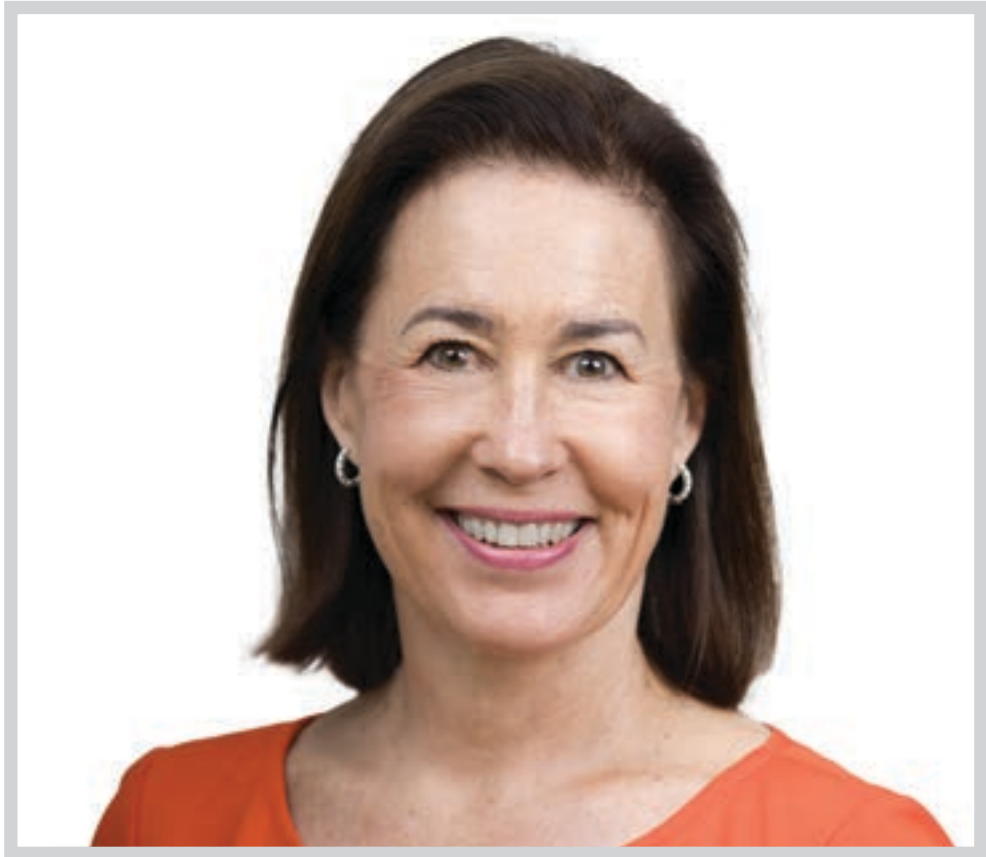




DEALMAKERS OF THE YEAR



ATTORNEY OF THE YEAR **HONOREE**

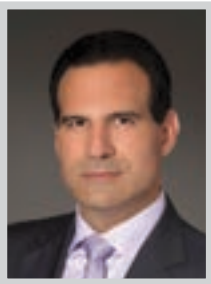
EVA DAVIS

Managing Partner, External Affairs
Winston & Strawn LLP

Eva Davis recently served as lead deal lawyer in the representation of Ghost Lifestyle, a lifestyle sports nutrition brand, in connection with its sale to Keurig Dr. Pepper (KDP) for approximately \$1.65 billion. KDP initially purchased a 60% stake in GHOST for \$990 million, which will be followed by the acquisition of the remaining 40% stake in 2028. Ghost is a lifestyle sports nutrition business with a portfolio anchored by a leading ready-to-drink energy brand that has been added to KDP’s existing energy drink brand portfolio. The deal closed December 2024.

Davis brought her extensive knowledge of commercial terms and deal terms to this transaction, that was not a simple merger or equity sale.

Davis also recently served as lead deal lawyer in the representation of LesserEvil in its sale to The Hershey Company. LesserEvil snacks include popcorn, puffs, and curls, and its variety of food snacks will further expand Hershey’s snacking portfolio across its long-established confection brands like Hershey’s, Reese’s and Jolly Ranchers and emerging salty snack brands including SkinnyPop, Dot’s Homestyle Pretzels, and Pirate’s Booty. Deal value is \$750 million plus an undisclosed earnout amount in a deal announced April 2025. Davis brought her extensive knowledge of commercial terms and deal terms to this transaction, that was not a simple merger or equity sale and was negotiated during a time of uncertainty due to newly imposed US tariffs for LesserEvil ingredient supplies and expected FTC/Department of Justice antitrust scrutiny given the overlapping markets of LesserEvil and Hershey brands.



MEHDI KHODADAD
FINALIST
Partner
Sidley Austin LLP

An extraordinary dealmaker, Mehdi Khodadad in known for the broad variety, creative structuring, complexity and output of deals he executes for clients. He serves as global co-leader of Sidley’s M&A and Private Equity group of more than 650 lawyers and is a member of the firm’s Executive Committee, a testament to his strong leadership skills.

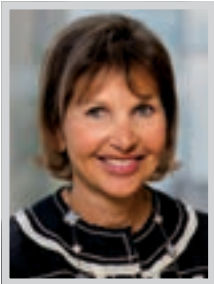
At a time when the global private equity industry has seen a reduction in deal activity, Khodadad has led some of the most notable transactions in the market over the last 18 months. His work at Sidley has helped to catapult the firm’s reputation in the market and earn top spots within private equity league tables, among other recent awards and rankings.



ERIC KLEIN
FINALIST
Partner; Healthcare Team Co-Leader
Sheppard, Mullin, Richter and Hampton LLP

Eric Klein is the leader for transformative M&As, joint ventures and other strategic transactions across hospitals, health systems, post-acute care providers and physician organizations. He regularly serves as lead transactional counsel on some of the most high-profile and industry-shaping deals throughout the US, and is one of the most experienced deal lawyers in population health management, physician alignment and global risk, helping hospitals and physician entities transition to or operate under value-based and risk-based payment models.

With 13 purchase/sale projects for hospitals in progress and over 120 hospital M&As and/or joint venture projects previously completed, Klein’s creative structuring, tactical negotiation and deep regulatory expertise enable clients to seize the most significant opportunities and mitigate risk in today’s healthcare landscape.



ALISON RESSLER
FINALIST
Partner
Sullivan & Cromwell

With a career spanning four decades, Alison Ressler, the co-head of S&C’s Global Private Equity Group, has led legal teams on blockbuster transactions for California-based companies across all sectors from biotech and technology to consumer and restaurants, resulting in her consistent ranking as one of the top corporate dealmakers.

Ressler served as a member of S&C’s management committee for over 20 years. Since the start of 2024, she has advised major clients on a remarkable range of complex deals spanning the entertainment sector, energy transition and biotech. These include one of the biggest recent deals in the entertainment industry, the \$8 billion Skydance / New Paramount deal, and California Resources Corporation’s merger with Aera, creating a company at the forefront of energy transition.



STEVEN STOKDYK
FINALIST
Partner
Latham

As a leading corporate lawyer in Southern California, Steve Stokdyk advises companies, principal investors and investment banks on their most complex securities, finance, acquisition and governance matters. He is the former global co-chair of Latham’s market-leading Public Company Representation Practice and local chair of the Corporate Department.

Stokdyk draws on a strong combination of sophisticated practical experience that is unusual in the Southern California legal market: M&A experience with complementary capital markets, and corporate governance experience to advise public companies on the full suite of strategic issues in their business lifecycles including structure, finance and securities. He draws on nearly three decades of experience representing clients in a wide range of industries, including technology, financial institutions, healthcare, gaming and real estate.