



Mary J. Martinelli

Partner

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Practice Areas

Family Law

As a Certified Family Law Specialist*, Mary Martinelli is uniquely qualified to resolve complex family law matters with an emphasis on business concerns — earning her clients' trust for more than thirty years.

Mary's experience includes high-profile and complex work in a number of **family law** areas, involving dissolution of marriage, legal separation, child custody, guardianship, adoption, pre-marital and post-marital agreements, domestic partnerships, same-sex family issues and domestic violence.

Mary handles family law matters for clients throughout California, with a special emphasis on supporting business owners in the fields of healthcare, finance, banking, technology, professional services (including medical, legal and accounting), insurance, agriculture, automobile sales, commercial trucking, food services, construction and real estate. In addition, she has assisted entertainers, professional athletes and investors/entrepreneurs with their highly specialized needs. Mary has extensive experience working with forensic accountants and other experts, which enables her to resolve the most challenging business valuation, support and child custody issues.

Mary is well known across the state for her passionate advocacy and litigation skills, as well as her dexterity in creatively negotiating positive settlements. She has been honored by numerous national and local entities as one of the best family law attorneys in the region — including a preeminent five-star rating from Martindale-Hubbell and consistent placement among the Judge's Review. Mary has brought her considerable talents to critical cases that are seminal in family law, including *LaBass v. Munsee*.

In addition to her practice, Mary is an integral part of firm management. She served on the Executive Committee for many years, and is currently involved with lateral hiring and merger opportunities, and serves as Marketing Partner.

Experience

- Downey Brand's family law practice is particularly sensitive to the privacy of its clients, thus the family law group does not discuss specific case results.

Professional & Community Service

- University of California at Davis, School of Law (King Hall), Former Visiting/Adjunct Professor
- University of California at Davis, School of Medicine, Presenter of Didactic Program in Family Law
- Sacramento County Bar Association, Family Law Section
- California Lawyers Association, Family Law Section
- Association of Trial Lawyers of America
- Foster Youth Education Fund, Board of Directors
- Association of Certified Family Law Specialists
- Dean's Leadership Council UCD School of Law
- Former Board of Directors and Legislative Analyst, Association of Certified Family Law Specialists
- Weave, Former Board Member
- Sacramento Ballet Company, Former Board Member
- Sacramento County Pro-Tem Judge
- California State ADR Standing Committee, Past Co-Chair
- Milton L. Schwartz American Inn of Court, Former Barrister
- Judicial Council Family Court Services Grants Advisory Committee, Former Member

Education

- J.D., University of California at Davis School of Law, 1986
- B.A., University of California at Berkeley, 1980

Honors & Rankings

- AV Preeminent® Rating by Martindale-Hubbell®, 1996-2021
- Certified Family Law Specialist, California Board of Legal Specialization
- Best Lawyers® 2024 Family Law "Lawyer of the Year" in Sacramento
- Best Lawyers® 2022 Family Law "Lawyer of the Year" in Sacramento
- Best Lawyers in America®, Family Law, 2013-2024
- Best Lawyers, Women in the Law, 2016
- *Super Lawyers*, Northern California Super Lawyer, Family Law, 2015-2023
- *Sacramento Magazine*, Top Lawyer, Family Law, 2015-2023

- *Sacramento Business Journal*, Best of the Bar, 2013-2019

Speaking Engagements / Events

- *Death and Taxes are Certain, Divorce is Possible, and Business is Unpredictable - Are You Prepared?*, Co-Presenter, Capital Region Family Business Center's 2018 Annual Generations Conference, January 29-30, 2018
- *Divorce, Family Law Issues, and Family Business*, The Capital Region Family Business Center, March 2, 2017
- *CFLR (Thompson Reuters) Family Law 101 and Advanced Family Law seminars*, 2010-2016
- *Bankruptcy Law Forum, and County Bar Estate Planning Section; Barristers' Club: Seminar 'Bridging the Gap'; Young Lawyers.*
- *The Capitol Region Family Business Center, C.E.B., N.B.I., S.A.L.A., Employee Benefits Roundtable*

Publications

- *CEB Publications*, Writer