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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

An Nguyen Ruda, CEO of Bartko Pavia LLP, Named Dual Finalist for Law.com's 2026 Women, Influence & Power in Law Awards

Firm Leader Recognized for Transformative Leadership and Extraordinary Mentorship Partnership

SAN FRANCISCO, April 16, 2026— Bartko Pavia LLP announced today that CEO and Co-Managing Partner **An Nguyen Ruda** has been named a finalist in two categories for [Law.com](https://www.law.com) Corporate Counsel's prestigious 2026 Women, Influence & Power in Law (WIPL) Awards: **Managing Partner of the Year** and **Mentor & Mentee Collaboration** (with Luzann Fernandez, Strategic Counsel to Managing Partners).

The WIPL Awards honor in-house and law firm women leaders who have made a remarkable difference in the legal profession, recognizing trailblazers, advocates, and leaders who have demonstrated exceptional skill, dedication, and commitment to advancing equality and empowerment of women in law. Winners were announced at the WIPL Awards Dinner on April 14, 2026, in Chicago.

Transformative Firm Leadership

An's recognition as a Managing Partner of the Year finalist acknowledges her transformative leadership at the helm of Bartko Pavia. Since assuming leadership in January 2023, she has executed a strategic vision that defies traditional law firm models. In March 2025, she orchestrated the firm's high-profile combination with New York-based Pavia & Harcourt, creating a bicoastal litigation powerhouse spanning San Francisco, Los Angeles, and New York City, covered extensively in *The Recorder* and *Law360*. "An represents the future of law firm leadership, entrepreneurial, inclusive, and unafraid to challenge tradition," said **Patrick Ryan, firmwide Co-Managing Partner**. "She's building a different kind of law firm; one that prioritizes strategic growth over headcount, values client relationships over billables, and champions authentic leadership over hierarchy."

Extraordinary Mentorship Partnership

An's recognition in the Mentor & Mentee Collaboration category alongside Luzann Fernandez celebrates an extraordinary 20+ year partnership that transformed a career and an institution.

Their relationship began when Luzann was founding and chairing the labor and employment practice at her prior firm, where An joined as an associate.

"Luzann didn't just guide my career, she shaped the leader I've become," said An Nguyen Ruda. "She taught me how to navigate a profession where few looked like me, how to turn my background into strategic advantage, and how to lead authentically rather than conforming to traditional models. Her mentorship changed everything." When Luzann moved her practice to Bartko Pavia in 2020, she brought An as co-chair, a powerful vote of confidence that positioned An for future leadership. That move became the foundation for An's eventual rise to CEO. Luzann's mentorship extended beyond law practice into institutional leadership; she mentored An into board service at Pitzer College, where An is now succeeding Luzann as a trustee.

"Create succession, not dependency. True mentorship means building leaders who surpass you, carry forward your values, and expand your impact long after you've moved on."

— Luzann Fernandez, Partner & Strategic Counsel, Bartko Pavia LLP

Luzann Fernandez reflects that watching An lead the firm "with vision, integrity, and commitment to empowering others" is among her most profound professional satisfactions.

An Extraordinary Journey

An's journey to national law firm leadership is itself extraordinary. She arrived in America as a Vietnamese refugee, fleeing by boat as a child. Her family settled in East San Jose, one of the Bay Area's most economically underserved communities, where she worked daily on her family's food truck. Even during law school, she returned home regularly for long shifts at the family restaurant.

These formative experiences became the foundation of her revolutionary approach to law firm leadership. Today, as one of the few Asian American women leading a national law firm, An brings authentic perspective to diversity leadership, actively mentoring the next generation of attorneys.

"My path was unconventional, and I could have tried to hide that," An explained. "Instead, I brought my whole self to leadership; my immigrant perspective, my working-class roots, my unique insights, and discovered that authenticity inspires others to do the same."

Recognized Legal Excellence

Widely recognized as one of California's preeminent labor negotiators, An represents clients ranging from innovative startups to Fortune 500 companies across healthcare, entertainment, hospitality, and manufacturing. She has served as Chief Negotiator on numerous landmark collective bargaining agreements and as Special Labor Counsel in major distressed business scenarios, including renegotiating seven collective bargaining agreements in just 70 days during one of the largest healthcare bankruptcies in U.S. history.

An serves on the Board of Trustees at Pitzer College and co-founded an investment fund supporting technology innovation from emerging entrepreneurs, extending her impact beyond legal practice.

About Bartko Pavia LLP

Bartko Pavia LLP is a powerhouse litigation and transactional firm representing both plaintiffs and defendants in high-stakes commercial disputes, real estate transactions, class actions, antitrust matters, labor and employment litigation, and bet-the-company cases. The firm is known for combining elite legal talent with a client-focused, service-oriented culture that prioritizes practical business solutions over conventional law firm metrics. Bartko Pavia's team includes numerous former in-house counsel and business leaders who bring real-world experience to their practice. For more information, visit www.bartkopavia.com

About the WIPL Awards

The Women, Influence & Power in Law Awards, presented by Law.com Corporate Counsel, honor in-house and law firm women leaders and allies who have demonstrated a commitment to advancing the empowerment of women in law. The awards recognize trailblazers, advocates, and leaders who have made a remarkable difference in the legal profession through their exceptional work, leadership, and dedication to equality. For more information, visit www.law.com/corpcounsel.