



## INFLUENTIAL LEADERS

### INFLUENTIAL LEADERS IN SAN DIEGO

#### LAW

## Steve Coopersmith

Coopersmith started his own business litigation law firm to focus on corporate and business disputes. Before founding Coopersmith Law Firm in 2008, he practiced business and commercial litigation with well-respected firms in San Diego, and also served as a military prosecutor with the U.S. Army's Judge Advocate General's Corps, where he held the rank of captain.

While stationed at Fort Lewis, Washington, Coopersmith tried felony criminal cases at courts-martial and gave legal advice to brigade-level commanders. He said the years he served in the Army JAG were the most formative of his life, and that he touches on those experiences every day.

"Having that experience out of law school — being thrown into this great system for going to trial — it allowed me to have essentially no fear in going to trial in civil litigation," he said.

While his specialty is partnerships and corporate disputes, Coopersmith also handles fine art disputes and select public interest and municipal matters.

He currently represents a former board member of Civic San Diego and a group of construction and trade unions in high-stakes litigation against the city, questioning the legality of the powers it granted to the development agency. San Diego is the only place in California where a private entity controls land-use decisions.

He won a small victory recently when the court denied CivicSD's motion to block whistleblower depositions from going forward. The case is proceeding and a trial is scheduled to begin in February.



MANAGING ATTORNEY

## The Coopersmith Law Firm

Coopersmith said he credits his mentors for his progress, and now serves as a mentor himself to other young attorneys.

"I try to be a good lawyer, ethical and forthright, to protect my clients and to zealously advocate, but also to be ethical to both the court and opposing counsel, and to practice law in a tough but fair way," he said. "I think that has led to the reputation I greatly enjoy and am so humbled by."

— Jennifer Chung Klam