



FIRM EXPANDS INTO SOCAL WITH PREEMINENT LABOR & EMPLOYMENT GROUP

Publications

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San Francisco, January 15, 2020. Bartko Pavia is pleased to welcome a top-tier Northern and Southern California labor and employment practice with co-chairs [Louise Ann Fernandez](#) and [An Nguyen Ruda](#) joining the firm. Their clients following them to the firm include healthcare providers and media companies. Ms. Fernandez, Ms. Ruda and their group, including associate Elina Tilman, will complement and bolster Bartko's complex litigation and real estate practices by providing additional vital services for corporate clients.

Ms. Fernandez and Ms. Ruda come to Bartko Pavia from Jeffer Mangels Butler & Mitchell LLP, where both were equity partners and where Ms. Fernandez founded and headed the labor and employment group for decades. Ms. Fernandez has been recognized by the *Daily Journal* in 2010 and again in 2013 as one of the top labor attorneys in California. Both will continue to practice in Southern and Northern California, and bring a wealth of labor and employment and sophisticated defense litigation experience. In addition, Ms. Tilman has also joined Bartko from the Jeffer firm, where she worked closely with the Fernandez/Ruda team in many labor and employment matters.

LABOR NEGOTIATION

At Bartko Pavia, Ms. Fernandez and Ms. Ruda will continue to represent management in complex negotiations with labor. Ms. Ruda has served as the Chief Negotiator on many collective bargaining agreements for healthcare systems and media companies, while Ms. Fernandez—who started her legal career in the Advice Division of the National Labor Relations Board—has decades of labor experience. Their negotiating philosophy is respectful, leading to quick and fair negotiations that are sensitive to the ongoing relationship between management and labor.

The Fernandez/Ruda team recently completed the negotiation/modification of 8 collective bargaining agreements in 75 days with six labor unions, as well as the negotiation of an initial

labor contract for a major Southern California newspaper. The Fernandez/Ruda team also defeated an attempt to organize a client's manufacturing unit—a decisive management victory.

LITIGATION

The Fernandez/Ruda team knows when litigation offers clients the best business option—and how to win. They are seasoned trial lawyers in defense and on behalf of corporate clients, with a proven track record in employment and trade secret cases. The team will fit well into Bartko Pavia's industry-leading trade secret practice that resulted in the number one trade secret trial victory of 2018. Some of their successes include:

- A 7-figure settlement and public apology on behalf of an entertainment executive wrongly accused of sexual harassment.
- A defense victory in arbitration brought by the chief compliance officer of a financial services company.
- Obtaining jurisdiction over Russian executives leading to resolution of a trade secret case and return of stock and IP from Luxembourg.
- Defeating class certification and winning summary judgment in wage & hour class actions in the healthcare, multinational cosmetics and tech industries.

The Fernandez/Ruda team prides itself on initial investigation strategies that create cost-efficient and favorable business-centric results for clients.

GENERAL ADVICE – RISK AVOIDANCE

The Fernandez/Ruda team knows the importance of long-term client relationships—providing trusted advice on issues ranging from difficult personnel decisions to regulatory compliance. They have also counseled high-profile individuals in confidential matters like employment separations and allegations of workplace misconduct.

INVESTIGATION, MEDIATION AND ARBITRATION

Due to her experience and reputation for fairness, Ms. Fernandez is often asked by firms and corporations to serve as an impartial investigator or mediator of complex disputes. She also is a volunteer mediator for the Central District of California.

Ms. Ruda is a shrewd management-side dealmaker, known for fashioning creative solutions that preserve labor/management relations.

Ms. Fernandez and Ms. Ruda share Bartko Pavia's philosophy that a huge team of lawyers is not needed for every case. Sophisticated clients hire lawyers—not law firms—and demand personalized efficient representation.

[Rob Bunzel](#), Bartko's managing shareholder, said the firm "looks forward to expanding our portfolio of services for clients who face increasingly complex legal issues related to privacy, competition, and labor," while [Patrick Ryan](#), a Bartko Pavia principal who has previously worked with the Fernandez/Ruda team, said "I am excited to welcome my friends, former colleagues, and world-class lawyers to Bartko Pavia to help us in complex class actions and trade secret litigation, to build on our ability to offer flexible fee arrangements, and to see their labor practice continue to prosper."

Bartko Pavia is a California boutique law firm specializing in national and international complex litigation, investigations, and real estate transactions. Bartko Pavia takes pride in advancing our clients' business goals, which drives strategy and tactics in the important matters we handle. We are also an industry leader in partnering with clients on cost-effective alternative fee arrangements designed to align lawyer/client objectives through sharing of risk and reward.

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Labor & Employment

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