

# Daily Journal

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# WOMEN

## TOP WOMEN LAWYERS 2019

### Susan L. Heller

Like a chess player, Heller is always thinking multiple moves ahead. The intellectual property lawyer sometimes applies for trademarks for companies that develop high-tech products whose functionality is likely to change before the mark is registered. She therefore spends considerable time versing herself in the inner-workings of the company and the potential trajectory of its product, she said.

“You have to figure out where they’re going so you can craft something that covers what they’re doing now but leaves the ability to cover the product as it evolves,” she said. “IP doesn’t stay still. That’s the beauty of it; that’s the challenge.”

As the chair of Greenberg Traurig LLP’s global trademark and brand management group, Heller is often called on by Fortune 500 companies to handle high-stakes “bet-the-brand” trademark disputes or to oversee the IP aspects of complex international acquisitions.

Heller also advises clients on strategies related to the monetization and expansion of a brand, the importance of which has become increasingly evident in recent years, she said. “One misstep of a person or a product and a



whole empire can come crashing down,” she said. “So more C-suite executives are getting involved because anything that goes wrong is going to hurt the company’s image—not just product sales.”

Over the past year, Heller became the go-to trademark strategist for Urban Armor Gear, which makes protective cases for mobile devices, and assisted in the branding

**GREENBERG TRAURIG LLP**  
IRVINE

**Practice Type:**  
Intellectual property

of marquee buildings for commercial real estate giant Tishman Speyer.

She said real estate companies are increasingly emphasizing the services and amenities offered at their buildings, as opposed to focusing solely on “location, location, location.” The co-managing shareholder of the firm’s Irvine office experienced the other side of that effort earlier this year, when she helped select a new building for the office, which will relocate later this year.

Whether Heller is shopping for real estate or a pair of jeans, she is constantly scrutinizing features that differentiate one brand from another, she said, adding that the real-world implications of her practice are one of the most rewarding facets of her job.

“It doesn’t end when I get up from the desk and go home,” she said. “It affects every purchasing decision you make.”

— Mark Armao