

Industry Watch

# Cooley Godward Attracts Litigator

By Drew Combs  
Daily Journal Staff Writer

Prominent trial attorney Steven M. Strauss has joined Cooley Godward as a litigation partner in the firm's San Diego office.

Fred Muto, Cooley Godward's San Diego managing partner, said the firm recruited Strauss because "he is on everyone's shortlist in San Diego."

"Steve is one of the people you have to talk to if you are going to trial," Muto said.

Strauss, 48, was previously head of litigation at Procopio Cory Hargreaves & Savitch, where he practiced for more than 20 years.

Thomas W. Turner Jr., Procopio Cory's managing partner, said he expects Strauss to excel in a national platform.

"There is a high level of mutual respect so that has made the transition smooth for us," Turner said.

## Law Firms

Procopio Cory did not return calls seeking comment.

Strauss, whose practice focuses on complex business litigation, has represented the city of San Diego in its dispute with the Chargers of the National Football League over the team's lease at Qualcomm Stadium.

But currently, he finds himself opposing efforts by San Diego City Attorney Michael Aguirre to void pension benefit increases.

Strauss represents former and current city officials, including former Mayor Dick Murphy on several matters.

Murphy resigned in April as public corruption probes, downgraded bond ratings and election controversies battered his credibility and the city's image.

While Strauss' practice is deeply involved in local litigation, many of his clients have a national presence.

Clients include Qualcomm and Manchester Financial Group.

Strauss said that the chance to avail himself of



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a national firm and further expand his practice in the areas of securities and intellectual property litigation was a major factor in his decision to make the move.

"I would like to broaden my practice," he said. "It is important to be at a firm that has a national platform and a lot deeper bench of support."

Procopio Cory has 80 attorneys at offices in downtown San Diego and Carlsbad.

Strauss said that he settled on Cooley Godward because "they are very collaborative."

During the recruiting process, Strauss visited several of the firm's offices and met with partners across a variety of practice groups.

"I fit in right away," Strauss said.

Cooley Godward has offices in six cities and 450 attorneys. The firm was founded 80 years ago in San Francisco.

In addition to California offices, Cooley Godward has offices in Colorado; Washington,

D.C.; and Reston, Va.

The San Diego office was established in 1992 and has a variety of practice groups including corporate, securities, mergers and acquisitions, corporate governance and litigation.

Eighty attorneys work out of the firm's San Diego office, which is located in the Golden Triangle area.

While Strauss attended college and law school in the Los Angeles area at Claremont Men's College and UCLA School of Law, respectively, he is a second-generation San Diegan and returned to the city to begin his practice.

Strauss serves as president of the board of trustees for the La Jolla Playhouse and is on the Junior Seau Foundation's board of directors.

"I decided to return here because of the quality life and ability to meet my career goals," Strauss said. "It was changing from [a] sleepy Navy backwater."