

# Howard A. Slavitt

## Partner

San Francisco

## Details

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Howard Slavitt specializes in real estate, trust and estate, and other complex commercial litigation matters. He counsels fiduciaries and also represents them in litigation involving alleged breaches of fiduciary and professional duties. He also prosecutes and defends intellectual property disputes, including trade secrets, patent, trademark and copyright litigation.

He has significant experience related to family business disputes (often with real estate holdings) and in trust and estate litigation. Because these cases often become emotionally charged matters, Howard works closely with his clients to ensure their goals are achieved effectively, efficiently, and privately.

In addition to these areas, Howard has broad experience in general business disputes and in defending consumer class actions, unfair business practices and California Proposition 65 litigation. Howard also often represents clients in appeals.

Howard received his undergraduate degree in history summa cum laude from the University of California, Berkeley (1985) and his master's degree in cinema production from the University of Southern California, Los Angeles (1989). He earned his law degree magna cum laude from Harvard University (1994) where he was also a general editor and executive editor of the Harvard Civil Rights-Civil Liberties Law Review.

## Notable Representations

### **Family Business Disputes: *Bacharach v. Arnone et. al.***

Coblentz attorneys defended a complaint to remove family members as general partners from a family business involving commercial real estate holdings, and asserted a cross-complaint to dissolve another related business entity. They negotiated a settlement involving the separation of the real estate holdings, interests in multiple family trusts, and family businesses.

### **Trust and Probate Litigation**

Coblentz prosecuted and defended probate petitions and claims concerning alleged breaches of fiduciary duties by trustees, the interpretation of trust instruments, and testamentary capacity and undue influence. The disputed assets included approximately thirty apartment buildings in the Bay Area and Sacramento. They negotiated a settlement involving the separation of the real estate holdings and interests in multiple family trusts.

### **Trade Secrets Litigation: *WorldPantry.Com, Inc. v. John Doe et. al.***

Coblentz represented WorldPantry.Com in a case involving claims for misappropriation of trade secrets, conversion, and related torts. Coblentz obtained a temporary restraining order and then negotiated a swift, effective resolution.

### **Real Estate Litigation: *Currie Samuelson v. Mitchell International***

Coblentz prosecuted claims for a long term tenant's breach of its surrender obligations pursuant to a commercial lease involving millions of dollars of damages due to the failure to properly repair and maintain a 75,000-square-foot office building.

## Professional Activities

Howard currently serves as Co-Chair of the Bar Association of San Francisco's Estate Planning, Probate and Trust – Litigation Subsection. He is a member of the California State Bar, the American Bar Association, and the Bar Association of San Francisco.

For more than 15 years, Howard has provided pro bono services to low-income individuals as a volunteer and member of the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights of the San Francisco Bay Area. He has also prosecuted pro bono appeals in the

Ninth Circuit and the California Courts of Appeal.

## **Publications & Speaking Engagements**

- Howard authored “Selling the Integrity of the System of Precedent: Selective Publication, Depublication, and Vacatur” (1995) in the Harvard Civil Rights-Civil Liberties Law Review.
- He has served as a lecturer at the University of Southern California and Pepperdine Universities.

## **Education**

- J.D., magna cum laude Harvard University (1994)
- M.A., University of Southern California (1989)
- A.B., highest distinction University of California, Berkeley (1985)