

TOP 40 UNDER 40 BUSINESS PROFESSIONALS

*Emerging developers, brokers, lawyers and public officials
who are helping to shape San Diego's future.*

Drew Gardiner

Latham & Watkins LLP

Title: Counsel

Age: 38

Few if any San Diegans have worked on Capitol Hill during a tumultuous presidential election year, as has Drew Gardiner, an attorney with Latham & Watkins his entire 11-year career.

Gardiner, whose practice focuses on representing policyholders in complex insurance coverage and bad-faith disputes, served as a White House intern during the final nine months of the Clinton administration.

"I was the special assistant to the senior adviser to the president [Joel Johnson] and I also worked in the chief of staff [John Podesta's] office," Gardiner said. "It was great, especially coming straight out of college to be, basically, working a couple of doors down from the Oval Office."

Not bad for a kid from Poway whose wardrobe then consisted mainly of sweatshirts and jeans and who just "decided to head back east" after high school.

"I didn't really know what I was getting myself into [because] I grew up here," Gardiner said.

What Gardiner got into was a degree in



government from Dartmouth College and a law degree from the University of Virginia.

"I was thinking I wanted to be in D.C. and be involved in the political scene, but I decided I wanted to be back home on the West Coast in San Diego," Gardiner said. "I did a summer internship here at Latham after my second year of law school and I just really enjoyed it and decided to come back out here."

He has been with Latham ever since.

"We at Latham are one of the few big firms that specialize in policyholder-side representation," Gardiner said. "The great thing about the insurance coverage work we do is that it actually results in recoveries for our clients."

Gardiner also heads the pro bono committee of Latham's San Diego office.

— Tony Lovitt