



## Jones Day partner receives Berkeley prize

Richard Woolley • Wednesday, 5 March 2014 (2 hours ago)

The University of California, Berkeley, has awarded Jones Day arbitration partner **Steven Smith** a prize for his contribution to international law.



(l-r) BJIL editors Megan Niedermeyer and Tara Capsuto, Steven Smith, and Kate Jastram of the Miller Institute

Smith received the 2014 Stefan Riesenfeld Memorial Award on 27 February from the *Berkeley Journal of International Law* and the university's Miller Institute for Global Challenges and the Law.

The award recognises a scholar or practitioner who has made an outstanding contribution to international law. Previous recipients of the honour include **Charles N Brower** of 20 Essex Street, World Trade Organization deputy director-general Alejandro Jara and human rights law professors Dinah Shelton and Philip Alston.

Smith, who was chair of O'Melveny & Myers' international arbitration practice before he joined Jones Day's San Francisco office last year, is a co-chair of the American Bar Association's international arbitration committee, a member of the ICC's commission on arbitration and ADR, and chair of the ICC's arbitration committee for the Northwest United States.

He is also an alumnus of Berkeley Law School, where he was the founder of the *International Tax And Business Lawyer*, which would go on to become the *Berkeley Journal of International Law*.

"I am very humbled and deeply honoured to accept this award, especially from Berkeley – an institution I cherish – and I'm particularly pleased that so many friends and colleagues could be present," says Smith. "I also feel like a proud father when I see how the journal has matured over the years and established itself as one of the leading publications in the field, worthy of its affiliation with Berkeley."

He joined O'Melveny shortly after graduation, becoming partner in 1990 and going on to found and chair the firm's international arbitration practice group for 20 years.

While at O'Melveny, his clients included Duke Energy, in an UNCITRAL arbitration against Algeria's Sonatrach, for which he won the 2008 California Lawyer of the Year Award for extraordinary achievement in alternative dispute resolution.

Since joining Jones Day he has worked alongside of counsel **Marcus Salvato Quintanilla**, who moved with him from O'Melveny, in defending a global engineering, procurement and construction contractor in ICC arbitration arising from the failure of a combined-cycle power-generation facility in Paraná, Brazil.

He was presented with the award at a ceremony held at Berkeley's Bancroft Hotel on 27 February, as part of the law school's annual Riesenfeld Symposium. Earlier in the day, the law school played host to a panel discussion on international developments in privacy law entitled "Who's Watching? Global Perspectives on Privacy".

In his remarks, Smith spoke about the impact of the Iran-US Claims Tribunal (established when he was a student) on his own career and on the development of international arbitration as a distinct practice in the United States. He would go on to gain significant early experience in international arbitration trying cases as counsel before the tribunal.

He also commented on recent changes in the international arbitration law market: "In the next five years, I think you'll continue to see the mega-firms such as Jones Day pull away from the rest of the pack. But it's also true that there are many more firms with specialists in this practice area – not only in the US and Europe, but also in the major legal markets of the Middle East and Asia."

Presenting the award, **Jim Shannon**, formerly a partner at Kirkland & Ellis and retired deputy general counsel of Bechtel Group, said "Steve has built an impressive career as a California-based international lawyer: he undoubtedly is one of the country's leading private international lawyers, and he has climbed to that rank while living here, in the Bay Area, a place outside the major centres of international arbitration. Steve's career is thus a great model for young aspiring international lawyers."

Addressing the students at the reception, Shannon added "If you wish to practise international law in California, you should strive to be like Steve – have a generous, dogged, creative mind, be a humble, probing, eloquent, gentle person and still be a bull who does not quit, no matter the load on your shoulders or the mountain before you.

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