm's FLSA litigation section, where he spearheads new litigation against employers who are not fairly compensating their employees.

Mr. Vaught has more than 15 years of experience working as a litigator on complex, multi-party litigation. Recently, Mr. Vaught won a major award for a group of mechanics who were incorrectly classified as independent contractors by their employer, which earned him the distinction of being recognized as the "Litigator of the Week" by the state of Texas by legal publication *Texas Lawyer*.

He is currently leading litigation against several oil and gas companies regarding lay-offs that were not made in accordance with the Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification ("WARN") Act, a U.S. labor law which protects employees by requiring most employers with 100 or more employees to provide 60 calendar-day advance notification of plant closings and mass layoffs.

**Holly Werkema** joined Baron & Budd in May of 2012 in the firm's General Litigation Group, representing homeowners throughout the southeast affected by toxic Chinese drywall installations in their homes. After settlement with the drywall manufacturer, Ms. Werkema assisted hundreds of the firm's clients in navigating the claims process that ultimately led to repair and/or replacement of the toxic drywall in their homes.

Ms. Werkema recently joined the firm's Pharmaceutical Litigation Group, where she represents clients and their families adversely affected by Granuflo, a product used in dialysis that has caused countless deaths due to misleading and inadequate use instructions provided to health care professionals by its manufacturer.

Prior to joining Baron & Budd, Ms. Werkema served the State of Florida Department of Financial Services as an attorney in the Prosecution and Enforcement Litigation Group. There she developed her litigation skills representing the Department in enforcement proceedings, rule challenges, property claim denials and garnishments.

**Evan Zucker** works in Baron & Budd's Los Angeles office. He specializes in consumer class action litigation and insurance bad faith cases. Mr. Zucker is dedicated to fighting for the rights of consumers who have been harmed by the systematic and uniform practices of unscrupulous corporations.

Before joining Baron & Budd in 2014, Evan Zucker represented clients in matters which had positive ramifications across the country for those who had been victims of improper mortgage and loan-service fees. He has been appointed class counsel or co-class counsel in more than a dozen state and nationwide class action matters dealing with such corporate malfeasance. In three such cases, Mr. Zucker successfully recovered compensation for mortgage holders in California, New Jersey and Massachusetts who had been improperly charged late fees and mortgage-related servicing fees.

Earlier in 2014, Mr. Zucker worked as part of a trial team which won a verdict on behalf of an elderly couple against a home insurance company in a matter stemming from the total destruction of their dwelling during the 2009 Los Angeles wildfire known as the Station fire. In that case, the jury made a finding that allowed punitive damages against the insurer for acting with malice toward the couple, essentially forcing them to live in a cramped hotel room for two and a half years while the insurance company repeatedly and fraudulently denied them the full value of their insurance claim.

Before starting work at Baron & Budd, Mr. Zucker also represented several individuals in civil rights cases against various state and local law enforcement entities, receiving several favorable settlements for these citizens. Additionally, he worked with California senators to pass legislation protecting the privacy of Californians who were victimized by online extortion schemes which posted

consumers' personal information. He was instrumental in furthering litigation aimed at shutting down these cyber-thieves.

Mr. Zucker was in middle school when his family's home was devastated by the Northridge earthquake in 1994. At the time he saw the tremendous impact that industry-wide insurance practices could have on middle class families, especially after a natural disaster. As a result of this experience, even before deciding to attend law school, Mr. Zucker gravitated toward work in law firms that handled cases against insurance companies, including those against insurers who engaged in malicious claims handling practices. Ultimately, Mr. Zucker found himself working to recover hundreds of millions of dollars on behalf of commercial and residential policyholders faced with catastrophic losses after that same 1994 Northridge earthquake. As a result of these experiences, he was inspired to seek a career in law. Mr. Zucker has been representing citizen plaintiffs ever since, and will continue that work as a part of Baron & Budd's Banking Fraud and Automotive Defect team.

In his spare time, Mr. Zucker enjoys playing basketball and likes to snowboard in winter. And although he learned to juggle balls in the air as a youth, these days he prefers to concentrate his multitasking skills on giving Baron & Budd's clients the best representation possible.