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## Letter from the Managing Partner

We're well into 2018 and before you know it, spring break will be here. In spite of recent stock market gyrations, the economy is going strong and many businesses are feeling the benefits.

But even success has its challenges. Growing businesses may struggle to find employees with the right skill set, and staffing-up requires attention to a host of issues around employment agreements, work visas, etc. If you're adding staff, you might also need to negotiate for additional office space. As revenue grows, there are often questions around tax liabilities as well. Those tax questions are compounded this year by the passage, recently, of the first major federal tax reform legislation in decades.

Many individuals only think of their attorneys when they're in trouble. Being there in a crisis is an important role, but a good law firm is a business partner who anticipates issues and proactively works with clients to develop solutions early on. At Higgs Fletcher & Mack, we are committed to building meaningful relationships with the businesses and individuals we work with, to understanding their worlds in a deeper way. We continue to adapt to our client's evolving needs in light of changes in their industries. And that means we're here for you, even in the good times.

— Steven J. Cologne

## HFM FIRM NEWS

## U.S. News & World Report "Best Law Firms" and "Best Lawyers"

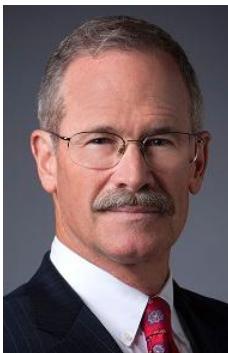
In 2018, Higgs Fletcher & Mack was named a Tier 1 Metropolitan Best Law Firm in eight practice areas and Tier 2 in six practice areas by *U.S. News Best Law Firms*®. The "Best Law Firms" rankings are based on a rigorous evaluation process that includes the collection of client and lawyer evaluations, peer review from leading attorneys in their field, and review of additional information provided by law firms as part of the formal submission process.



In addition, 15 Higgs attorneys were recognized in *The Best Lawyers in America*®. James Harrigan and William Low received "Lawyer of the Year" recognition with the highest overall peer-feedback for their specific practice area and geographic region.



**James Harrigan**



**William Low**

## Two Appeals, Two Victories

Rachel Moffitt, civil writs and appeals lawyer with HFM, recently won two precedent-setting decisions. Rachel has been recognized as a Super Lawyers Rising Star and top appellate attorney in San Diego. [Read more about these two cases.](#)



## Maggie Schroedter Elected President of the SD Bankruptcy Forum

Higgs Business Litigation and Bankruptcy attorney, Maggie Schroedter is now the President of the San Diego Bankruptcy Forum (SDBF). The SDBF provides educational support and networking opportunities to help members collaborate and develop professionally.

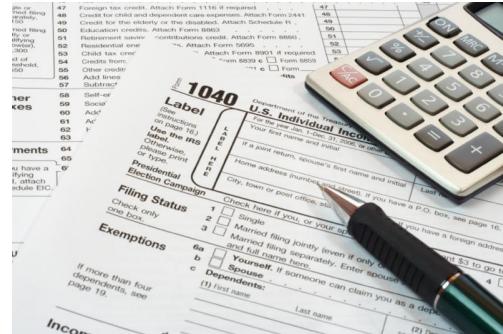
## HOT TOPICS

- Tax Reform
- Construction
- Privacy and Information Security

### Tax Reform Benefits for Businesses

The recently passed tax reform laws include significant changes for both businesses and individuals. With the newly reduced corporate tax rate to 21% and the brand new "pass through deduction" of 20%, businesses may want to re-evaluate their current entity structure to take full advantage of these tax reductions. If you want to know more about the new tax laws and how they affect your business, contact attorneys

Laura Buckley or Bruce O' Brien .



### General Contractor Liability

As of January of this year, general contractors on private works projects must ensure that subcontractors pay all lawful wages, benefits and other contributions to their employees. Pursuant to California Labor Code section 218.7, contractors may face claims by the California Labor Commission, third parties or others if subcontractors do not provide the wages and benefits to which their employees are legally entitled. For more information, contact attorney Michael Gibson .



### EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

In May of this year, new privacy regulations will go into effect in the EU. These new regulations establish a single set of rules across Europe to give EU residents greater control over their personal data.



Businesses outside of the EU are subject to the GDPR if they collect data about an EU resident. The new regulations will allow businesses to deal with a single supervisory authority, and appoint an EU representative (law firm or privacy consultant) to work with the supervisory authority. The new regulations separate responsibilities and duties of data controllers and processors, and require appropriate technical and organizational measures

are implemented to protect resident's privacy. They must also adhere to an approved code of conduct or appropriate certification.

For US companies targeting EU residents, the Safe Harbor will no longer apply and you should be aware of your responsibilities under the GDPR. For more information, contact attorney [Michael Hoisington](#).

## IN THE COMMUNITY



### Downtown San Diego Partnership Kickoff Mixer

Since 2010, Higgs Fletcher & Mack has proudly hosted the [Downtown San Diego Partnership's](#) Kickoff Mixer. The mixer brought together a community of committed individuals who strive to improve economic growth in Downtown San Diego. Partnership member, [Kitchens for Good](#), a nonprofit organization that aims to break the cycles of food waste, poverty and hunger through innovation programs provided their catering services.

The organization uses a portion of their proceeds to provide culinary training and jobs for individuals seeking a better life. This year, HFM partner [Doug Kerner](#) will serve on the Partnership's Board of Directors.

### Adopted Family

Last year, the [Sherman Academy](#) referred us to a family who needed a bit of help and cheer during the holidays. HFM staff provided the family with items from their wish list, which included essentials such as shoes and clothing as well as a Christmas tree with decorations.



### Pan Asian Lawyers Dinner Scholarship

To help a budding law student succeed, Higgs Fletcher & Mack contributed a \$1,500 scholarship to the Pan Asian Lawyers of San Diego and Filipino American Lawyers of San Diego. Darly Htike, a student at USD School of Law, received the 2018 scholarship at the organizations' 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gala Dinner. Congratulations Darly!



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