



Danielle R. Stephens Partner

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Practice Areas

Bankruptcy & Insolvency | Corporate Finance | Corporate Law |
Environmental Remediation & Due Diligence | Real Estate

Danielle Stephens is a skilled transactional attorney who assists clients with commercial real estate leasing, financing (including CMBS and SBA loans), acquisitions and sales, easements, and title matters with a focus on contractual negotiations requiring collaborative deal-making. She also advises on matters involving contaminated properties including due diligence and remediation.

Danielle represents investors in the acquisition and sale of real property; business owners entering into their first lease or their tenth; landlords in the preparation of form leases (for mixed use projects, office buildings, shopping centers, and industrial parks), lease amendments, and tenant defaults; and businesses looking to purchase a building for their expanding operations and obtain financing. Danielle utilizes her expertise and fine-tuned processes in Small Business Administration (SBA) and Commercial Mortgage Backed Security (CMBS) lending to ensure that borrowers quickly satisfy lender conditions and that loan documents are reviewed and negotiated in an efficient manner. Danielle is also a trusted advisor to property owners and developers who are buying, selling, leasing, remediating or financing contaminated properties.

Experience

Real Estate

- Negotiated hundreds of commercial leases for landlords and tenants, including retail, office and industrial leases. Locally represented tenants include Pizza Press, Bacon & Butter, US Cryotherapy Sacramento and Viva Supermarkets.
- Negotiated, documented, and closed the acquisition and disposition of retail shopping centers, office buildings, single tenant investment properties, commercial condominiums, and industrial buildings. In 2019 alone, assisted in the purchase of the 250,610 sq. ft. Vallejo Plaza, the purchase of a 100,693 sq. ft. retail strip center in Sacramento, the sale of a 58,516 sq. ft. industrial building in San Jose, the sale of a 156,500 sq. ft. storage facility, and the purchase of two adjacent office buildings consisting of 33,082 sq. ft. in Brentwood.

- Represented a large, family-owned winery in the acquisition of more than 9,000 acres of land in San Joaquin County.
- Represented the largest United States wireless telephone company in real estate matters in its Central California, Northern California and Northern Nevada service areas, including negotiation and preparation of leases for land, tower, and rooftop leases for hundreds of cell sites, as well as the acquisition of Subordination, Non Disturbance and Attornment Agreements from national banks.
- Guided a physician through the process of acquiring a mixed use, multi-unit building in San Francisco and securing SBA financing for the purchase and extensive building remodel.
- Negotiated the loan agreement, deed of trust, indemnity agreement, and other ancillary documents required by lender to provide financing for the expansion of a bed and breakfast establishment in Placerville.
- Acted as local counsel assisting out-of-state counsel navigate the nuances of purchasing and financing real property in California.
- Prepared an agricultural lease for over 2,000 acres of land involving the construction of a mill, a nursery, wind turbines, and residential housing.
- Negotiated and closed the purchase of a 148-acre power plant site and numerous transmission line easements.

Environmental

- Enforced environmental indemnity provision to collect significant costs incurred by the property owner in connection with a third party's remediation activities.
- Assisted a responsible party with the negotiation of an environmental access agreement permitting entry to an adjacent site to perform remediation activities while limiting the scope of the client's liability.
- Negotiated a cost sharing agreement to allocate environmental liability between the property owner and dry cleaning operator.
- Guided a shopping center owner through the SB445 grant process to fund the remediation of releases from a prior tenant's dry cleaning operations.
- Guided a property owner through the SCAP grant process to fund remediation of releases from a prior tenant's manufacturing operations.

Bankruptcy

- Represented seller carryback lenders collecting from defaulting borrowers who filed for bankruptcy to avoid foreclosure, and was successful in obtaining payment in full for the lenders.

Professional & Community Service

- Fairytale Town, Board of Directors, 2015-present
- Food Literacy Center, Pro Bono Counsel, 2015-present

- California Real Estate for Women (CREW), Program Committee, 2019-present
- California Young Lawyers Association, Board of Directors, 2015- 2019
- FBI Citizens Academy, Class of 2018
- City of Sacramento Management Academy, Class of 2017
- Leadership Sacramento, Sacramento Metro Chamber Foundation, Class of 2016
- Sacramento County Bar Association, Board of Directors, 2008-2010
- Sacramento County Bar Association, Real Property Section, President, 2007; Vice President, 2006
- Association of Commercial Real Estate (ACRE), Former Co-Chair of the Broker of Year Awards & Charity Event

Education

- J.D., Santa Clara University School of Law, Certificate in Public Law and Social Justice, 2004
- B.A., *cum laude*, Santa Clara University, 2002

Honors & Rankings

- AV Preeminent[®] Rating by Martindale-Hubbell[®], 2015-present
- Martindale-Hubbell[®] Platinum Client Champion Award, 2019
- *Sacramento Magazine*, 100 Notable Business Leaders, 2021
- *Super Lawyers*, Northern California Super Lawyer, Real Estate, 2018-2020
- *Sacramento Magazine*, Top Lawyer, Real Estate, 2017-2020
- *Sacramento Business Journal*, Best of the Bar, 2014-2019

Speaking Engagements / Events

- *COVID-19 Webinar No. 3: Considerations for Businesses & Employers*, Downey Brand COVID-19 Webinar Series, April 3, 2020