

Daily Journal

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Top Women Lawyers 2018

*The Daily Journal's Annual List of
Leading Women Lawyers in California*

Judith A. Hasko

Hasko's skills in the biopharma life sciences field include the firsthand knowledge she gained working in Genentech Inc.'s cardiovascular research department before she went to law school. She has advanced degrees in biopsychology, neurophysiology and ethology. "I came to the law when I got really interested in the industry," she said. "It's an amazing feat to see a product get to the approval stage. I took a leap of faith to pursue being a commercial transactions lawyer who can successfully execute deals."

Over the last two years she has developed novel strategic licensing structures enabling biopharma companies to receive the critical funding and additional resources they need to further their life-saving innovations while retaining substantial rights to the innovations developed under deals she brokers.

In a recently announced mega-transaction, Hasko guided longtime global client Prothena Corp., based in Dublin, Ireland, in its strategic collaboration with Celgene Corp. of Summit, New Jersey. In the deal, Celgene will pay Prothena \$100 million up-front and is valued at up to \$2.2 billion in milestone and other payments to develop new therapies for neurodegenerative diseases.

"These deals can take a long time, but this one went pretty quickly," Hasko said. The



companies had been in talks since mid-2017 and called her near the end of the year when discussions got serious. The deal was announced near the end of March.

"We invited Celgene to do the first terms of a draft. I'd been opposite Celgene in earlier transactions, so I had a good sense of how they thought about things," Hasko said.

LATHAM & WATKINS LLP
MENLO PARK

Practice Type:
Corporate transactions

"We'd get together in a room and then have many days of teleconference negotiations. We'd discuss business needs and the risks that needed mitigating. We'd talk about the spreads between the ways the parties want to work and then pressure test them."

For Hasko, a key was respect. "You want to leave people with the feeling that they're being heard," she said. "I'm not a litigator. I try to set up agreements that can work for the long run, solve problems, get people to volunteer potential solutions themselves. A lot of relationships get created during the development of deals like this."

Hasko additionally champions women in science, funding scholarships at her alma mater, the University of Sussex, and at Vassar College to support economic diversity at that school. She was named Finance & Transactional Attorney of the Year – Licensing and Collaboration by LMG Life Sciences.

— John Roemer