

SAN FERNANDO VALLEY BUSINESS JOURNAL

Valley Mentors

◆ AWARDS ◆

Honoring those who shaped today's leaders

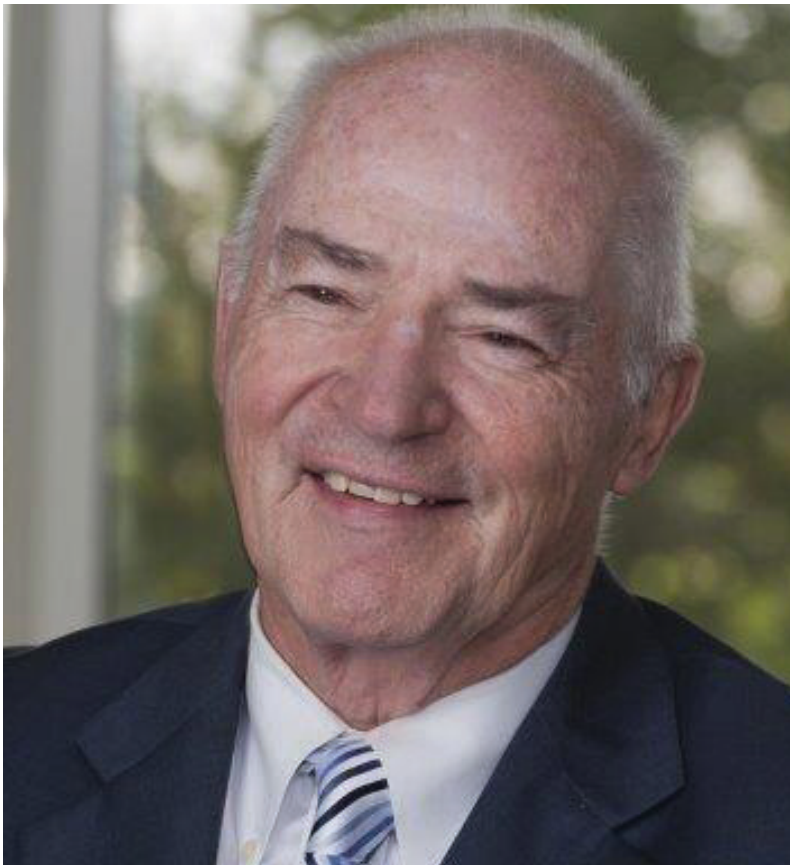
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DAVID FLEMING

Throughout his successful career as an attorney and civic-minded businessman, David Fleming has always maintained a passion for supporting his community and helping others succeed. Fleming has been involved in so many civic duties and philanthropic causes, he once was described by former Los Angeles Mayor Richard Riordan as “Mr. San Fernando Valley.” He now serves as the senior advisor to Sen. Robert Hertzberg, the California Senate Majority Leader.

Fleming founded the Los Angeles County Business Federation (BizFed), an umbrella lobbying organization representing 180 chambers of commerce and trade groups. During his 58-year career as an attorney, he was appointed to 14 federal, state, county and city boards and commissions. He also served on more than 20 boards for nonprofits and chaired many of them, including the Valley Economic Alliance for 16 years and Valley Presbyterian Hospital for 25 years. Over the past 50 years, he has devoted over 80,000 hours of service to civic, community, charitable and government organizations.

Interestingly enough, Fleming was nominated by another Valley Mentor, Lee Kanon Alpert. Alpert credits Fleming with encouraging him to get more involved years ago. In his nomination, Alpert said of Fleming: “He is generous with his time and money, is a very humane, caring and an engaging person with all, regardless of their standing, status, wealth or ethnicity. He treated me and all others the same and encouraged everyone to get involved with the Valley and our organizations.

“He also encouraged some of us, like me, to get involved in broader municipal and state and federal entities always for the benefit of the Valley,” Alpert continued. “He was involved at all level of politics and remains involved in our community. Dave has never been ashamed of or forgotten the Valley. He is a wonderful, down to earth man, who – if he is your friend – will promote and help you regardless of the circumstance.”

KAREN GABLER

With over 28 years of experience counseling businesses in all aspects of employment law, Karen Gabler has earned a reputation for developing proactive and creative strategies to enhance workplace productivity, improve workplace culture, ensure legal compliance and avoid employment disputes. She co-founded LightGabler in 2011 and has been instrumental in helping to build the firm from seven to 26 people and from 287 to over 3,000 clients today.

Her colleague Angela Lopez nominated Gabler, praising her generosity. “When I first joined the firm, I was fortunate enough to work alongside Karen,” said Lopez. “Karen is very strategic, while my impulse is to act based on whatever seems best in the moment. Her willingness to explain her tactical decisions helped me learn and grow as a professional, and I now approach all problems in a more mindful and deliberative way. She also models great community service and involvement and has involved me in several wonderful community service organizations over the years.”

“Karen frequently reaches out to her own personal contacts on behalf of young attorneys and has helped many of us develop community ties and clients through board membership or other community involvement,” Lopez continued. “She has a great legal mind and often devotes time to helping others learn. Karen has been very generous with her time, especially in connection with new laws adopted for the COVID-19 pandemic.”

Lopez offered up a telling story. She said Gabler encouraged her to drop a client development obligation that she did not particularly enjoy. She said that Gabler “reminded me that hard-earned personal time is too valuable to spend on organizations that you do not feel passionate about supporting, and I always consider her advice now when taking on new obligations.”

Lopez went on to say: “I think I have done some of my best work while working with Karen. Like other good teachers, she always seems to expect great things and believes in the potential of those she helps mentor.”

