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Anthony J. Ellrod, a founding partner, holds an AV Preeminent® rating from Martindale-Hubbell, and is an Associate of the American Board of Trial Advocates (ABOTA). He was named a 2012, 2013 and 2014 Top Business Litigation Attorney by *Pasadena Magazine*, as well as a 2005–2010 and 2016–2017 Super Lawyer, and a 2009–2010 Super Lawyer – Business Edition.

Among his many accomplishments, Mr. Ellrod recently obtained a double appellate win in *Honeycutt v. Meridian Sports Club, LLC*, ultimately leading to a published opinion. This opinion is significant because the court found as a matter of law that the acts attributed to the defendant did not rise to the level of gross negligence. *Honeycutt v. Meridian Sports Club, LLC* (2014) 231 Cal. App. 4th 251.

Mr. Ellrod presently heads the firm's Business Litigation; Corporate and Commercial Transactions; Intellectual Property; and Sports, Recreation, and Attractions Law Teams. He developed an expertise in sports, recreation, and attractions law early in his career, and is nationally regarded as one of the leading experts in sports and recreation law. While still a cutting edge attorney in this area, his practice had evolved to include a significant amount of business litigation and commercial transactions. He has conducted numerous successful jury trials, in both state and federal court, on matters including premises liability, general negligence, breach of contract, officers and directors liability, and intellectual property. He represents many of the largest health club chains and attractions in the country, as well as various self insureds and governmental entities. He also represents some of the nation's largest sports and recreation industry trade groups.

Mr. Ellrod authored the Lexis Practice Advisor section on Settlement Agreements and Releases, a practice guide for attorneys as part of the Lexis legal research program by Matthew Bender & Company. Mr. Ellrod is under an ongoing contractual relationship with Lexis to manage updates to same.

Mr. Ellrod is also a member of the Association of Southern California Defense Counsel, the Association of Business Trial Lawyers, the Defense Research Institute (DRI), the Professional Liability Underwriting Society (PLUS) and the International Health, Racquet & Sportsclub Association. He is admitted to practice law before all California state courts, the United States District Courts for the Northern, Central, Eastern and Southern Districts of California, the 9th Circuit U.S. Court of Appeal, and the Supreme Court of the United States.

Notably, in a highly publicized 2004 breach of contract case, Mr. Ellrod obtained an \$8.5 million settlement followed by a jury verdict in excess of \$22.5 million. He regularly handles matters ranging from breach of contract and trade libel to complex securities litigation and trademark infringement. He also has significant expertise in IT errors and omissions and cyber liability, and has spoken internationally on both areas.

Mr. Ellrod graduated from Pepperdine University School of Law (JD 1988) and the University of South Florida (BA 1983), where he majored in business administration. At Pepperdine, he was the business editor of the *Pepperdine Law Review*, and published a comment on the California Supreme Court decision in *Ingersoll v. Palmer*. A recipient of the American Jurisprudence award in Civil Procedure, he was awarded the Pepperdine and National Dean's Honor Lists. Following graduation, he worked extensively in the areas of the First Amendment and the defamation torts, and was heavily involved in the drafting of a brief before the California Supreme Court in *Molko v. Holy Spirit Association for the Unification of World Christianity* (1988) 46 Cal.3d 1092.

Mr. Ellrod serves as pro bono general counsel for the Malibu Special Education Foundation, which is dedicated to supporting students, families, and educators in the Malibu Special Education community. He also serves pro bono as a board member and general counsel for the Aurelia Foundation, whose mission is to create state of the art day programs for adults with disabilities. Mr. Ellrod is a 6th degree black belt in Yoshukai karate and presently acts as assistant West Coast director of the World Yoshukai Karate Kobudo

Organization.

#### Practice Areas

- Business Litigation
- Corporate and Commercial Transactions
- Intellectual Property
- Sports, Recreation, and Attractions Law