



Steven (Steve) A. Ellenberg

Partner

San Jose

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Steve Ellenberg enjoys the reputation as a “boots in the courtroom litigator,” and represents a wide range of business and individual clients in commercial, intellectual property and trust & estate lawsuits in Silicon Valley and throughout California, in both state and federal courts. With more than three decades of trial experience, Steve has litigated significant cases for high-profile clients, e.g., Caliper Technologies and Linear Technology.

Steve also has extensive experience taking trust and estate lawsuits to trial. Recently, Steve obtained a defense judgment including an award of attorneys’ fees and costs for his clients who were falsely accused of forging their parents’ estate plan which was ultimately affirmed on appeal. His clients commented after the trial that it was remarkable how “Steve controlled the courtroom.” Steve has also successfully prosecuted and defended elder abuse claims through trial. In 2024, *Best Lawyers* named him as the “Lawyer of the Year” for Trusts and Estates Litigation in San Jose.

Steve is a skilled negotiator who has successfully resolved multiple cases for clients prior to trial. He has an AV preeminent rating from Martindale Hubbell, was selected for the 2025 Lawdragon 500 Leading Litigators in America list and been named a Northern California “Super Lawyer” every year since 2006.

Prior to joining the firm, Steve was the founding partner at Ellenberg & Hull and a partner at Ruby & Schofield.

Areas of Focus

Services

[General Business & Complex](#)

[Commercial Litigation](#)

[Trust & Estate Litigation](#)

[Litigation](#)

Sectors

[Technology](#)

Experience

Commercial Litigation

- *Barrous v. BP and Conoco Phillips*. Obtained significant settlement for clients arising out of contamination after defeating four separate motions for summary judgment or partial summary judgment.
- *Caliper Technologies v. Applera*. Obtained \$56 million verdict in favor of client in trade secret misappropriation case. The case was a top 10 verdict in California in 2010 as reported by the California Law Journal.
- *Hamlin v. Zohuri*. Obtained \$400,000 judgment in favor of client in fraud and breach of contract case.
- *McLean v. Volpe, Brown, Whelan Asset Management*. Obtained \$13.5 million verdict in favor of client for fraud and breach of contract including punitive damages. This case was a top 10 verdict in California in 2005 as reported by the California Law Journal.
- *Nguyen v. Global Equipment and Manufacturing Services, Inc.* Defeated claim for indemnity at trial ultimately resulting in the dismissal of a multi-million rescission claim.
- *PQ Labs v. Zaagtech*. Obtained significant award of general damages, punitive damages and attorneys' fees as well as a worldwide injunction in Federal Trade secret case.
- Obtained multi-million dollar bad faith settlement (confidential) against insurance carrier after defeating seven separate motions for summary judgment or partial summary judgment.
- *Schiro v. Catlett*. Obtained \$3.5 million alter ego decision in favor of client following two week bench trial.

Trust & Estate Litigation

- Obtained judgment of non-suit in favor of clients against damage claims in excess of \$30 million following a three week elder abuse trial.
- Successfully defended claim that clients forged their parents' trust and obtained an award of \$900,000 in legal fees following a four week trial.
- Obtained order restoring property converted by Elder's Accountant to the trust following four week trial.
- Petitioners dismissed 850 petition following three days of trial.

Credentials

Education

- Columbia University School of Law, J.D.
- University of California - Berkeley, B.A., History, magna cum laude

- Phi Beta Kappa

Bar Admissions

- California (1990)

Court Admissions

- U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit

Recognition

- Selected Among *Best Lawyers in America*, Commercial Litigation and Trusts & Estates Litigation, 2021 – 2025
 - "Lawyer of the Year," Trusts & Estates Litigation, 2021, 2024
- *Lawdragon*, 500 Leading Litigators in America, 2025
- *San Jose Metro*, "Best Litigator in San Jose," 2011
- Northern California *Super Lawyers*, 2006-2020
- Martindale-Hubbell® "AV" rating
- AV® Preeminent™ rating from Martindale-Hubbell

Community Involvement

- Rotary Club of San Jose, Board of Directors, 2020-2023
- Jewish Federation of Silicon Valley, Past President, 2011-2012