



SANDRA SMITH THAYER

Partner

Sandra Smith Thayer has been recognized as one of the nation's top insurance recovery lawyers (*Law360*) and one of California's Top 100 Women Litigators (*Daily Journal*). She specializes in representing clients in high stakes, bet-the-company litigation against insurers and insurance brokers. She also advises clients on post-loss and post-claim insurance issues, including assisting clients in negotiations with insurers. Sandy has represented insureds in a wide range of industries and in a wide range of insurance matters, including claims under cast insurance, directors and officers liability, employment practices, errors and omissions, general liability, political risk, property, revenue shortfall, and specialized policies.

Sandy co-led efforts that resulted in insurance recoveries of more than \$1.8 billion for an energy company in connection with the 2007 San Diego Wildfires. Sandy co-led efforts to obtain insurance coverage for another energy company in connection with coverage issues arising out of a major fire in Northern California and yet another energy company in connection with the Aliso Canyon/Porter Ranch, California, natural gas well leak.

In addition to insurance recovery matters, Sandy represents insureds in claims against insurance brokers for malpractice, breach of contract, and fraud. She played an instrumental role in obtaining one of the largest jury verdicts ever against Marsh USA (\$48.5 million). She handled all aspects of the pre-trial work in the Marsh lawsuit, conducted direct and cross-examination of the majority of the witnesses at trial, and developed many of the key arguments and evidence that led to the judgment and its affirmance in full on appeal. Sandy also was instrumental in obtaining an even larger recovery against another insurance broker involving a dispute over whether the broker accurately represented the insurance it procured.

Sandy also specializes in the area of political risk insurance. She has handled political risk insurance claims for companies with losses in Argentina, China, and Mexico, including second-chairing a month-long arbitration before the London Court of International Arbitration on behalf of a major east coast energy company.

Sandy has litigated and arbitrated entertainment insurance claims, including second-chairing an entertainment industry arbitration resulting in a total recovery of \$100 million under a revenue shortfall policy and representing a studio in the largest cast insurance recovery in entertainment industry history. Sandy also is a co-author of the *New Appleman Sports and Entertainment Insurance Law & Practice Guide*.

Sandy also recently first-chaired an arbitration against an insurer that challenged the rates charged by the insured's underlying defense counsel and costs incurred in that defense. The arbitrator awarded the full amount sought.

PUBLICATIONS

- Checklist and Guide to Hurricanes and other Natural Disaster Insurance Coverage Claims, *Lexology* (September 24, 2018)
- 2016 Insurance Coverage Litigation Year In Review, *Law360* (January 3, 2017)
- Political Risk Insurance: Coverage for Your International Investment, *International Insurance Law Client Strategies: Leading Lawyers on Developing Purchase Strategies and Overcoming Regulatory Challenges (Inside the Minds)* (March 1, 2015)
- New York's High Court: Insured's Failure to Read Its Policy Does Not Preclude a Negligent Procurement Claim Against Its Broker, *Policyholder Informer* (July 22, 2013)
- Insuring Against Political Risks, *Oil & Gas Financial Journal* (April 2011)
- Insuring Against Political Risks, *Maritime Executive* (March 8, 2011)
- Insuring Against Political Risks, *Los Angeles Daily Journal* (February 18, 2011)
- New Appleman Sports and Entertainment Insurance Law & Practice Guide, *LexisNexis* (December 2010)
- Insurance broker responsibility extends beyond procuring coverage, *Advocate: Journal of Consumer Attorneys Associations for Southern California* (June 2010)

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

- *Chambers USA: America's Leading Lawyers for Business*: Named an "Up and Coming Individual" in Insurance Coverage in California
- *Daily Journal*: Named one of the Top 100 Women Litigators
- *Law360*: Rising Star – Named one of the Top 10 Policyholder Attorneys Under 40
- *Legal 500*: The Client's Guide to the US Legal Profession
- *Southern California Super Lawyers*
- *The Los Angeles Daily Journal's Top Plaintiff Verdicts in California* (2009)

ADMISSIONS

- California
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit
- U.S. District Court, Central District of California
- U.S. District Court, Northern District of California
- U.S. District Court, Southern District of California

EDUCATION

Tulane University Law School (J.D., *cum laude*, 1998)
 University of California Los Angeles (B.A., 1994)