

FIRST NAME	LAST NAME	TITLE	COMPANY	BIO
Brian	Balconi	Chief Legal Officer	Authority Brands	<p>Mr. Balconi has led the legal function of Authority Brands and its affiliates since joining Authority Brands in November 2018. In this role, he oversees all legal matters, including franchising, intellectual property, corporate law and mergers and acquisitions.</p> <p>A veteran of franchising, Mr. Balconi was previously an attorney for Dunkin' Brands (Dunkin' Donuts and Baskin Robbins) and Little Caesars where he was General Counsel. Mr. Balconi is active in industry associations, including the International Franchise Association and the American Bar Association Forum on Franchising, in which he previously served as Director of the Corporate Counsel Division.</p> <p>Mr. Balconi has a Bachelor of Business Administration from the University of Notre Dame and a law degree from the University of San Diego.</p>
David	Bamberger	Senior Counsel	DLA Piper (US) LLP	<p>David H. Bamberger practices antitrust law in the Washington, D.C. office of DLA Piper LLP. He has litigated in numerous federal and state courts around the country for more than 40 years, having tried scores of cases and argued in many appellate courts, including the Supreme Court of the United States. He regularly counsels clients in a variety of industries on antitrust and trade regulation matters and frequently advises franchising stakeholders on federal and state law pricing issues.</p>
Jason	Bauman	Associate General Counsel, Franchising	Planet Fitness	<p>Jason Bauman (Associate General Counsel, Franchising – Planet Fitness). Jason is currently Associate General Counsel, Franchising at Planet Fitness. He previously worked at the Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab at MIT and at Foley Hoag LLP. Jason graduated from Tufts University and Harvard Law School. Jason currently lives in northern Michigan with his wife Beth and children Noah and Sage.</p>
Andrew (Andy)	Beifuss	Partner	Quarles & Brady LLP	<p>Andy Beifuss is a nationally recognized advisor on issues that affect how businesses get products to market. His primary focus is on litigating franchise, product marketing and distribution disputes, though he also counsels on direct sales, mergers and acquisitions (M&A), and contractual and regulatory matters. Leveraging his business and legal knowledge with his network of contacts around the world, Andy advances the business and legal goals of many types of clients, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Franchise entities, addressing key concerns in the franchisor-franchisee relationship such as marketing, quality and operation standards. Manufacturers Specialty retailers Sales representatives, both those directly employed by product makers and independent consultants Distributors <p>With a master's degree in business and having worked for two Fortune 50 companies before becoming an attorney, Andy has the rare ability to understand the intersection of business and legal issues facing clients, which enables him to craft cost-effective and practical solutions for his clients worldwide.</p>
Eli	Bensignor	Partner	Lathrop GPM LLP	<p>Partner Eli Bensignor helps clients navigate the complex franchise, distribution and licensing world. He works closely with emerging and well-established franchise systems, guiding a wide range of day-to-day legal needs, from drafting agreements and commercial contracts to ensuring regulatory compliance and handling franchise registrations. Eli also represents buyers and sellers in mergers and acquisitions involving franchise systems and multi-unit franchisees, including those backed by private equity. Eli frequently writes and speaks on franchise topics; he is the author of the U.S. Chapter in Lexology Panoramic Franchise and has been the author for this annually updated publication since 2023. He has also been named among Best Lawyers: Ones to Watch and Franchise Times' Legal Eagles for several years.</p>

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Stephanie	Blumstein	Senior Counsel, Legal	Wyndham Hotels & Resorts, Inc.	Stephanie J. Blumstein is Senior Counsel at Wyndham Hotels & Resorts, supporting franchise development and operations. She was previously a Partner and Chair of the Franchise Practice Group at a business law boutique, where she provided counsel to prospective franchisees, veteran franchise operators, and franchisors on a wide range of issues both in and out of court. Ms. Blumstein has extensive experience representing clients in franchise and commercial litigation matters before state and federal courts across the country, as well as before arbitration tribunals, in alternative dispute resolution forums, and in private mediations. Ms. Blumstein is a frequent speaker on topics related to franchising, a contributor to several publications on franchising, and serves on various franchise law committees.
Mike	Broadarick	General Counsel	PuroClean, Inc.	Michael Brodarick, once honored as the "Favourite American of the Year" by PuroClean Canada, offers legal expertise to the PuroSystems business groups, in addition to enforcing and safeguarding PuroSystems' global trademarks and franchise agreements. Michael also has experience in defending insurance carriers and their insureds against construction defect and property damage claims, having served clients such as Zurich Insurance Group, Continental Casualty Company (CNA), and Citizens Property Insurance Corporation. Michael is a member of the Florida, Georgia, Michigan, and Kentucky State Bar Associations.
Toni	Brown	Of Counsel	Greenberg Traurig, LLP	Toni Brown is a shareholder in Greenberg Traurig's Atlanta office. Toni specializes in drafting and negotiating commercial contracts, with a distinct emphasis on supply chain and distribution agreements. Leveraging a wealth of practical experience that she developed both in private practice, and in over the decade she spent in-house, Toni takes a uniquely business-focused approach to document review and negotiation. With an astute understanding of corporate dynamics and the complexities of supply chain operations, Toni regularly counsels clients on optimizing contractual arrangements for seamless supply chain and distribution operations, and consistently seeks to ensure clients have adequate protections and practical remedies in their agreements. Her experience also includes structuring, drafting, and negotiating supply contracts, co-packing and private label agreements, distribution agreements, third party logistics contracts, product development agreements, and master services agreements and associated statements of work. Toni has represented some of the largest franchise brands in the food and beverage industry. However, her skills and experience easily translate across a variety of industries, helping her to serve clients outside of the food and beverage industry as well.

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Harold R.	Bruno, III	Equity Shareholder	Robinson Waters & O'Doriso, P.C.	<p>Hal is a shareholder at the Colorado law firm of Robinson Waters & O'Doriso, P.C.</p> <p>Since 1985, his practice has focused on franchise, distribution and intellectual property litigation and arbitration representing franchisors, franchisees, manufacturers and distributors.</p> <p>Hal is admitted to practice law in Colorado, Wyoming, and the District of Columbia as well as the United States Courts of Appeals for the 1st, 4th, 9th, 10th, and Federal Circuits.</p> <p>Hal is an approved arbitrator with the American Arbitration Association and is on the AAA Franchise Panel. He has served as a neutral in nineteen franchise cases, many of which have gone to hearing. He has also been selected and presided over dozens of commercial disputes as an arbitrator.</p> <p>He is a member of the American Bar Association's Intellectual Property Law Section, the ABA Forum Committee on Franchising, the International Franchise Association, the International Trademark Association, and the South Asian Bar Association.</p> <p>Hal is listed in Best Lawyers in America® for Franchise Law and was selected as the 2016, 2018, and 2022 "Lawyer of the Year" for Franchise Law in Colorado. He has also been recognized as a Super Lawyer® in either franchise law or intellectual property litigation since 2010 and has earned an AV rating from his peers through Martindale-Hubbell. Most recently, Hal was selected as a "Legal Eagle" by the Franchise Times. Hal was President of Temple Micah from 2007 to 2009 and volunteers for the Rocky Mountain Immigration Advocacy Network.</p> <p>Education:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • B.A. in Finance, University of Illinois, With Honors • J.D., University of Colorado
Nicole	Buffalano	Partner	Morgan, Lewis & Bockius LLP	<p>Nicole has deep knowledge of traditional labor law, representing employers in complex labor relations issues across diverse industries, including sports and entertainment, hospitality, healthcare, automotive, trucking, maritime, and manufacturing. She brings extensive experience in advancing employers' interests in corporate campaigns, union elections, unfair labor practice proceedings before the National Labor Relations Board and federal courts, collective bargaining, arbitration, strike and picketing management, and labor considerations in mergers and acquisitions.</p>
Dale	Cantone	Assistant Attorney General	State of Maryland	<p>Dale Cantone is an Assistant Attorney General for the State of Maryland and the Deputy Securities Commissioner for the Maryland Securities Division. Mr. Cantone is the chief of the franchise and business opportunity unit of the Maryland Securities Division. In addition, Mr. Cantone serves as Chair of the Franchise and Business Opportunity Committee/Project Group of the North American Securities Administrators Association, Inc. ("NASAA").</p>
Megan	Center	Partner	Quarles & Brady LLP	<p>franchise law, corporate governance and mergers and acquisitions (M&A). With over a decade of dedicated experience, Megan provides comprehensive, results-oriented legal counsel to franchisors across diverse industries, guiding them through every stage of the franchise lifecycle. Megan advises clients on:</p> <p>The strategy and structure of franchise programs, as well as counseling on corporate formation, governance and M&A transactions.</p> <p>Preparing and maintaining franchise disclosure documents (FDD.)</p> <p>Drafting and negotiating complex franchise transactional documents.</p> <p>Ensuring compliance with state and federal franchise regulations.</p> <p>Day-to-day franchise system management, including renewal, termination, transfer, supply and relationship issues, and operational changes.</p> <p>Franchise system acquisitions and sales, including sales to, or purchases by, private equity.</p> <p>Systems designing alternatives to franchising.</p> <p>As co-chair of the International Franchise Association's (IFA) Women's Franchise Network, Megan is deeply committed to fostering growth and leadership within the franchise industry. She is an active member of the IFA Women's Committee and the American Bar Association Forum on Franchising.</p> <p>Megan's client-centric approach combines strategic legal counsel with a profound understanding of the franchise business model. She is dedicated to proactively addressing legal challenges, helping franchisors mitigate risks and focus on sustainable, long-term growth.</p>

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Harris	Chernow	Attorney at Law	Reger Rizzo Darnall LLP	<p>Distribution Practice Group and an active member of the Corporate & Business Services Group and Hospitality Law Group. He has a national practice representing franchisors, franchisees, and distributors in many sectors, including in the hotel and hospitality industry. His experience is complemented by his significant business and corporate practice, including complex mergers and acquisitions, executive employment, leasing and real estate, and mediation and arbitration practices.</p> <p>Much more than a franchise and hospitality lawyer, Harris is a well-respected corporate/business lawyer who improves his clients' companies by delivering guidance through their business transactions and disputes.</p> <p>With clients ranging from start-ups to large, long-established companies, Harris has worked with an array of businesses. His franchise and business practice extends across a range of industries, representing franchisors/brands, single and multi-unit franchisees/owners, area developers, master franchisees, franchisee associations, distributors, and private equity-backed businesses seeking to expand through franchising or distribution.</p> <p>Harris is also highly sought after for his dispute resolution acumen in franchise, hospitality, and commercial business disputes. He has a reputation for being strong but reasonable. Harris and the firm's Litigation Group are often called upon to represent clients in franchise and commercial litigation, arbitration, and mediation cases.</p> <p>Due to Harris' reputation for being knowledgeable, fair, and unbiased, he is frequently appointed as an arbitrator and mediator in franchise, hospitality, and commercial matters.</p>
Robert	Clary	Partner	Baker & McKenzie LLP	<p>Robert (Rob) Clary is a tax partner in the Chicago office. Rob focuses his practice on international tax, corporate reorganizations, post-acquisition integration and cross-border acquisitions. He advises clients in a variety of industries, including retail, technology, consumer health, industrial manufacturing, automotive, consumer products, pharmaceuticals, medical technology, and financial information.</p>
Mike	Coccaro	General Counsel	Synergy Home Care	<p>Mike Coccaro joined SYNERGY HomeCare as its General Counsel in 2014 and provides strategic legal direction and support. He handles the areas of franchise law, corporate governance, dispute resolution, intellectual property protection, data privacy, advertising and marketing laws, contract negotiation, drafting and more. Prior to joining SYNERGY HomeCare, Mike was an associate with Snell & Wilmer, L.L.P. in Phoenix, Arizona. Mike is admitted to practice law in Arizona and California and has spoken at IFA and ABA events on franchise matters and has authored articles in various franchise-law related publications.</p>
Fredric (goes by)	Cohen	Partner	Cheng Cohen LLC	<p>Ric is a seasoned business and commercial litigator and trial lawyer. He represents clients in state and federal trial and appellate courts across the country as well as in alternative dispute resolution forums such as arbitration and mediation. Ric has extensive experience in the areas of distribution, antitrust, trademarks, valuation and finance, among others.</p> <p>Ric spends most of his time keeping the world safe for franchising. For over thirty years, Ric has represented many of the nation's most prominent franchise, licensing and distribution companies in a wide variety of lawsuits from complex multi-forum class action litigation to standard enforcement actions and everything in between.</p> <p>Ric has helped franchisors develop programs to protect and enforce their franchised systems and intellectual property rights like trademarks and trade secrets, and he regularly defends franchisors against fraud, breach of contract, good faith and fair dealing, tortious interference, registration and disclosure violations and similar claims. Ric also works with franchisors to develop effective responses to state and federal regulatory inquiries and investigations, as well as strategies to defend state and federal enforcement actions. Chambers USA commented that Ric "is hailed by peers as an excellent litigation lawyer" and "one of the great litigation experts in the [franchising] field."</p>

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Deb	Coldwell	Partner	Haynes & Boone, LLP	<p>liability companies, partnerships, and the individuals who run those companies in jury trials, bench trials and arbitrations. She has litigated across several industries – from hotels and restaurants to health clubs and tax preparation services to product and service-based franchise and distribution networks.</p> <p>Deb will help bring a business solution to a dispute when possible and is skilled in representing clients in mediations and other settlement proceedings. But when litigation is inevitable, she is fully prepared to go to trial or arbitration and to fight for a company and its officers. To that end, in 2022 Deb successfully led a trial team in a franchise case in the Eastern District of Texas, tried a case involving the sale of a franchise company in bankruptcy court, and previously litigated a successful six week jury trial in Texas state court in a joint venture dispute. Ranked nationally in Band 1 by Chambers USA, Chambers and Partners, 2009-2024 in the franchise law category, clients have described her as an "outstanding trial lawyer," "very poised, thoughtful and smart," and as "an especially good advocate."</p> <p>Deb loves to organize and motivate teams to accomplish short and long term goals. She is a past chair of the 2,000-plus member American Bar Association Forum on Franchising. She also served the Forum as the editor-in-chief of the Franchise Law Journal and as its publications officer. Deb is currently a Champion at the Center for Women in Law housed at the University of Texas School of Law. She was nominated and is serving a three year term on the Executive Committee of the Center.</p> <p>Prior to attending law school, Deb worked in restaurants and taught junior high and college. Deb's unique background helps her bring a practical approach to problem solving and allows her to assist clients to find an</p>
Lindsey	Cooper	Lead Counsel	Franchise World Headquarters LLC (Subway)	<p>Currently, Lead Counsel on the North America Team in the Subway Legal Department, where I handle litigation and transactional matters pertaining to Subway® franchises and leases in the northeast United States and the US Territories. Prior to my current role, I was Associate General Counsel for the Subway Dispute Resolution Group, responsible for management of litigation and arbitration matters concerning franchise, consumer, and general contract disputes.</p>
Kristin	Corcoran	VP of Corporate Counsel	Marco's Pizza	<p>Kristin L. Corcoran has broad commercial, transactional, and litigation experience and has practiced franchise law for over 25 years. She is currently Chief Legal Counsel for Marco's Franchising, LLC. In her previous role with DLA Piper and as co-founder of Appleby & Corcoran, LLC, Kristin provided legal advice on domestic and international franchise matters. She was previously Senior Associate General Counsel leading the international legal team for Subway restaurants, focusing on market entry, legal compliance, and supply chain management. In addition to teaching Franchise Law and the Commercial Transactions Workshop at Quinnipiac University School of Law, Kristin is on the steering committee for the International Franchise Association's Legal Symposium, and is an active member of the ABA Forum on Franchising, and the ABA's International Contracts Committee.</p>
Julie	Davis	Global Chief Legal Officer & Corporate Secretary	Taco Bell	<p>Julie Davis is Global Chief Legal Officer of Taco Bell Corp., leading the law department and all ethics, integrity, and corporate compliance efforts. Julie also helps lead brand reputation initiatives to protect and support the brand. Most recently, she took the Taco Bell Foundation under her wing and plans to continue the Foundation's growth to build confidence in more passionate young adults.</p> <p>Before joining Taco Bell in 2013, Julie was a partner at Carothers DiSante & Freudenberger LLP, where she was the lead defense counsel for single-plaintiff and class action employment cases.</p> <p>Julie graduated from the University of Pennsylvania with a degree in Psychology, before earning a J.D. degree from the University of North Carolina School of Law, graduating in the top 1% of her class with high honors.</p> <p>From 2007-2011, Julie was recognized as a "Southern California Rising Star" by Los Angeles Magazine. She has also written for multiple publications and books. The entire Legal Department recently received the 2019 "Best In House Legal Team" from the Orange County Business Journal.</p>

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Daniel	Deane	Litigation Partner	Nixon Peabody LLP	Dan Deane is a litigation partner in the Manchester, New Hampshire office of Nixon Peabody LLP. He is active on the firm's Franchising & Distribution team, the Class Actions and Aggregate Litigation, and the TCPA and Consumer Privacy teams. Dan's franchise practice focuses on representing franchisors and franchise systems in all manner of disputes, including breach of contract, franchise terminations, enforcement of trademark rights and non-competition covenants, and defending against government enforcement actions and consumer-based class actions that threaten entire franchise systems. He frequently practices before state and federal courts across the country, as well as arbitral forums, such as the AAA and JAMS. In recent years, Dan has represented several franchisors in mediations and arbitrations and was part of a trial team that won a \$38 million verdict in the first trial of a wide-ranging mass action litigation pending in the New Hampshire superior courts. Before joining Nixon Peabody, Dan clerked for Judge Jeffrey R. Howard on the United States Court of Appeals for the First Circuit and Judge Joseph A. DiClerico, Jr. on the United States District Court for the District of New Hampshire.
Danielle	Diller	Franchise Attorney	Shankman Leone, P.A.	Danielle is an experienced franchise attorney with nearly eight years of dedicated practice in the field. Danielle primarily represents franchisors, including Fortune 500 franchise companies, providing comprehensive legal counsel on all aspects of franchise operations and disputes. Her practice includes managing complex litigation files, advising franchisors on their day-to-day relationship management with franchisees, assisting clients with preparation of the full spectrum of franchise documents, including Franchise Disclosure Documents, and ensuring compliance with relevant laws and regulations. Additionally, Danielle's practice extends to employment-related restrictive covenant disputes and connected business torts and violations. Danielle represents clients in federal and state courts, and arbitrations in Florida, North Carolina, and across the United States. These matters often involve franchise and development agreement disputes, regulatory compliance, trademarks, trade secrets, unfair competition, covenants not to compete, antitrust issues, and related business torts. Over the course of her career, Danielle has become a trusted advisor to franchisors, helping them navigate the dynamics of franchisor-franchisee relationships and disputes in order to support her clients' business growth and minimize their legal risk. With an understanding of both the strategic, operational, and regulatory aspects of franchising, Danielle delivers practical, result-oriented legal solutions that help clients navigate and succeed in the evolving franchise landscape.
Jarina	Duffy	Counsel	Polsinelli	An experienced attorney, Jarina Duffy understands the unique challenges and opportunities that franchise, licensing and distribution businesses face, sharing clients' entrepreneurial focus by delivering responsive, practical, creative and focused legal counsel to companies ranging from startups to well-known, established brands in the domestic and international franchise, license, distribution, and supply chain space. She assists clients in drafting and negotiating franchise disclosure documents, franchise and licensing agreements, supply agreements and a range of other contracts related to franchising and distribution. Jarina also advises clients on franchisee relationships, intellectual property and regulatory compliance matters.
Molly	Eichten	Attorney	Larkin, Hoffman Daly & Lindgren Ltd	Molly Eichten is a shareholder in the intellectual property department of Larkin Hoffman, a law firm based in Minneapolis. Molly focuses her practice in the areas of trademark and copyright law as well as technology transactions including licensing, outsourcing, and software development. Molly has legal and technical experience in web-related issues, such as software development, e-commerce, domain names and social media. Since 2017, Molly has been recognized each year as one of the top 1,000 trademark lawyers in the world by the World Trademark Review (WTR), a news service dedicated to global trademark topics. In 2024, Molly was named to Minnesota Lawyer's List of Top Women in Law. Molly represents several franchised brands, including Anytime Fitness, Orange Theory Fitness, Waxing the City, The Bar Method, Scooter's Coffee, and Sonny's BBQ.

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Zev	Eigen J.D.	Senior Director, Data Science	DLA Piper US LLP	<p>Zev Eigen is the Senior Director of data science. In this role, he tests clients' commercial algorithms for bias and disparate impact in light of regulatory standards and ethical principles.</p> <p>Before joining DLA Piper, Zev developed technology centering on pay equity, second-chance hiring, and AI dispute resolution. As a strategic advisor, Zev focused on developing and testing models and systems to de-bias AI and to help ensure compliance with laws and regulations, with a focus on wage-and-hour class actions.</p> <p>Zev previously served as in-house labor counsel at a global media/entertainment company. Zev was an Irving S. Ribicoff Visiting Professor of Law at Yale Law School, a visiting Associate Professor of Law at NYU School of Law, and an Associate Professor of Law at Northwestern University School of Law with a joint appointment at the Kellogg School of Business.</p>
Michael	Einbinder	Partner	Einbinder & Dunn LLP	<p>extensive experience representing clients in disputes in state and federal courts and in arbitration forums nationwide. He has also represented clients in mediations. Michael's cases generally involve claims relating to breach of contract, fraud, misappropriation of trade secrets, interference with contractual relations, enforcement of non-competition agreements, commercial real estate issues, and partnership and shareholder disputes. Michael's business and commercial clients include businesses in a wide variety of industries including business services, retail, restaurant, hospitality, pet services, garment industry, entertainment, childcare and children's recreation, healthcare, manufacturing, and logistics. A significant portion of Michael's practice is devoted to representing franchisor and franchisee clients in connection with franchise transactional work (preparation of Franchise Disclosure Documents, review of franchise agreements, acquisitions of franchise businesses) and disputes, including franchise terminations, trademark infringement claims, enforcement of non-competition agreements, and breach of contract and fraud claims. He also handles disputes relating to securities and bankruptcy issues. Michael has also represented clients in disputes involving wills, trusts and guardianships.</p> <p>Michael is a member of the New York City Bar Association, is active in the American Bar Association Forum on Franchising and the International Franchise Association, and is a member of the American Bar Association Section of Dispute Resolution as a committee member of both the Arbitration and Ethics committees.</p> <p>Michael has served as an arbitrator for the American Arbitration Association for since 2010, presiding over cases involving claims relating to breach of contract, license agreements, fraud, misappropriation of trade secrets and intellectual property, interference with contractual relations, enforcement of</p>

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Robert	Einhorn	Managing Partner	Zarco Einhorn Salkowski	<p>thirty years, Robert has focused on representing franchisees in litigation throughout the United States and internationally. He has represented franchisees from nearly every major franchise system in the hotel, restaurant, and service industries. Robert holds a Bachelor of Business Administration degree from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where he dual-majored in accounting and risk & insurance. He also holds a law degree from the University of Miami and is both an attorney and an accountant.</p> <p>After graduating from law school in 1990, Robert worked for a prestigious litigation firm in Florida, gaining extensive experience in complex civil and criminal litigation in state and federal courts nationwide. He is currently admitted to practice before several state and federal courts across the country. Additionally, he has appeared and represented clients in numerous other state and federal courts and has conducted various arbitration proceedings across the country.</p> <p>Robert began working with Robert Zarco in January 1994 and has worked continuously with Mr. Zarco since that time, representing franchise clients and preparing and trying franchise cases. He regularly devotes his time to franchisee associations that advocate for fairness in franchising and improved relations between franchisors and franchisees.</p> <p>Robert frequently serves as an author and speaker on franchise-related topics. He has been an active member of the American Association of Franchisees and Dealers ("AAFD") for over thirty years and has served on the AAFD's Fair Franchising Standards Committee. He has also been involved with the American Bar Association's ("ABA") Forum on Franchising for many years, serving as a frequent speaker at the ABA's Annual Franchise Forum and contributing as both an author and editor for the Franchise Law Journal.</p>
Brian	Forgas	Senior Counsel - Global Franchise Regulatory	Hilton	<p>Brian Forgas is Senior Counsel of Global Franchise Regulatory for Hilton in McLean, Virginia. Brian leads Hilton's franchise regulatory compliance program for the company's 22 hotel brands worldwide. He also provides strategic direction and legal support for new market entry and new brand development projects, hotel franchise and management transactions, and enforcement matters. Previously, Brian was in-house counsel with McDonald's Corporation in Oak Brook, IL where he was a U.S. Division Counsel responsible for regions encompassing about 3,000 restaurants. Before that he was in private practice in Washington, DC. Brian has written and spoken for the International Franchise Association, ABA Forum on Franchising, International Bar Association, and the Defense Research Institute. He is a chapter author of the Franchise Deskbook and is published in the Franchise Law Journal. Brian has taught at the American University's Washington College of Law, Hospitality and Tourism Law Program in Washington and Paris. He serves on the Georgetown Law Hotel and Lodging Summit planning committee, and is a past director of the ABA Forum on Franchising's Corporate Counsel Division. Brian received his J.D. cum laude from The Catholic University of America in Washington, DC.</p>
Helen	Fotinos	Partner, National Lead of Franchising, Distribution and Retail Groups	Dentons	<p>Helen Fotinos is a partner in our Corporate group in Toronto and lead of the Firm's National Franchising and Distribution group in Canada. Her practice focuses on all aspects of franchise/distribution law and related corporate/commercial contracts and disputes.</p> <p>Prior to returning to private practice, Helen served as General Counsel to domestic and international franchisors, manufacturers and distributors in the quick-service/casual dining, food and beverage, hospitality and automotive industries. She has extensive experience developing integrated risk management strategies and practical business solutions that assist clients in managing both their day-to-day operations as well as the strategic long-term growth of their businesses.</p> <p>Helen regularly advises domestic and international franchisors, manufacturers and distributors on wide variety of issues, including: Canadian market entry, exit and expansion strategies; franchise disclosure obligations; unit, area development and master franchise agreements; system changes; default enforcement; franchise terminations; renewals and transfers; the standardization of key operating documents; the implementation and enforcement of financial reporting, training and performance improvement programs; vendor, distribution and employment agreements; consumer grievances and litigation management.</p>

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Don	Fox	Former CEO	Firehouse Subs	<p>Don Fox served for 50 years in the restaurant industry. He is the former CEO of Firehouse Subs, having joined the then nine-year-old brand in 2003 when there were only 65 restaurants. He emerged as its COO in 2005, and in 2009, took the reins as chief executive officer. He led the brand until his retirement at the end of 2023, by which time there were 1277 restaurants in the USA and Canada with system sales exceeding \$1.1 billion.</p> <p>Fox was recognized by Nation's Restaurant News as 2011's Operator of the Year. In 2013, he received the prestigious Silver Plate Award from the International Food Manufacturers Association and in 2025, the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Florida Restaurant & Lodging Association. He continues to serve on several profit and nonprofit boards, including Treehouse Eyes, which provides treatment for childhood myopia, the National Restaurant Association, and the Army Historical Foundation.</p> <p>Fox's passion outside of the business of restaurants and franchising is researching and writing about the history of the Second World War. He is the author of the two-volume unit history of the United States Army Fourth Armored, "Patton's Vanguard" (2003) and "Final Battles of Patton's Vanguard" (2020). His third work, "You're a Good Man, Sergeant" (a collaboration with the late Sgt. Paul Porter of the 53rd Armored Infantry Battalion) was published in 2024. He has two works due for release in 2025: "The Fourth Armored Division Combat Chronology – Patton's Vanguard in World War II" and "Welcome to Firehouse! Building a Billion Dollar Brand in America's Most Competitive Industry."</p>
Vincent	Frantz	Attorney	Cheng Cohen LLC	<p>Vince's practice consists of franchise and distribution law, trademark matters, and general corporate governance. Vince helps clients in all stages of franchising, including drafting franchise disclosure documents, franchise and development agreements and all applicable governing documents. He also assists clients with day-to-day issues, such as vendor agreements, domain name acquisition, cease and desist letters, franchisee default and termination notices, and mergers and acquisitions. He has represented buyers in asset acquisitions, cross-border transactions, and take-private stock acquisitions. Vince is actively involved in managing the firm's trademark registration and maintenance services, including filing trademark applications and monitoring registrations around the globe.</p> <p>Prior to joining Cheng Cohen, Vince practiced at a law firm in Chicago, where he represented clients in a wide range of intellectual property and technology transactions. His practice covered patent portfolio monetization, which includes patent sales, licensing, litigation, and portfolio valuation. He also created and managed the firm's trademark prosecution practice.</p>
Eleanor (Elle)	Gerhards	Partner & Co-Chair of Franchising and Distribution Group	Fox Rothschild LLP	<p>Eleanor Vaida Gerhards, CFE is a partner at the national law firm of Fox Rothschild LLP where she concentrates her practice on commercial transactions and regulatory compliance matters. As Co-Chair of the firm's Franchising and Distribution Practice Group, she routinely serves as outside general corporate and franchise legal counsel to startup, emerging and established regional, national and international franchise clients. Elle is a former member of the IFA Legal Symposium Task Force, the current Co-Chair of the IFA Philadelphia Women's Franchise Network, and multiple past presenter at the IFA Legal Symposium, including participating on the panel for the 2023 IFA Legal Symposium Judicial Update. Elle has been recognized by Chambers USA as a leading national franchise attorney, named a "Legal Eagle" by Franchise Times for the last 10 years, a "Rising Star" by Superlawyers, a Pennsylvania "Lawyer on the Fast Track" by the Legal Intelligencer as well as recognized by Who's Who Legal Franchising and named among Philadelphia's Business Journal's 40 under 40.</p>

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Jim	Gonia	General Counsel	Self Esteem Brands	<p>As General Counsel of Purpose Brands—parent company to OrangeTheory Fitness, Anytime Fitness, Waxing the City, The Bar Method and Basecamp Fitness—Jim Gonia leads the team that helps the company and its brands navigate the wide range of domestic and international franchise and corporate laws that impact their businesses. Purpose Brands has over 7,000 operating units across the globe in more than 50 countries and territories and on all seven continents.</p> <p>Jim has been practicing franchise law for more than three decades, both in private practice and as in-house counsel, and has representing some of the most prominent brands in franchising. Jim repeatedly has been recognized as a leader in the field of franchise law. Jim previously served on the Governing Committee of the American Bar Association Forum on Franchising and is a member of Franchise Times Magazine's "Legal Eagle Hall of Fame." He has published numerous articles and papers on the subject of franchise law, as well as two books: The Franchise Law Compliance Manual, 3d Ed. (co-editor) and Annual Franchise and Distribution Law Developments, 2012 (co-author).</p> <p>Jim received a J.D. with high honors in 1990 from Rutgers Law School and a B.F.A. with honors in 1985 from the Tisch School of the Arts at New York University.</p>
John	Gotaskie, Jr.	Partner	Fox Rothschild	<p>matters including complex commercial litigation, bankruptcy litigation and franchising issues.</p> <p>He represents both franchisors and franchisees in litigation and general corporate matters, including advice respecting Franchise Disclosure Documents, franchise agreements and related contracts. In addition to his litigation practice, John serves as trusted advisor to several companies and individuals, assisting his clients in developing a carefully coordinated approach to identify and address legal issues effectively and efficiently. He believes that a carefully coordinated approach to legal services is necessary not only to help his clients solve their legal problems but also to help his clients become more successful.</p> <p>John's broad background in litigation matters, in both federal and state courts, includes cases involving contracts, partnership and shareholder agreements, trade secrets, restrictive covenants, trademarks and copyrights, construction, antitrust, employment, protection of creditors' interests in bankruptcy and governmental oversight of regulated industries.</p> <p>Beyond Fox Rothschild John is a U.S.A. Swimming Official, serving as a Starter, Chief Judge and Stroke and Turn Judge. He also serves on the Age Group Committee for Allegheny Mountain Swimming, one of 102 regional affiliates of U.S.A. Swimming.</p> <p>John is an Appointed Governor, Chair of the Alumni Clubs Committee and member of the Executive Committee of the Georgetown University Alumni Association, as well as a former President of the Georgetown Alumni Club of Pittsburgh.</p>
Michael	Graf	Partner	Dentons	<p>Michael Graf is a Partner in Dentons' Frankfurt office and Co-Head of the European Tax practice. He is an MBA (Diplom-Kaufmann), a lawyer admitted to the German Bar and a certified tax advisor. He specializes in tax law and mainly advises multinational corporations with respect to their national and international tax questions. His advice comprises tax optimized structuring, monitoring tax field audits, filing administrative appeals as well as representing clients before finance courts and the Federal Finance Court (Bundesfinanzhof). Furthermore, he advises on tax optimized structures in connection with M&A deals.</p>

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Kevin	Hein	Co-Chair, Franchise and Licensing Practice Denver	Akerman LLP	<p>Team, a highly experienced group handling U.S. and international franchising, licensing, dealership and trademark counseling, registration and litigation matters for franchisors, licensors, subfranchisors, dealers, and other business clients. For more than two decades, Kevin has focused his practice on counseling companies that rely on franchising as part of their distribution models on a wide range of legal issues, including state and federal disclosure requirements, compliance with state relationship laws, franchise sales compliance, restaurant and retail development, franchising in the health and wellness industries, mergers and acquisitions, corporate counseling, bankruptcy and reorganization, and dispute resolution.</p> <p>Kevin's experience in the restaurant industry includes advising clients regarding corporate formation, real estate acquisition and development, leasing issues, corporate financing activities, mergers and acquisitions, dispute resolution, general corporate matters, and franchise relationship issues. In addition, he regularly counsels established and emerging healthcare and wellness clients to ensure their franchise systems and licensing programs are structured to comply with federal and state laws regarding corporate practice of medicine, fee-splitting, Stark and physician self-referral regulations, HIPAA compliance, and other healthcare related compliance issues.</p>
Rob	Heulin	Chief Legal Officer	Threshold Brands	<p>Robert G. Huelin is the Chief Legal Officer of Threshold Brands, LLC, the operator of home services franchise brands such as MaidPro, USA Insulation, Sir Grout and Miracle Method. Prior to joining Threshold Brands, Rob spent 6 years leading the legal department at Wireless Zone, a leading franchisor of mobile device retail franchises. Rob lives in CT with his wife and children.</p>
Amelia	John	Senior Director	Yum! Brands	<p>I am a senior tax executive with strong business and global acumen coupled with proven leadership and communication skills. I have a diverse skill set including international tax planning, transfer pricing, tax efficient supply chain and compliance experience spanning over 15 years and multiple disciplines. I am experienced at implementing international transactions from both an international tax and ASC 740 perspective. I have experience with domestic and international structuring including IP planning, principal companies, integrated global holding companies, Subpart F income, foreign tax credits, FDII, GILTI, BEAT, 163(j), BEPS and ATAD. I have extensive experience leading and successfully implementing cross-functional tax projects for U.S. and non-U.S. multinationals across global teams that incorporate specialties from international tax, mergers and acquisitions and transfer pricing. I am a self-motivated and strategic thinker and am skilled at problem solving in both team and individual environments.</p>
Dave	Koch	Partner	Plave Koch, PLC.	<p>Dave co-founded Plave Koch PLC in 2007 after many years of large-firm partnership. His practice focuses on franchising, licensing, and supply chain transactions. Projects include structuring franchise programs and license arrangements, private equity investments in franchising, corporate and commercial transactions, regulatory compliance, antitrust counseling, advertising and marketing, and international expansion.</p> <p>He has worked with clients in foodservice, hotels, educational services, staffing, car rental, automotive, insurance, homeowner services, retail, and other industries. Before entering private practice, Dave served as an Attorney-Advisor to the Hon. Daniel Oliver, Chairman of the Federal Trade Commission.</p> <p>Dave is also an Adjunct Clinical Assistant Professor at the University of Michigan Law School, his alma mater, and at NYU Law School. Each law school operates an International Transactions Clinic where Dave works with students and clients on microfranchising and branded network projects.</p>

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Scott	Kuykendall	Assistant General Counsel	Neighborly	<p>Scott Kuykendall serves as in-house franchise counsel at Neighborly, the world's largest parent company of 30 home service brands and more than 5,500 franchises collectively serving 14 million+ customers by repairing, maintaining, and enhancing their homes and businesses. Prior to joining Neighborly, Scott was the General Counsel responsible at UAS International Trip Support, a company that provides aviation trip support, executive travel, and air charter. Before that, he served as Corporate Counsel at Era Helicopters, now Bristow, a leader in global vertical flight solutions offering helicopter offshore oil & gas transportation and search and rescue (SAR) services to civil and government organizations worldwide.</p> <p>When not working, Scott enjoys traveling or spending time in the outdoors with his kids and beautiful wife. He received his juris doctor from South Texas College of Law Houston and his Bachelor of Arts degree from Baylor University."</p>
Theresa	Leets	Assistant Chief Counsel, Franchise Unit, Legal Division,	California Department of Financial Protection & Innovation	<p>Theresa Leets is the Assistant Chief Counsel of the Securities Regulation Unit of the California Department of Financial Protection and Innovation's Legal Division. She is responsible for supervising the Department's programs under the Corporate Securities Law of 1968 and the Franchise Investment Law. Last year the Department regulated over 1.1 trillion dollars in securities and franchise transactions. The Department processed 36,000 exemption notice filings, 2,600 applications and collected \$17 million dollars in fee revenue. Ms. Leets speaks frequently on topics related to both franchise and securities law. She is a member of the North American Securities Administrators Association (NASAA) Corporate Finance's Franchise and Business Opportunities Project Group. Ms. Leets is currently serving as a Trustee for the Los Angeles County Bar Association. She is also a licensed California real estate broker with an inactive Mortgage Loan Origination (MLO) endorsement. She is the first franchise regulator to earn a Certified Franchise Executive (CFE) designation from the International Franchise Association (IFA). Ms. Leets received her B.A. degree at the University of California at Santa Barbara and her J.D. degree at the University of California at Davis.</p>
Leah	Leipold	Partner	Caiola & Rose	<p>Leah Leipold leads the corporate practice at Caiola & Rose, advising a diverse client base—from founder-led businesses to private equity-backed multi-brand systems—on corporate and transactional matters, with a particular focus on the franchise industry. With a career rooted in complex business transactions, Leah has extensive experience representing both private and public companies in mergers, acquisitions, joint ventures, and public and private securities offerings. She also brings deep expertise in federal and state franchise registration and disclosure laws, regularly guiding franchisors through corporate transactions, contract negotiations, franchise program structuring, and regulatory (FDD) compliance. Leah's background in sophisticated corporate transactions, restructuring, and governance makes her a valuable asset to clients navigating franchise M&A deals, private equity investments in franchise systems, and whole business securitization transactions. She represents clients across a broad range of industries, including hospitality, restaurants, pet care, fitness, and convenience stores.</p>
Jeremy	Liebman	Deputy General	Krispy Kreme	<p>Jeremy Liebman is Deputy General Counsel at Krispy Kreme (NASDAQ: DNUT), where he provides strategic legal guidance on global growth and franchising. Jeremy works across global markets, navigating complex transactions, expansion efforts, and regulatory challenges.</p>
Doug	Luther	Partner	Luther Lanard, PC	<p>Doug Luther is the founder of and attorney with the law firm of Luther Lanard, PC. His practice focuses on litigating, arbitrating and mediating disputes on behalf of franchisees, helping clients buy and sell franchises and negotiating master franchise and development agreements. Doug has litigated matters in jurisdictions across the country obtaining over \$20 million in verdicts, pre-trial judgments, and settlements. Prior to starting the firm, Doug was a general counsel for a franchisor. He uses the knowledge gained in the business side of franchising to help franchisees in negotiations and in resolving disputes. Doug is a Certified Specialist in Franchise and Distribution Law by the State Bar of California's Board of Legal Specialization and past chair of the California Lawyer's Association's Franchise Law Committee. He is a past speaker at the American Bar Association Forum on Franchising, has written for the Franchise Law Journal and was a contributing author to the Franchise Deskbook: Selected State Laws, Commentary and Annotations, Third Edition.</p>

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Kim	Magyar	VP & General Counsel, Retail	McLane Company, Inc.	<p>Kim S. Magyar is the General Counsel for McLane Company, Inc.'s Retail division. McLane provides retail and restaurant supply chain solutions to convenience stores, mass merchants, drug stores, restaurants and warehouse clubs. McLane and its subsidiaries operate 80 distribution centers and one of the nation's largest private fleets. The Retail division optimizes the purchase, flow and sale of tens of thousands of consumer products to over 46,000 retail locations across the United States. Kim provides strategic legal advice on retail transactional, litigation and operational matters. She focuses on legal services that reduce overall legal, regulatory and compliance risk, while growing revenue and income through flexible and innovative business arrangements and ventures. Kim earned her bachelor's degree from the University of Wisconsin at Madison and her law degree from Marquette University. Kim has served on the U.S. Chamber of Commerce's litigation center's advisory committee and currently serves on the Board of Directors of the Temple Symphony Orchestra located in Temple, Texas.</p>
Stephanie	Maloney	Chief of Staff and Associate Chief Counsel	US Chamber of Commerce, Litigation	<p>Stephanie Maloney is chief of staff and associate chief counsel at the U.S. Chamber Litigation Center, the litigation arm of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. In this capacity, Maloney handles a variety of matters for the Chamber, including environment and energy litigation.</p> <p>Most recently, Maloney served as Chief of Staff and Counsel in the Environment and Natural Resources Division of the U.S. Department of Justice. In that capacity, she directed litigation strategy, oversaw case briefing, and managed coordination and communication with agency clients in priority cases. And she served as government counsel in cases arising under various environmental and natural resources laws.</p> <p>Before that, Maloney practiced as an associate in the Appellate and Critical Motions Practice Group at Winston & Strawn LLP. Her work focused on briefing and strategy in complex commercial and appellate litigation at the federal and state level, including merits and amicus curiae briefs to the Supreme Court of the United States.</p> <p>Maloney served as a law clerk to both the Honorable Edith Brown Clement, of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit, and the Honorable Stephen J. Murphy, III, of the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan. She graduated cum laude from Notre Dame Law School, where she served as Symposium Editor of the Notre Dame Law Review, and summa cum laude from Loyola University Maryland, where she received a B.A. in Political Science. Maloney also holds a master's degree in theology from Emory University.</p>
Andrae	Marrocco	Partner	McMillan LLP	<p>partner in the Business Law Group. A seasoned lawyer, Andrae is known for his work on high-profile matters and is a trusted advisor to domestic and international businesses. His transactional practice specializes in franchise and distribution law as well as corporate/M&A transactions, with expertise in complex franchise arrangements, franchise system mergers and acquisitions, and cross-border/international transactions.</p> <p>He works with businesses and franchise systems at all stages of growth—from start-ups to mature international enterprises—across a diverse range of industries, including professional services, technology, automotive, restaurant, retail, fitness and healthcare, childcare and education, real estate, manufacturing, and commercial services.</p> <p>Andrae provides comprehensive counsel on all aspects of Canadian franchise and distribution law. His expertise includes advising on structuring and expansion strategies, negotiating franchise (master and area development), distribution, and licensing agreements, regulatory and disclosure compliance, trademarks, acquisitions and dispositions, system changes, disputes, and enforcement. He is particularly skilled in helping foreign franchisors expand and adapt their systems to the Canadian market.</p> <p>Andrae frequently presents at Canadian and international franchise conferences and events, and routinely writes for national and international franchise journals and publications. He is an active member of various North American franchise organizations, and serves on several steering committees.</p> <p>Andrae has been awarded the "Certified Franchise Executive" designation by the Institute of Certified Franchise Executives and is repeatedly named on the list of Legal Eagles by Franchise Times. He is also recognized by Chambers Canada, Who's Who Legal: Franchise, Who's Who Legal: Canada, Lexology's Client Choice Award, The Canadian Legal Lexpert Directory, the Lexpert Guide to the Leading US/Canada Cross-Border Corporate Lawyers,</p>

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Elizabeth	McIntosh	Associate Attorney	Venable LLP	<p>Elizabeth McIntosh practices in the areas of commercial litigation, franchise litigation, and municipal law. Elizabeth also has experience handling insolvency and real estate litigation matters. She represents clients in state and federal courts, and arbitration proceedings. She served as a judicial intern to the Honorable Marcia G. Cooke at the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Florida and Judge Kerry I. Evander at the Fifth District Court of Appeals. Before attending law school, Elizabeth was the program director for the Partnership for Appalachian Girls' Education, a nonprofit educational enrichment program for girls in rural Appalachia.</p> <p>Elizabeth is a member of the American Bar Association, International Franchise Association, National Associate of Federal Equity Receivers, Miami-Dade Bar, and the Florida Bar Young Lawyers Division. Additionally, she is an active member of the Duke South Florida Alumni Association Board of Directors and a co-chair of the Duke South Florida Women's Forum.</p> <p>While in law school, she was the University of Miami Law Review senior notes and comments editor, a fellow in the University of Miami Children and Youth Law Clinic, and participant in the University of Miami Litigation Skills Program, where she received multiple honors. She was also a recipient of the Dean's Merit Scholarship Award and the CALI Excellence for the Future Award in the Children and Youth Law Clinic.</p>
Susan	Meyer	Partner	UB Greensfelder LLP	<p>Susan Meyer, Partner with UB Greensfelder, helps publicly-held and privately owned companies and individuals plan for success and navigate complex legal challenges. Susan provides practical business-driven solutions in the areas of intellectual property (IP), franchising, and distribution. Susan works with franchisors on compliance issues and strategic planning and serves as outside general counsel for them. In IP, she manages prosecutions, licensing, and dispute resolution, and with extensive experience in trademark law, represents clients before the Trademark Trial and Appeal Board and federal courts. In 2019, Susan was appointed as Norway's Honorary Consul for Illinois, and since 2024, her role also includes Wisconsin. Serving as Royal Norwegian Honorary Consul, Susan assists with consular affairs and helps to facilitate development of business, cultural, and educational relations between Norway and the U.S. In her legal practice, she frequently advises companies on matters related to commerce between the U.S. and Scandinavia. She has spoken on IP and franchising matters at the American Bar Association's Forum on Franchising, the International Franchise Association's Legal Symposium, the European Women's Association, the IWEC Foundation, the Swedish American Chamber of Commerce (SACC-USA) in Sweden, and the Norwegian-American Chamber of Commerce (NACC). She is a past president of NACC Chicago (now NorCham) and twice attended the SelectUSA Investment Summit on international trade opportunities as a member of the Norwegian delegation. Susan is an active member of NorCham Chicago and SACC Chicago. She is a board member of the Norwegian-American Defense and Homeland Security Industry Council (NADIC). Susan serves on the board of Women Entrepreneurs Grow Global (WEGG), a non-profit organization dedicated to helping women-owned businesses expand internationally. She is president and on the Board of the Friends of Astrup Fearnley Museet, a non-profit that supports and promotes the Astrup Fearnley contemporary art museum in Oslo, Norway.</p>

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Nicole	Micklich	Shareholder	Urso, Liguori & Micklich, P.C.	<p>franchisees and development agents at every step of the franchise relationship and in litigation with franchisors. She also frequently draws on her construction knowledge and experience to effectively represent property owners and contractors in a variety of construction disputes.</p> <p>Ms. Micklich's commitment to her clients and to the field of franchise law leads to enviable results. The outcome of each case depends on the facts and circumstances of each particular case.</p> <p>Ms. Micklich routinely assists potential franchisees as they review disclosure documents and proposed agreements.</p> <p>She has successfully represented development agents and franchisees in arbitration and in state and federal courts in cases regarding alleged non-compliance, termination and non-renewal, franchisor refusal to consent to transfer, bad faith, contract and tort claims, and violations of state and federal laws, including disclosure laws. She has also favorably settled numerous cases on behalf of franchisees and development agents involved in such disputes.</p> <p>Ms. Micklich advises clients regarding the transfer of franchise agreements and has drafted and negotiated the Asset Purchase Agreements and related Agreements, Notes and Resolutions for those transactions. She also frequently drafts and negotiates termination agreements and releases.</p> <p>Ms. Micklich enjoys extensive involvement in the American Bar Association Forum on Franchising, where she is a member of the Governing Committee. She was a co-chair of the Forum's 46th Annual Meeting, in Dallas, Texas, November 1-3, 2023. With Mark VanderBroek, Ms. Micklich recently co-</p>
Vanessa	Miller	Partner	Foley & Lardner LLP	<p>the firm's national Automotive Team, as well as on the advisory committee of the firm's Manufacturing Sector. She served as a former chair of the Detroit office's Litigation Department. Vanessa's practice focuses on a wide array of supply chain disputes, including breach of contract and warranty claims, automotive supply chain issues and maintaining continuity of supply, defending manufacturers against class actions, trade secret misappropriation claims and business torts. Recognized as a nationally ranked top lawyer by Chambers for Transportation: Road (Automotive) for the past two years, showcasing her deep expertise and leadership in the field.</p> <p>Vanessa has successfully managed, litigated and tried cases in state and federal courts, as well as handled appellate proceedings. She has significant experience handling complex international arbitrations in various venues, including the Court of Arbitration of the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), the American Arbitration Association (AAA), the Judicial Arbitration and Mediation Services Inc. (JAMS) and the Singapore International Arbitration Centre (SIAC). Vanessa also has represented clients in commercial mediations, resulting in early resolution of legal disputes and creative business solutions for parties continuing to do business together.</p> <p>In addition to her litigation, international arbitration and mediation experience, Vanessa regularly counsels clients on various commercial contracts, supply chain agreements, supply</p>
Keith	Miller	Franchisee, Past Chairman & Principal	North American Association of Subway Franchisees; Franchisee Advocacy Consulting	<p>Keith Miller has been a Subway franchise owner since 1988, owning up to 6 stores in Nevada and California, and currently owns 3 stores in California. Keith was Chairman of the Coalition of Franchisee Associations (CFA) from January 2012 through January 2018 and remains on as a Director. He served on the North American Association of Subway Franchisees (NAASF) as a Director from 2000-2002 and 2005-2010, and served as NAASF's first President, CEO, and Chair in 2000-2001. In 2018, Keith founded Franchisee Advocacy Consulting, working to advance franchisee causes through engagement and advocacy. In 2019, he was named Director of Public Affairs and Engagement for the American Association of Franchisees and Dealers (AAFD).</p>

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Jorge	Mondragon	Partner	Perez-Lorca	<p>a legal and commercial business-oriented practice with a focus on corporate, commercial, franchising, licensing, distribution, technology, and business retail matters.</p> <p>Experience</p> <p>His experience includes advising Mexican and foreign clients on the full spectrum of transactions – from start-ups mechanisms to the correct management and operation of their business. His practice also entails compliance, regulatory, corporate and intellectual property aspects required for the implementation of franchise systems and distribution schemes. Jorge also has vast knowledge of complex corporate and commercial matters, including mergers and acquisitions, corporate reorganizations, strategic alliances and joint ventures, corporate controversies, foreign investments and labor consulting.</p> <p>In October 2023 Jorge was named Chairman of Multilaw, one of the world's largest international professional services network of independent law firms. Established in 1990, Multilaw covers over 90 firms across 100 countries. These firms are made up of more than 11 thousand lawyers.</p> <p>Advised several highly regarded franchise systems (franchisors) for their start-up and expansion in Mexico; from diverse industries including clothing, education, hospitality, fast food, restaurant, medical, oil & gas, real estate, technological, among others.</p>
Richard	Morey	Partner	DLA Piper LLP (US)	<p>Richard Morey's franchise and distribution practice is focused on working with both experienced and startup franchise companies, helping them structure new franchise programs and determine the most appropriate methods of single- and multi-unit franchising.</p> <p>Richard counsels franchisors on everyday compliance and other franchise-related issues, such as registration and disclosure matters, negotiating agreements, maintaining good franchisee relations and resolving disputes with franchisees. He also works extensively on international franchising and licensing transactions, including master franchise, area development and single-unit licensing deals in Asia, Europe, Central America, the Middle East and the Caribbean, in addition to structuring other methods of international product distribution such as manufacturing and bottling arrangements.</p> <p>In his corporate practice Richard handles all aspects of small- and mid-market mergers and acquisitions transactions, with a special focus on representing franchisors in M&A transactions. He also represents non-franchise clients on corporate, organizational and contract-related matters, including financing arrangements, workouts and management arrangements.</p>
Kirk	Nahra	Adjunct Privacy Law Professor	American and Georgetown Law Schools	<p>Kirk Nahra is a Partner with WilmerHale in Washington, D.C. where he co-chairs the firm's Cybersecurity and Privacy Practice as well as the Artificial Intelligence Practice. Mr. Nahra counsels clients across industries, from Fortune 500 companies to startups, on implementing the requirements of privacy and data security laws across the country and internationally. In recognition of his professional work in these areas, he was named the winner of the 2021 Vanguard Award from the International Association of Privacy Professionals (IAPP)—one of the most prestigious in the privacy field—in recognition of his "exceptional leadership, knowledge and creativity in privacy and data protection." He teaches privacy and security law issues at several law schools, including serving as an adjunct professor at the Washington College of Law at American University and at Georgetown University. In addition, he currently serves as a fellow with the Cordell Institute for Policy in Medicine & Law at Washington University in St. Louis. He also serves as a mentor to college students, law students and other young privacy and security professionals with more than a dozen organizations.</p>

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Ariane	Panter	Senior Counsel, Global Labor and Employment Law	McDonald's	<p>Ariane R. Panter is a seasoned legal expert specializing in franchising, strategic initiatives, and labor and employment law. At McDonald's Corporation, she provides vital legal support on franchising matters to the field, as well as strategic issues management, partnering with the Global Impact team to navigate complex regulatory landscapes. She has also led critical labor legal strategies globally and managed high-profile litigation, including before the National Labor Relations Board.</p> <p>Previously, Ariane was Director and Associate Counsel at the National Basketball Association, where she played a crucial role in labor relations and collective bargaining. She began her legal career at Proskauer Rose, LLC, representing employers in various legal proceedings.</p> <p>Ariane holds a J.D. from Harvard Law School and a B.A. in History and Art History, summa cum laude, from Tulane University.</p>
Heather	Perkins	Partner	Faegre Drinker Biddle & Reath LLP	<p>Heather Perkins is a litigation partner in the Denver office of Faegre Drinker Biddle & Reath. She specializes in complex litigation, with deep experience in franchise and distribution and trade secret advising and litigation. Heather currently serves as an Executive Partner for the firm and served previously as a member of the firm's board and the managing partner of the Denver office. She is an at-large member of the Governing Committee of the American Bar Association Forum on Franchising, where she serves as liaison to the Women's Caucus. She currently serves on the University of Colorado Law Alumni Board and is the immediate past chair of the Colorado Legal Aid Foundation Board of Trustees, for which she served as chair from 2021-2023. She is Chambers ranked in commercial litigation. She previously served as editor in chief of The Franchise Lawyer and as an articles editor and an associate editor for The Franchise Law Journal. Heather graduated with honors from the University of Colorado School of Law, after which she served as a judicial law clerk for a federal judge in Colorado before going into private practice. Prior to law school, she practiced as a CPA in Colorado and Chicago.</p>
Lee	Plave	Partner	Plave Koch PLC	<p>Lee has extensive experience counseling distributors and franchisors, including drafting and negotiating franchise agreements for complex international and domestic transactions and advising clients on all aspects of franchise and distribution law.</p> <p>Lee also counsels clients on the application of technology to franchise and distribution systems. He focuses his attention on matters such as social networking and social media issues, e-commerce, data use and security policies, cybersquatting and domain name disputes, consumer complaint and cybersmear sites, as well as software and hardware licensing. In addition, he serves as an expert witness and also represents clients in matters before the Federal Trade Commission.</p>
Brian	Romanzo	General Counsel	Rep'M	<p>Brian Romanzo serves as Secretary and General Counsel for the Rep'm Group where he advises the company on all legal, regulatory and compliance matters affecting this full-service franchise sales and development organization. Brian previously served as in-house counsel for Driven Brands in a variety of roles, ultimately as Vice President and Deputy General Counsel and brand General Counsel for Meineke Car Care Centers. In addition to his franchising roles, Brian previously served as general counsel for a global consumer electronics company and began his career as an associate with the law firm of Sidley Austin LLP. Brian received his law degree from the University of Notre Dame and his undergraduate degree from Princeton University.</p>
Shahin	Rothermel	Partner	Venable LLP	<p>Shahin Rothermel is an experienced counselor and defender who helps advertisers, retailers, merchants, and marketers advance their business goals while reducing legal and regulatory risks. Shahin provides clients with up-to-date, practical insights into the constantly evolving advertising, marketing, and e-commerce regulations, which allows her clients to make informed decisions. She has achieved successful resolutions, dismissals, and full walkaways in court, saving clients millions of dollars. She takes a pragmatic approach as a counselor, considering the implications of her advice for her clients' marketing campaigns and their bottom lines.</p>

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Jeff	Salter	Founder and CEO	Caring Senior Services	<p>care in 1991, working for a home healthcare agency in Odessa, Texas. It was there that he saw firsthand how difficult it was for seniors and their families to handle the challenges of aging in place. Four months later, at 20 years old, Salter started his own senior care service to provide seniors with the nonmedical care they need to stay healthy and happy at home.</p> <p>He expanded the business to include other locations in Texas, including Midland, McAllen, Corpus Christi, San Antonio, and Austin. By 2003, Caring Senior Service began offering franchises throughout the country and today has more than 50 locations operating in 18 states.</p> <p>Salter recognized early in his career that creating systems allowed for his operations to be predictable, which made it easier to franchise the company. Today, all Caring Senior Service franchise locations benefit from a systematic approach that includes proprietary technology, a GreatCare® method for delivering superior care and back-office support to its franchise owners.</p> <p>Salter has been heavily involved with the National Association for Home Care and Hospice (NAHC), serving on several advisory councils for the organization. He's been involved with the Private Duty Home Care advisory council for the past six years and is a past chair of the council's Data Collection Subcommittee. He also serves on the NAHC Advocacy Council, helping to drive the legislative agenda and advocate for issues related to nonmedical home care. Fueling his passion for the use of technology in senior care, Salter has also been active on the Home Care Technology Advisory Council (HCTAC), which works to boost initiatives that support the use of e-enabled technologies within the industry.</p> <p>Salter's participation with NAHC doesn't end there. He's been a featured</p>
Drew	Seid	Senior Consultant	MSA Worldwide	<p>international franchise advisory firm. While an experienced litigator and a transactional lawyer in franchising, Andrew is the son of our founder and franchising has been part of his life-long experience starting when he attended his first IFA convention at the age of ten. Andrew specializes in working with emerging franchisors to determine their initial strategy, franchise support, and franchise sales efforts.</p> <p>Andrew earned his BA in business from Franklin & Marshall and his JD from Villanova University School of Law. Starting in high school and continuing through college and law school, Andrew has worked with MSA clients in the design of franchise systems, competitive research, mergers and acquisitions, and franchise sales. He interned at the IFA working closely with many of the leading figures in franchising, as well as gaining experience as an intern with several well-known franchise law firms. His academic background in labor and employment law and his legal foundation in franchising, when coupled with his business and consulting experience, brings a unique dynamic our clients can rely upon.</p> <p>While as a consultant Andrew is no longer practicing law, he is a member of the bar in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Connecticut and practiced as a litigator until he joined MSA as a consultant. MSA does not provide any legal advice or services for our clients as we are not a law firm; however, Andrew remains active and continues his participation at ABA and IFA legal symposiums. This gives him the capacity to review the legal documents prepared by our client's outside lawyers from a perspective that provides significant benefits to our clients.</p> <p>In addition to his other client services at MSA, Andrew works on MSA's emerging franchisor sales incubator team, which assists clients in both</p>

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Michael	Seid	Managing Director	MSA Worldwide	<p>...and the founder and managing director of MSA Worldwide (MSA), a provider of domestic and international franchise advisory services.</p> <p>During my professional career, I have been a senior operations officer, financial executive, consultant or accountant for companies within the franchise, retail, restaurant, personal services, healthcare, hospitality, education and service industries. I have also been both a franchisor and franchisee. The International Franchise Association has published that MSA Worldwide is “the leading strategic and tactical advisory firm in franchising.”</p> <p>I have consulted both domestically and internationally for companies on the appropriateness of franchising, licensing, and other methods of down-stream distribution of products and services; the design, development and implementation of franchise and licensing systems; and for established franchisors, non-franchisors and other multi-unit operators. MSA Worldwide also provides other professional services including but not limited to manuals; training programs; franchisee recruitment strategies; franchisor expansion strategies; real estate site selection and site development; franchisee advisory councils; franchise relations; joint-employment; crisis management; change strategies; management company relationships; litigation support; and the strategic restructuring of established companies.</p> <p>I am a frequent speaker at programs for the International Franchise Association, universities, law schools, and retail and professional organizations and have lectured and written for the ABA Franchise Forum and the IFA’s Legal Forums. I have lectured at several universities and law schools including St. Thomas University, Georgetown Law School, New York University School of Law, Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law, Nova University, the University of Arizona, Johnson & Wales University, MIT Sloan School of Management, Harvard Business School, University of California</p>
Pratik	Shah	Partner	Akin Gump Hauer & Feld LLP	<p>Pratik Shah is the head of Akin’s Supreme Court & appellate practice. Pratik, who previously served as Assistant to the Solicitor General in the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), has argued 18 cases before the U.S. Supreme Court and over 70 cases in other federal and state appellate courts—including in every circuit. He also provides strategic advice to clients at all stages of constitutional, regulatory, and other complex litigation. Pratik is ranked among the country’s top appellate litigators by a number of leading publications and has been elected into the American Academy of Appellate Lawyers. He also currently teaches as an Adjunct Professor of Law at Georgetown University Law Center. Pratik clerked for Justice Stephen G. Breyer on the U.S. Supreme Court and Judge William A. Fletcher on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 9th Circuit. He received his J.D. from University of California at Berkeley School of Law and his B.S.E., summa cum laude, from Princeton University.</p>

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Peter	Snell	Partner	Cassels Brock & Blackwell LLP	<p>clients to expand their franchise businesses in Canada and around the world. With a unique blend of business law and intellectual property law experience, Peter is well positioned to address key intellectual property issues and incorporate them into successful strategic planning. Getting to know his clients and their business is fundamental to Peter's approach, and his understanding of a client's business risks and opportunities is a critical component of his effective expansion strategies.</p> <p>Peter is highly regarded as a recognized leader in franchise and distribution law in Canada. Peter enjoys assisting businesses focused on domestic and international franchising, licensing, product distribution, business law, and intellectual property/trademark law. Beyond the "pure franchise" work that Peter does, Peter is also sought out to assist with corporate reorganizations, corporate governance issues, mergers and acquisitions, joint ventures, and negotiating and drafting commercial agreements.</p> <p>As an experienced franchise lawyer, Peter is active in editing and authoring many franchise publications in Canada and abroad. He is also in demand to speak at franchise and business conferences and seminars. Peter is highly rated by the world's leading franchise directories including Chambers, Lexpert, Lexology Index, and Best Lawyers in Canada.</p> <p>Peter's leadership extends to his involvement with grassroots community organizations. Peter's love of the outdoors and family has led to his being very active with the Gambier Island Conservancy, the Future of Howe Sound Society, Ronald McDonald House British Columbia, Scouts Canada, The BC Lions Waterboys, and Vancouver Whitecaps Starting 11.</p> <p>Prior to joining Cassels, Peter served as a franchise law partner</p>
Angelo	Spinola	Shareholder	Polsinelli	<p>employment litigation with a special interest in the home health, home care and hospice industry. Bringing a wide breadth of knowledge across the health care spectrum, he works with an array of home-based care clients, including Fortune 500 organizations and franchisors, small businesses, and franchisees across multiple industries. Additionally, Angelo works closely with private equity firms and investment groups with respect to labor and employment issues that may arise during acquisitions and activities in these sectors.</p> <p>Angelo partners with attorneys in Polsinelli's Health Care, Corporate and Transactional, and Franchise practices to build coalitions that bring a deep bench of experience and industry knowledge to his clients in the home health, home care and hospice industry.</p> <p>Leveraging technology to better serve clients, Angelo utilizes innovative legal technology platforms designed specifically for franchise systems and home health, home care and hospice clients. The platforms serve as a source for industry information and substantive legal resources where employers have direct access to the tools, documents and knowledge needed to reduce their legal spend as their business needs grow throughout the corporate lifecycle and franchise process. Angelo also utilizes client portals to share confidential, proprietary client documents to allow clients and him to seamlessly manage matters or case-specific documents.</p> <p>Angelo regularly represents employers across the United States in class actions brought under the Fair Labor Standards Act and state wage and hour laws. His experience includes:</p> <p>Helping employers respond to wage and hour investigations by the U.S. Department of Labor and state agency equivalents.</p>

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Cheryl	Stanton	Chief Legal Officer and Government Affairs Officer	BrightStar Care	<p>Cheryl Stanton diligently works on behalf of the organization and its franchisees by assisting with legal, compliance and risk management, as well as providing federal and state advocacy for the brand. In fact, one of the accomplishments she's most proud of is the State Advocacy Brand Program she established to teach franchise owners how to advocate for themselves while navigating their state's individual laws and regulations.</p> <p>Bringing more than two decades of legal and policy experience at both the state and national level, Cheryl has served her constituents with results-driven initiatives Cheryl served as an Associate Counsel to the President of the United States, where she advised the White House Presidential Personnel Office, the White House Personnel Office and the White House Office of Management and Administration and served as a member of the White House Judicial Selection Committee. She also served as the primary legal liaison for the Department of Labor, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and the National Labor Relations Board.</p> <p>Cheryl later served under two different gubernatorial administrations during 2013-2018 as the Executive Director of the South Carolina Department of Employment and Workforce. In 2016, Cheryl received the Order of the Palmetto — the highest civilian award in the state, which is given to those who demonstrate extraordinary lifetime achievement, service and contributions of national or statewide significance. Under Cheryl's leadership, South Carolina's jobless rate dropped to its lowest point in at least 50 years, South Carolina's workforce system helped place over 500,000 South Carolinians into jobs and (partnering with the Department of Corrections) South Carolina created a job re-entry program for ex-offenders that continues to receive national accolades.</p>
James (Jim)	Susag	Attorney and Shareholder	Larkin Hoffman Law Firm	<p>James M. Susag is a seasoned trial attorney with a focus on franchise and dealer disputes, and complex commercial matters. He has been the lead attorney in over 100 trials and arbitrations in state and federal courts across the country and in domestic and international arbitration forums. Jim represents franchise and dealer clients across various industries including food and beverage, retail, leisure and fitness, health care, hospitality and commercial and consumer services. His experience spans disputes relating to claims of violation of state franchise or dealership laws, trademark infringement, breach of contract, system- standards enforcement, consumer class actions, post-termination rights, disclosure and registration issues, fraud claims, vicarious liability, independent contractor misclassification and joint employment issues.</p>
John	Teza	CEO	Hand & Stone Massage and Facial Spa	<p>John Teza, CFE joined Hand & Stone as President and Chief Development Officer in 2020. He was appointed Chief Executive Officer in 2021. John is an experienced franchising executive and has served in various C-level roles across his twenty-year plus career. John has been a Hand & Stone member for over a decade and recognizes the role the brand plays in his health and wellness routine.</p>
James	Tysse	Supreme Court and Appellate Partner	Akin Gump Hauer & Feld LLP	<p>James is a partner in Akin's Supreme Court & appellate practice and co-leads the firm's administrative & regulatory litigation practice. He specializes in appellate and trial court litigation against the federal government in APA and regulatory litigation cases, and has led successful suits on behalf of major companies and industry associations. A Law360 "Appellate Rising Star," in the past several years James has earned The American Lawyer's Litigator of the Week recognition as well as seven additional honorable mentions. He has argued in most federal circuit courts of appeals and the Florida Supreme Court, as well as numerous federal, state, and tribal trial courts. James clerked for the Honorable Karen L. Henderson of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit and Beverly B. Martin of the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Georgia. He received both his J.D. and B.A. from the University of Virginia.</p>
Benjamin	Van Airsdale	Associate Attorney	Marks & Klein	<p>office. Marks & Klein is a franchised focused, boutique law firm where Ben's primary area of practice centers around providing counsel to both franchisor and franchisee clients helping them navigate through business transactions. Ben represents a broad range of franchise companies, from emerging to mature brands, in various industries. He provides ongoing support and assistance to franchisors through all phases of development and operations--namely crafting franchise disclosure documents and other ancillary agreements to ensure the protection of his clients' trademarks and intellectual property.</p>

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Aaron	Van Nostrand	Attorney	Greenberg Traurig, LLP	Aaron Van Nostrand focuses his practice on general and complex litigation on behalf of clients of all sizes. He has wide-ranging experience in commercial litigation and class action defense, as well as breach of contract, fraud and breach of fiduciary duty, product liability, consumer finance, pharmaceutical licensing, real estate and oppressed shareholder litigation. Aaron also litigates and counsels clients in franchise disputes. He represents franchisors in litigation against franchisees involving claims of breach of contract, fraud and consumer fraud, tortious interference, and violation of various state franchise laws. He also regularly represents franchisors in litigation and disputes against third parties in a variety of contexts, such as real estate, construction, and consumer fraud. In addition, he helps clients pursue alternatives to litigation. In recent years, he has served as counsel in individual and class cases in California, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, Ohio and Texas.
Justin	Vartanian	General Counsel	Planet Fitness	Justin Vartanian serves as General Counsel and SVP, International Division overseeing all legal matters and international development. He joined the Company as General Counsel in 2014 and played a critical role in the Company's initial public offering in August of 2015, and has since overseen all public company, corporate governance and franchising matters as a key member of the company's leadership team. Prior to joining Planet Fitness, Mr. Vartanian was a corporate attorney at Devine Millimet. He also currently serves on the Board of Directors of the NH/VT/ME Region of the American Red Cross and the Business & Industry Association of New Hampshire.
Lucas	Versteegh	Associate, Franchise & Distribution	Osler, Hoskin & Harcourt LLP	Lucas Versteegh is a franchising and distribution lawyer based in the Toronto, Ontario, offices of Osler, Hoskin & Harcourt LLP. His franchising work includes the preparation of franchise agreements and disclosure documents, along with the endless variety of accompanying ancillary agreements, such as releases, purchase agreements, delivery arrangements, licences, and confidentiality agreements. Lucas helps franchisors navigate the increasingly complex regulatory environment of Canadian franchising law and its implications for Canadian systems as well as US brands expanding to the Canadian market. His distribution, retail, and general commercial work includes advising retailers and other businesses on all contractual matters in a supply and distribution chain, including advice on distribution agreements, service agreements, licensing agreements, manufacturing agreements, warehousing agreements, transportation agreements, consignment agreements, and sponsorship agreements. Lucas also advises extensively on consumer protection issues, including the structure of rewards and loyalty programs, gift cards, promotions and contests, debt collection, e-commerce and Internet sales agreements, cost of credit, packaging and labelling, and various advertising and marketing issues.
Tom	Wood	President & CEO	Floor Covering International	Tom Wood is CEO and President of Floor Coverings International and has served in that position since 2005. Floor Coverings International is currently recognized at the #1 Flooring Company in North America for customer satisfaction as well as tops in it's class in most franchise ranking services. Prior to his post with Floor Coverings International he started with the parent organization, FirstService Corp., while still a college student in 1985 and has held several key positions in its various organizations over the past 34 years. After helping found CertaPro Painters in 1992, he became President of the Franchise Development Center in 1998. Dedicated to the growth and development of new franchises for several of the brands owned by FirstService, he placed more than 600 franchises for CertaPro Painters, California Closets, Stained Glass Overlay, Paul Davis Restoration, and NutriLawn. In 2005, he became President and CEO of Floor Coverings International. Tom also is a volunteer for many non-profits in Atlanta, including the Central Night Shelter.
Will	Woods	Partner	Baker & McKenzie LLP	Will K. Woods is a partner in the Dallas office of Baker McKenzie. He is Chair of the North America International Commercial Practice Group and leads the firm's Global Franchise and Distribution Group. He concentrates his practice in franchise and distribution law. He counsels clients on structuring cross-border and domestic franchise transactions, distribution of products and services, and franchise registration and disclosure matters. He represents several of the leading hotel, lodging and hospitality franchise companies and has significant experience in negotiating complex franchise transactions both in the U.S. and in many other countries around the world and in counseling clients across industries with respect to system restructuring and related relationship issues. He is a Past Chair of the American Bar Association Forum on Franchising.