SpencerFane®

Maria S. Bellafronto

Partner

Contact

San Jose (Silicon Valley)

P 408.918.2828 | **F** 408.286.5722

mbellafronto@spencerfane.com



Overview

Maria Bellafronto helps clients navigate real estate and commercial disputes, developing proactive, value-maximizing strategies for a wide range of complex matters. Well established in her litigation methods, Maria boasts nearly 30 years of experience in jury and bench trials across federal and state courts, continually sharpening her courtroom litigation skills while solidifying her track record of favorable outcomes.

Within her expansive practice, Maria regularly represents property owners and developers as well as buyers and sellers in commercial disputes involving purchase and sale transactions, real estate investment fraud, and commercial landlord-tenant disputes. She also has extensive experience representing clients in federal securities fraud litigation. Additionally, Maria serves as a Judge Pro Tempore for the Santa Clara County Superior Court.

During law school, Maria honed her investigative skills as a private detective. Following, she worked as an associate for insurance fraud claims and as in-house counsel for a national insurance group, gaining a breadth of experience that has led to her current robust litigation and dispute resolution practice.

Education

- Santa Clara University School of Law (J.D.)
- University of California, Davis (B.A.)

Bar Admissions

- California, 1992

Court Admissions

- U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California
- U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of California

Community Involvement

- Thirty*One* Women, Co-Founder
- Graceful Giving, Co-Founder
- Santa Clara University School of Law, Real Property Law, Adjunct Professor
- De Anza Force Soccer Club, Board Member
- Little Italy San Jose, Advisory Board Member

Distinctions

- *Best Lawyers in America*
  - Commercial Litigation, 2026-2027
  - Litigation – Trusts and Estates, 2024-2027
- *Silicon Valley Business Journal*, Women of Influence, 2019

Memberships

- Santa Clara County Superior Court, Judge Pro Tempore
- Santa Clara University Real Estate Advisory Board
- William F. Ingram Inn of American Inns of Court
- Silicon Valley Bar Association (SVBA)
- Santa Clara County Bar Association
- American Bar Association

Related Experience

- Successfully defended a motion for summary judgment against a large insurance company in a federal securities fraud lawsuit, resulting in a $2.2 million settlement in a case where actual damages were $1.4 million.
- Obtained a defense verdict against Stanford University in a landlord-tenant dispute over alleged use violations in Stanford's ground lease.
- Successfully defended a commercial real estate developer against allegations of fraud and breach of contract in a six-week jury trial in Shasta County. Client was awarded all attorney fees and most costs to defend the action.
- Successfully defended high tech startup company in a commercial eviction lawsuit brought by its landlord in San Francisco, claiming that the client's office lease was illegal because the City of San Francisco's zoning ordinances did not permit "office" use. Client was awarded all fees and costs incurred in defending the eviction action in trial.
- Represented a shopping center commercial landlord in a settlement of $3.5 million after its anchor tenant, a major grocery chain, ceased operations and abandoned the premises.
- Represented a client in a securities fraud jury trial filed in the U.S. District Court in San Francisco.
- Represented a client in a probate court trial against the client's sister, invalidating the sister's power of attorney on grounds of lack of capacity and enabling client to receive half of the estate.
- Won a $250,000 claim in binding arbitration for client against former girlfriend for failing to repay him for improving her property.