

CUSTOM CONTENT  
AUGUST 20, 2018

SAN FERNANDO VALLEY BUSINESS JOURNAL

# Trusted Advisors

Honoring the Valley Area's top-achieving accountants, attorneys, bankers,  
insurance professionals and wealth managers.



Winners and sponsors of the Business Journal's Trusted Advisors Awards: (Bottom row, from left) Barry Kurtz of Lewitt Hackman; Vrezhui Missakian of Missakian and Associates; Laura Azzalina Rigali of Illuminate; Jake Furlow of Wells Fargo Private Bank; Terri Hilliard of Terri Hilliard PC; Shawn Shafer of UBS Financial Services; and Tamara Gurney of Mission Valley Bank. (Top row, from left) Argishti Avetyan of Wells Fargo; Byrdie Pompan of Clear Health Advisors; Karen Brown of First Bank; Sarah Reznick of Edward Jones; Teri Frankel of Leavitt Insurance Services; Darryl Gross of gish SEIDEN; Paula Bahamon of Mission Valley Bank; and Charles Crumpley, editor and publisher of the Business Journal. Not pictured: Sasha Baluka of B&G Accounting Services and Consulting; Barry Cohn of Really Great Employee Benefits; and Jonathan Fraser Light of LightGabler.

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Few things make managing a business more comfortable than knowing you've got professional advisors you can trust! So it is with gratitude that we announce the 2018 Trusted Advisors Awards honorees. Once again we have singled out and honored the outstanding accountants, attorneys, business bankers, insurance professionals and wealth managers helping their clients thrive here in the Valley area.

These professionals are recognized by the Business Journal for their commitment to high-quality client service, to ingenuity and to the greater community. That's what makes them "Trusted Advisors."

With the many great professionals providing services in our area, it's not easy to single out a select few to be honored. We collect and examine a list of nominees and review each within his or her respective professional category. Within each category, there are individual awards criteria. But the key drivers are the client and referral testimonials. Reading through the submitted material is ultimately what steered us to select the individual honorees.

At our annual Trusted Advisors Awards event on Thursday, August 9 at The Garland in North Hollywood, we proudly announced the 2018 class of Trusted Advisors, whose stories are also detailed in the pages of this special supplement of the Business Journal.

Many thanks to our Presenting Sponsor: Wells Fargo; our Platinum Sponsor: Mission Valley Bank; and our Gold Sponsors: LBW Insurance, LightGabler, Ruth's Chris and Valley Community Healthcare. And, of course, congratulations to each of our 2018 honorees!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Charles Crumpley".

Charles Crumpley  
Editor and Publisher



LEGAL – CLIENT SERVICES AWARD

BARRY KURTZ

Lewitt Hackman

Barry Kurtz is the Chair of Lewitt Hackman's Franchise and Distribution Practice Group, currently one of the largest law departments dedicated to that practice area in California. A Certified Specialist in Franchise and Distribution Law designated by the State Bar of California Board of Legal Specialization and a Certified Franchise Executive under the auspices of the International Franchise Association, Kurtz also has a wealth of experience in franchise-related business matters, including corporate, mergers and acquisitions, business transactional law, and commercial real estate leasing.

Kurtz represents franchisors, manufacturers, franchisees and distributors. His familiarity with franchising – as an attorney, a franchisor executive and franchisee developer – spans decades, and provides both domestic and international clients with a unique perspective on the issues and demands that franchised and independent business owners face in the expansion, sale, purchase, financing and operation of their companies.

His practical, hands-on experience includes: Outside General Counsel, Chief Operating Officer and Vice President of National/International Expansion for a national retail franchisor with 100+ units; the development and administration of 22 franchised quick-service restaurants and serving as an officer and a director of his franchisor's Franchise Advisory Council and Independent Franchisee Association. Kurtz is certified as a mediator by the Pepperdine University School of Law, Straus Institute for Dispute Resolution. He is rated 5.0 AV Preeminent, Martindale-Hubbell's highest award for legal ability and ethics, and has been listed in the directory's National Bar Register of Preeminent Lawyers since 2008.



# Trusted Advisors

## EVENT SCENE



1. Paula Bahamon speaks after she was announced as a winner. 2. Karen Brown accepts her award. 3. Argishti Avetyan of Wells Fargo, left, presents an award to Barry Kurtz. Charles Crumpley is at right. 4. Teri Frankel, center, gets her award from Tamara Gurney of Mission Valley Bank and Charles Crumpley. 5. More than 100 attended the Trusted Advisors luncheon at The Garland in North Hollywood. 6. Vrezhui Missakian with Victor Berrellez of US Bank. 7. Michelle Rodriguez, Irma Amarillas, Sherri Goodman, Veronica Omar, Diana Reyes, Marien Sanchez and Heather Hoffman, all of Wells Fargo.

PHOTOS BY JEREMY FRATKIN