

# Daily Journal

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## TOP 40 UNDER 40

California's leading lawyers of 2019

### Allison L. Libeu

Libeu was among the cadre of lawyers that launched Hueston Hennigan LLP in 2015 after exiting Irell & Manella LLP.

"John Hueston asked me to come along, and it's been exciting to be part of this startup," Libeu said.

Now a partner at Hueston Hennigan, Libeu provides clients lawyering, counsel and strategic business advice. She litigates high-stakes business disputes including business torts, contracts, class actions, securities fraud and trade disputes. She advises in the "corporate divorce" arena, which typically involves clashes between the founders and owners of a business. She has also successfully prosecuted and defended matters involving the termination of C-suite executives and the claims that typically arise in such cases, including breach of fiduciary duty, unfair competition and violation of nondisclosure, non-compete and non-solicitation agreements.

Libeu's national practice includes litigation at the trial and appellate levels in both federal and state courts in addition to U.S.-based international arbitration.

She represents the CEO and co-founder of Gavrieli Brands, Kifr Gavrieli, in an ownership dispute with his sister, Dikla Unatin. The company makes Tiekks, a line of women's designer shoes. The siblings agreed to split ownership 60-40 in favor of Gavrieli, but Unatin sued in 2017 for a judicial declaration that she owned 90 percent.

"It's a family business and they didn't document everything formally," Libeu said. "She refused to answer some interrogatories, but we forced her to concede that she had never owned more than 50 percent of the company, and she was forced to amend her complaint." Trial is set for Aug. 19. *Unatin v. Gavrieli*, BC686856 (L.A. Super. Ct., filed Dec. 13, 2017).

As co-lead counsel, Libeu represents Tesla Inc. in its civil suit which claims a disgruntled assembly line worker stole confidential and proprietary data from the automaker's Gigafactory 1 in Nevada and made false claims to the media about the data. Tesla needed an immediate investigation and a quick pursuit of civil remedies.



**Hueston Hennigan  
LLP**

Newport Beach  
Practice: General complex  
commercial litigation  
Age: 38

"Within twenty-four hours of getting the case, we filed our complaint," Libeu said. "It turned out he was fleeing to Hungary after he was identified, and we were able to serve him before he got on the plane. We knew we had to move fast, and I was asked to spearhead the filing. Yes, we pulled an all-nighter drafting the complaint. It reminded us of law school before a big exam." The complaint alleged that Martin Tripp launched a sabotage campaign after having been denied a promotion. The suit sought \$167 million in damages. *Tesla Inc. v. Tripp*, 3:18-cv-00296 (D. Nev.,

filed June 20, 2018).

"Mr. Tripp remains in Hungary," Libeu said. "We've been taking discover on his counterclaims. The current big issue is whether Mr. Tripp should be able to review documents in Hungary. We say it's too risky because he has tweeted out confidential information about Tesla."

Libeu said she is glad she made the move to Hueston Hennigan. "The firm's a great place, with a lot of good young attorneys and a good energy," she said.

— John Roemer