

# Daily Journal

JANUARY 18, 2012

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## Top 20 Under 40



Robert Levins / Daily Journal

### JEFFREY LE SAGE

Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher LLP  
Los Angeles

**Practice type:** Corporate

**Practice specialty:** Mergers & acquisitions

**Age:** 38

One of Le Sage's proudest moments as a lawyer was in leading an historic public/private partnership with the city of Los Angeles to revitalize Lafayette Park, a blighted area west of downtown.

Working closely with the recreation and parks department, he developed a model based on those used in such cities as New York and Chicago. After seven years of developing, negotiating and raising funds for the project, the city of Los Angeles, the recreation and parks department and the Heart of Los Angeles Youth — known as HOLA — realized their dream.

They built a state-of-the-art community center that opened in February 2011 and featured a gym sponsored by the Los Angeles Lakers.

The whole process began after HOLA had to vacate the space it used as a community center to make way for a charter school. They relocated to a basement in a low-income housing project, across the street from Lafayette Park.

"I walked across the street and started dreaming about it," Le Sage, 38, said.

While Los Angeles has engaged in public/private partnerships, he said, none had involved parks. "We decided to see if the city would agree to this," Le Sage said. "We put together a model after some other cities and, eight years after that, built a beautiful community center, a LED-certified building and a gorgeous gym."

HOLA provides the programming for more than 2,400 at-risk youth at the park, while the city is in charge of maintenance and additional programming.

"The partnership at the park is transforming the whole area," Le Sage said. "We took the park back from the gangs."

In his recent notable transactions, Le Sage led the \$777 million merger of Pasadena-based Ameron International Corp., his client, with National Oilwell Varco that closed on Oct. 5.

"It was a great deal for the stockholders of the company," he said. "We got a 99.57 percent approval, which is almost unheard of."

Last year, Le Sage led Bally Technologies Inc.'s \$400 million modified tender offer

and related refinancing of its credit agreement; and led Bally's acquisition of MacroView Labs, a deal that Le Sage said could change how consumers gamble both inside and potentially outside of casinos.

"I do a lot of mergers and acquisitions work for Bally, and I've seen them grow from the old-style slot machines and one arm bandits to one of the leading tech companies in the space," Le Sage said.

Le Sage also led the \$850 million sale of Carlton Forge Works and Arcturus Manufacturing to Precision Castparts Corp.

Before he became involved, there had been two aborted attempts to sell the company.

He came to the deal with a fresh perspective, Le Sage said, and eventually convinced the buyers to assume some of the post-closing risk, without reducing the sales price.

Precision Castparts was motivated, he said, because it wanted and needed the asset.

"It was an important company in their strategy," Le Sage added. "I'm not sure the deal would have been done without some creativity on risk allocation, because of the difficulty in reaching consensus among the selling shareholders."

It all comes down to bringing all of the parties together, he said.

"It was an interesting puzzle to approach," Le Sage said. "You needed to take a fresh and creative look on how you were going to be able to structure the deal. In that case, it was a consensus building exercise."

— Pat Broderick