

Sheppard Mullin Announces 2025 Partner Class

Twenty-One Attorneys Promoted Firmwide

02.18.2025

Sheppard, Mullin, Richter & Hampton LLP is pleased to announce that 21 attorneys have been promoted to partner. The 2025 Partner Class includes Benjamin D. Brooks (San Diego), Aaron J. Campbell (Century City), Snehal Desai (San Francisco), Amy J. Dilcher (Washington, D.C.), Stacy M. Dominguez (Orange County), James W. Fischer (Washington, D.C.), Jennifer M. Hoffman (Los Angeles), Robert E. Hough (Dallas), Tyler J. Johnson (Los Angeles), Lisa C. Mays (Orange County), John A. Montgomery (Houston), Edward W. Musharbash (Los Angeles), Kazim A. Naqvi (Century City), Katherine H. Oblak (Chicago), Cesar Pereira (New York), Patrick C. Quine (Washington, D.C.), Christopher Ryan (Orange County), Kristi L. Thomas (Orange County), Nicolas Urdinola (Century City), Dimitris Vallindas (Brussels) and William Ziegelbauer (New York). The promotions are effective March 1, 2025.

“This year’s partner class exemplifies the exceptional talent, dedication and leadership that define Sheppard Mullin,” said Luca Salvi, chair of Sheppard Mullin. “Each of these attorneys demonstrates an unwavering commitment to excellence in their respective practice areas, and we are confident they will continue to drive our firm’s success. We are proud to welcome them into the partnership and look forward to their continued contributions to our clients and the legal profession.”

Meet Sheppard Mullin’s 2025 Partner Class:

Benjamin Brooks, based in San Diego, is a member of the Business Trial practice group. Ben is a trial and appellate litigator representing healthcare entities in various disputes, including disputes with providers and matters involving challenges to healthcare statutes and regulations. Ben also represents property and casualty insurers in bad faith litigation, and he defends businesses in consumer class actions. He has experience representing banks, mortgage servicers and other financial institutions in litigation and advisory matters involving the Fair Credit Reporting Act, Truth in Lending Act, Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act, federal and state securities laws, and state consumer-protection statutes, including the California Unfair Competition Law. He received his B.M., *summa cum laude*, from California State University at Sacramento and his J.D., *with High Honors* and *Order of the Coif*, from the University of Chicago.

Aaron Campbell, based in Century City, is a member of the Entertainment, Technology and Advertising practice group. He represents major motion picture corporations, independent production companies and other entertainment and media entities in domestic and international motion picture and television (scripted and unscripted) development, production, acquisition and distribution agreements, including handling talent agreements, first-look and overall agreements, rights acquisitions, production services agreements and rights analysis with respect to complex chain of title. In addition, Aaron often advises clients on entertainment aspects of mergers and acquisitions. He has frequently been recognized by *Variety* in its annual “Dealmakers

Impact Report". Before joining Sheppard Mullin, he gained valuable experience in the entertainment practice groups at other major law firms and spent time in the finance departments of various organizations. Prior to law school, Aaron worked in public accounting where he supervised internal and external financial audits. Aaron earned his Certified Public Accounting license in Michigan. He received his B.B.A. from Northwood University and his J.D. from UCLA School of Law.

Snehal Desai, based in San Francisco, is a member of the Intellectual Property practice group and the Privacy and Cybersecurity industry team. Snehal helps companies launch cutting-edge products and services in an increasingly complex and demanding legal and regulatory environment. She is the go-to outside counsel for product and commercial matters for some of the world's most prominent technology, gaming, social media, fintech, healthcare, retail and food service companies. Snehal advises clients in conducting advertising campaigns and drafts and negotiates agreements regarding software, SaaS, technology services, logistics, marketing, outsourcing, intellectual property licensing, sourcing and distribution, procurement, strategic alliances and other commercial and transactional matters. With her counsel, companies navigate the privacy, technology and commercial aspects of mergers and acquisitions, joint venture arrangements, financings and divestitures. Snehal also guides clients through compliance with domestic and international privacy laws and regulations and helps implement compliance programs. She helps clients with drafting privacy policies and online terms of service for websites and mobile applications. She also navigates cybersecurity breach response and best practices for mitigation. Snehal received her B.A. from the University of California, San Diego and her J.D. from the University of California, College of the Law, San Francisco (formerly UC Hastings).

Amy J. Dilcher, based in Washington, D.C., is a member of the Corporate practice group and Healthcare industry team. She brings over 25 years of healthcare industry experience with a clinical background as an oncology nurse. She served as the chief legal officer/general counsel for several sponsor-backed physician management networks and the largest healthcare provider in western Maryland. Her practice focuses on transactional and regulatory matters, helping healthcare organizations achieve their strategic business initiatives while navigating complex regulatory issues and mitigating risks associated with healthcare regulations, particularly in strategic affiliations, mergers and acquisitions, hospital and physician transactions, and other contractual arrangements. She also advises on a wide range of operational, compliance and regulatory issues. Amy received her B.S.N., *summa cum laude*, from the University of Pittsburgh, her J.D., *cum laude*, from Howard University School of Law and her LL.M. in health law from the University of Houston Law Center.

Stacy Dominguez, based in Orange County, is a member of the Business Trial practice group and the Food and Beverage and Hospitality industry teams. Stacy defends disability access discrimination claims under Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act and state accessibility standards relating to websites, physical locations and company policies. She represents restaurants, hospitals, department stores and retail companies, home improvement stores, sports teams and venue operators, entertainment companies, hotels and owners of commercial and residential properties. In addition to her litigation experience, Stacy reviews company websites and facilities for disability access implications and compliance. Stacy also advises clients on access under the ADA and FHA to prevent lawsuits, update their accessibility policies and implement policies and procedures to train employees about accessibility laws. She received her B.A. from the University of California, Los Angeles and her J.D. from Loyola Law School in Los Angeles.

James "Wes" Fischer, based in Washington, D.C., is a member of the Corporate practice group. He is also a member of the firm's Private Equity, Mergers and Acquisitions, Aerospace, Defense & Government Services (ADG) and Artificial Intelligence industry teams. Wes focuses his practice on mergers and acquisitions, private

equity leveraged buyouts and general corporate representation. He represents private equity firms and their portfolio companies as well as strategic clients in domestic and cross-border acquisition transactions and other corporate matters. Wes works with clients in a range of industries, including ADG software and technology, manufacturing and healthcare. He received his B.A., *summa cum laude*, from the University of Louisville and his J.D. from the University of Virginia School of Law.

Jennifer Hoffman, based in Los Angeles, is a member of the Business Trial practice group and the Insurance industry team. She has extensive experience defending complex class actions against insurers in California and nationwide. In addition, Jennifer litigates individual matters involving, among other things, novel coverage disputes, business practice challenges and extracontractual claims. She counsels insurers on institutional practices and compliance issues and provides coverage advice on complex factual scenarios under a variety of first- and third-party coverages, including general liability, professional liability, advertising liability, automobile, life, homeowners and commercial property policies. Jennifer received her B.A. from Indiana University and her J.D. from UCLA School of Law.

Robert Hough, based in Dallas, is a member of the Intellectual Property practice group and Sports and Advertising industry teams. Robert is a leading advertising and brand protection specialist who counsels some of the world's most iconic brands in safeguarding, enforcing and commercializing their intellectual property. He has significant experience advising clients on advertising claims, content clearance, prize promotions and cause marketing regulatory compliance. He also helps clients commercialize their brands through licenses and sponsorships, including in connection with arenas and event centers, sports teams, athletes and artists. He handles intellectual property infringement and licensing disputes in federal courts nationwide, as well as through administrative proceedings and enforcement actions under the Digital Millennium Copyright Act and the Uniform Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy. Robert received his B.S./B.A., *cum laude, with honors*, from the University of Arkansas and his J.D., *magna cum laude* and *Order of the Coif*, from Southern Methodist University Dedman School of Law.

Tyler Johnson, based in Los Angeles, is a member of the Labor and Employment practice group. He represents businesses of every size and has extensive experience in the healthcare, agricultural, retail and finance industries. He represents employers against claims of discrimination, harassment and retaliation in every stage of the litigation process. Tyler also routinely represents businesses in complex wage and hour litigation, including class actions and representative actions under the Private Attorneys General Act. He is a co-author of *California's Private Attorneys General Act – Litigation and Compliance Manual* and regularly lectures on wage and hour issues. Tyler has successfully taken cases to trial and through arbitration and also prevailed on appeals in the California Court of Appeal and Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals. Beyond litigation, Tyler counsels and trains employers and management to help them achieve compliance and avoid future disputes. He received his B.A., *summa cum laude*, from the University of Maryland and his J.D., *magna cum laude* and *Order of the Coif*, from Pepperdine Caruso School of Law.

Lisa Mays, based in Orange County, is a member of the Governmental practice group. She advises on international trade compliance and investigations. Lisa helps clients with issues related to supply chain, tariffs and import compliance, export controls, cross-border transactions and anti-corruption. Her experience includes counseling clients on compliance with the International Traffic in Arms Regulations, Export Administration Regulations, Office of Foreign Assets Control sanctions, the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act, anti-boycott laws, anti-money laundering regulations and inbound and outbound investment restrictions. She received her B.A. from the University of Southern California and her J.D., *with honors*, from The George Washington University Law

School.

John Montgomery, based in Houston, is a member of the Real Estate, Energy, Land Use & Environmental practice group and the Energy, Infrastructure and Project Finance team. John represents financial institutions, hedge funds, commodities trading companies and energy companies in structured energy transactions. He also advises clients on their related energy trading agreements, including commodity supply, off-take and hedging transactions and other finance and corporate transactions. John regularly negotiates bespoke energy trading agreements and standardized commodity master agreements, including the ISDA, NAESB and EEI. He received his B.A., *summa cum laude*, *Phi Beta Kappa* and *Taylor Medal*, and his M.B.A. from the University of Mississippi, and his J.D., *summa cum laude*, from Tulane University Law School.

Edward Musharbash, based in Los Angeles, is a member of the Real Estate, Energy, Land Use & Environmental practice group. He represents institutional investors, owners and developers in complex commercial real estate transactions involving the acquisition, disposition, financing, leasing and development of various asset types. In addition, Edward has a rich understanding of California's transfer tax and property tax reassessment laws which he uses to guide clients in achieving tax efficient treatment in their real estate transactions. He received his B.A., *summa cum laude*, from California State Polytechnic University, Pomona and his J.D. from the University of California, Berkeley School of Law.

Kazim Naqvi, based in Century City, is a member of the Business Trial and Intellectual Property practice groups and the Trade Secrets team. His multifaceted practice spans trade secret, patent and trademark litigation, as well as complex business litigation. He has particular expertise in prosecuting and defending claims brought under federal and state trade secret laws and regularly manages his clients' most sensitive and complex IP matters, often against competitors. Kazim also litigates complex business disputes, with a particular focus on business tort, partnership, shareholder, and restrictive covenant disputes. Kazim's clients span across a range of industries, including manufacturing, aerospace, semiconductor, food and beverage, restaurant, industrial, fintech, medtech, virtual reality and creative agency industries. Kazim maintains an active pro bono practice, focusing on children's adoption cases with the Alliance for Children's Rights. Kazim plays a key role in advancing the firm's culture of inclusion, serving as leader of Century City's Office Working Group and the office's DIAN leader. He received his B.A. from the University of Southern California and his J.D. from Loyola Law School.

Katherine Oblak, based in Chicago, is a member of the Labor and Employment practice group. Her practice encompasses all aspects of the employment relationship. She defends employers in a broad swath of industries, with a particular focus on food and beverage, at both the administrative agency and state and federal court levels. She handles claims including but not limited to wrongful termination, discrimination and retaliation. At each stage of litigation, she partners with clients to ensure their litigation and business objectives are met. Katherine also has expertise in high-stakes litigation, specifically in the restrictive covenant and trade secret misappropriation realms. She guides employers through all aspects of these complex actions and has achieved success in both prosecuting and defending such claims. She also has a robust advice and counseling practice, guiding employers through myriad aspects of the employment relationship and also drafting and revising employment agreements. She works to help clients mitigate risk and to navigate the evolving labor and employment landscape. Katherine received her B.S., *Dean's List*, from Northwestern University's Medill School of Journalism and her J.D. *cum laude*, from Loyola University Chicago School of Law.

Cesar Pereira, based in New York, is a member of the Business Trial practice group and Construction industry team. A former general counsel of a national construction company, Cesar advises clients in all stages of construction projects, providing strategic counsel to manage their legal and compliance risks. His experience spans infrastructure, commercial, residential and industrial construction. With Cesar's counsel, clients negotiate agreements with owners, developers, contractors, construction managers, designers, sureties, operators, suppliers and subcontractors to outline key issues including teaming, joint ventures, subcontracting, indemnity, payment and performance bonds. During project execution, his strategies help clients manage labor and compliance issues, resolve disputes, protect and enforce payment and performance bonds or reserve rights for a later dispute process. When needed, he represents them in disputes arising from defaults and terminations, extra work, differing site conditions and delay claims through mediation, administrative proceedings, state and federal court hearings and arbitration. Cesar also has extensive experience advising clients on state and local laws, regulations and administrative procedures across the country. He has advised clients on legal issues arising from state and local procurement regulations and administrative procedures and disputes involving state and local governments. He received his B.A. and M.P.A. from New York University and his J.D. from Boston College.

Patrick Quine, based in Washington, D.C., is a member of the Corporate practice group. His clients include private equity firms, public and privately held companies and founders and owners in merger and acquisition transactions across diverse industries such as consumer goods, food and beverage, aerospace, defense and government services, sports, entertainment, technology, manufacturing, industrial and financial services. He received his B.A. from the University of Notre Dame and his J.D. from Georgetown University Law Center.

Christopher Ryan, based in Orange County, is a member of the Finance & Bankruptcy practice group. He represents various lending clients, including national banks, local and regional banks, publicly traded companies, debt funds, life insurance companies and other lenders in all aspects of real estate finance, with an emphasis on construction lending, syndicated loan transactions, bridge lending and distressed real estate workouts. His experience includes the financing, foreclosure and restructuring of permanent, construction, acquisition and bridge loans secured by all types of real estate assets, including office, hospitality, retail, condominium, multi-family, industrial and land development projects, mixed-use projects and shopping centers. Christopher has also spent time as in-house counsel for an S&P 500 publicly traded REIT, providing him with an insider's perspective on the challenges his clients face. He received his B.A., *with honors*, from the University of California Santa Barbara, and his J.D., *cum laude*, from The Ohio State University, Moritz College of Law.

Kristi Thomas, based in Orange County, is a member of the Labor and Employment practice group. She defends employers in class action and single-plaintiff matters in all areas of employment law, including wage and hour, discrimination, harassment, retaliation and wrongful termination. Kristi handles all aspects of civil litigation defense, including mediation, arbitration and trial. She has tried multiple cases securing favorable verdicts. When she's not litigating, Kristi counsels employers on a variety of labor and employment law concerns, including wage and hour issues, disability and family/medical leave issues, discipline and termination. She also conducts supervisor and non-supervisor trainings for clients on sexual harassment and workplace behavior. Further, Kristi conducts audits, internal investigations and develops personnel policies and procedures. Kristi received her B.A., *cum laude* and *Dean's Honors*, from the University of Pittsburg and her J.D., *cum laude*, from Widener University School of Law.

Nicolas Urdinola, based in Century City, is a member of the Entertainment, Technology and Advertising practice group. His practice bridges the intersection of technology and traditional entertainment. Nicolas represents major and independent film and TV studios, media and tech companies, music artists, producers, streamers and traditional networks in transactional matters related to television, film, music, digital media, sports media rights and artificial intelligence, for projects in the U.S. and abroad. Nicolas advises at all stages, from development, production and licensing to distribution and exploitation of content (scripted and unscripted) and helps clients around the globe navigate emerging trends in the industry. His background includes extensive cross-border transactional expertise, with significant experience working for major law firms in Latin America and Spain. He has been recognized in *Variety's* "Dealmakers Impact Report" for two consecutive years. Prior to joining Sheppard Mullin, Nicolas served in-house at Fox Sports and The Walt Disney Company/ESPN, where he negotiated multi-platform sports rights agreements with major domestic and international sports leagues and where he led the legal team that negotiated with distribution partners in Latin America for the launch of the Disney+ service. He received his LL.B. from Universidad Javeriana (Bogotá, Colombia) and his LL.M. from Stanford University.

Dimitris Vallindas, based in Brussels, is a member of the Antitrust and Competition practice group. Dimitris specializes in European, French, Belgian and Greek competition law and has extensive experience handling complex, multi-jurisdictional merger and cartel cases. He possesses in-depth expertise in state aid matters, including R&D, energy, environmental initiatives, rescue and restructuring, risk capital and privatization cases. His industry experience spans the aviation, telecommunications, rail transport and energy sectors. He has advised prominent clients in various transactions securing European Commission approval for mergers and state aid and in litigation before EU and national Courts. He received his undergraduate degree and his LL.M. from the Aix-Marseille University.

William Ziegelbauer, based in New York, is a member of the Corporate practice group and Healthcare industry team. He serves as a trusted advisor to healthcare sector clients on complex corporate transactions, including mergers and acquisitions, growth capital investments, minority investments, joint ventures, reorganizations and general corporate matters. William has played a pivotal role in several of the most impactful healthcare transactions in recent years. He also helps clients assess corporate practice of medicine compliance questions and develop shared-risk and value-based arrangements. His client portfolio includes entrepreneurs, private equity firms, public companies, privately held companies and family offices. He received his B.A. from Marywood University and his J.D. from the University of Chicago Law School.

Attorneys

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Practice Areas

Antitrust and Competition

Appellate

Bankruptcy and Restructuring

Commercial Lending and Financial Transactions

Construction

Corporate

Energy, Infrastructure and Project Finance

Entertainment, Technology and Advertising

Exports and Export-Related Controls

Governmental

Healthcare

Imports

Insurance

Intellectual Property

International Trade and Investment

Labor and Employment

Litigation

Privacy and Cybersecurity

Real Estate Finance

Real Estate, Energy, Land Use & Environmental

Trade Secrets

Industries

Advertising

Aerospace, Defense & Government Services

Artificial Intelligence

Blockchain and Fintech

Food and Beverage

Healthcare

Hospitality

Private Equity

Retail, Fashion & Beauty

Sports

Telecom

Women in Healthcare Leadership Collaborative