

### Sheppard Mullin Named "Law Firm of The Year" by San Diego County Bar Association

03.29.2002

The San Diego County Bar Association has named **Sheppard, Mullin, Richter & Hampton LLP** the recipient of its Law Firm of the Year Award. Sheppard Mullin is the first-ever recipient of the award, one of the 2002 Public Service Awards announced by the SDBCA.

"Sheppard Mullin has a long and proud tradition of providing pro bono services. We will continue that tradition in the future," said **Guy Halgren, Chairman of the firm's Executive Committee** and a **Labor & Employment partner in the firm's San Diego office**. "Our attorneys and staff are always looking for new opportunities to give back to the communities we serve. We are honored to receive this award."

Sheppard Mullin was recognized for providing numerous hours of pro bono services to underprivileged and underserved persons in San Diego County. Last year, the firm's San Diego office alone dedicated more than 1,100 hours to public service activities, while more than 5,600 hours in pro bono services were donated firmwide. This translates into **services, contributions, and expenses in excess of \$2 million**. **Sheppard Mullin's San Diego office is also a four-time recipient of the San Diego Volunteer Lawyer Program's Pro Bono Law Firm of the Year award** (1990, 1991, 1995, 2000).

"Whether it's in the areas of immigration, domestic violence, AIDS, low-income housing, or otherwise, the indigent in San Diego County have important, real-life legal needs that often go unmet," said **Robert Gerber, Chairman of the firm's Pro Bono Committee** and an **Intellectual Property partner in the firm's San Diego office**. "As part of this community, we're doing what we can to help meet those needs. Sheppard Mullin is grateful to the San Diego County Bar Association for recognizing our efforts."

Gerber received national media recognition for his successful pro bono representation of Geovanni Hernandez-Montiel in 2000. In the landmark immigration case, a federal appeals court for the first time established persecution based on sexual identity as grounds for asylum. Gerber's work earned him the Tom Homann Law Association's President Award for the year 2000.

Sheppard Mullin has a long tradition of providing legal services to persons and community organizations who could otherwise not afford access to legal representation. The firm's lawyers have assisted with problems relating to education, immigration, political asylum, domestic violence, criminal matters, creditor-debtor relations and landlord-tenant relations. In recent years, Sheppard Mullin attorneys have become involved in providing pro bono services outside the litigation arena, including counseling to non-profit developers of affordable housing and "micro businesses," as well as those seeking to preserve historic landmarks.

**The SDCBA's 2002 Service Awards will be presented by current SDCBA President Monty McIntyre at the Law Week Luncheon on Friday, May 3,** at the SDCBA Bar Center. For more information about the event, please contact the SDCBA at (619) 231-0781.

Sheppard Mullin has more than **330 attorneys** among its **seven offices** in San Diego, Del Mar Heights, Orange County, Los Angeles, West Los Angeles, Santa Barbara and San Francisco. The **full-service firm** provides counsel in Corporate, Trial Practice, Finance, Bankruptcy, Labor and Employment, Intellectual Property, Real Estate, Land Use, Environmental, Construction, Tax, Employee Benefits, Trusts & Estates, Antitrust & Trade Regulation, Government Contracts, and Business Crimes. **The firm is celebrating its 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2002.** has more than among its in San Diego, Del Mar Heights, Orange County, Los Angeles, West Los Angeles, Santa Barbara and San Francisco. The provides counsel in Corporate, Trial Practice, Finance, Bankruptcy, Labor and Employment, Intellectual Property, Real Estate, Land Use, Environmental, Construction, Tax, Employee Benefits, Trusts & Estates, Antitrust & Trade Regulation, Government Contracts, and Business Crimes. .