

50 INFLUENTIAL LEADERS IN SAN DIEGO

LAW

Jake Ryan — Partner, Latham & Watkins

Flying airplanes for the Navy and litigating complex cases in court may not seem like similar endeavors, but to Ryan, the skill sets required for both are analogous.

“Sometimes you have things come up during trial that you didn’t expect, and you have to be pretty cool and collected and not overreact,” he said. “The same with flying in the Navy. When things go south, you can’t lose your cool.”

Ryan is global co-chair of Latham & Watkins’ complex commercial litigation practice, helping oversee a unit with 100 litigators worldwide. He is responsible for bringing together the right team of lawyers to successfully handle the case for Latham’s clients.

“I didn’t set out to become a practice group chair,” he said. “I felt I could bring some value to firm and to the firm’s clients, so when I got the call asking if I wanted to be chair, I said, ‘You bet.’”

Ryan said his deep roots in San Diego -- he came to the military town fresh out of flight school in 1991 -- is one of his most valuable traits. His time in the courtroom is a strength as well.

He worked for many years as an assistant U.S. attorney in Chicago, prosecuting

cases in the areas of white collar fraud, terrorism, tax evasion, and organized crime.

“I bring a great deal of trial experience across a great number of different areas,” he said. “I think that’s what allows me to bring the most value to the law firm and the firm’s clients.”

Ryan represented Apricus Biosciences in its successful motion to dismiss a U.S. antitrust claim in September 2018. He also helped Cytori Therapeutics defeat a breach of contract claim and represented Neurocrine Biosciences in breach of contract litigation related to a patent license case.

Before becoming a global co-chair, Ryan was chair of Latham & Watkins’ litigation & trial department in San Diego.

He helped form the firm’s complex commercial litigation practice group in San Diego three years ago, marking one of his most gratifying accomplishments.

“We’ve got a tremendous amount of energy and enthusiasm,” he said. “The best thing about working at Latham is working with incredibly smart people, both at the firm and with our clients.

“I’ve had the opportunity to work with biotech companies and the most brilliant



Jake Ryan

scientists you’d ever want to meet, who are making incredible discoveries and getting valuable drugs to market.”

— Doug Sherwin