

## APRIL WOMEN'S INITIATIVE SPOTLIGHT:

# Kristi Blackwell

Kristi Blackwell is a Partner in Tyson & Mendes' San Diego office and leads the firm's Retail, Restaurant, and Hospitality practice group. Kristi was the third partner for the firm (after Bob and Pat), and played a key role in preparing the petition and opening brief for *Howell v. Hamilton Meats*, one of the firm's most significant wins. Kristi's practice focuses primarily on general liability, personal injury, premises liability, and complex litigation. Read on to learn more about Kristi, including her love of sports and latest music downloads.



## Q&A

**Q:** What drew you to Tyson & Mendes?

**A:** Tyson & Mendes was my first job out of law school and I am still here! I cannot think of two better people to work for than Bob and Pat. They have been so supportive throughout my career and I have learned so much from them.

**Q:** What is the strongest distinguishing factor that sets Tyson & Mendes apart from other firms?

**A:** We have a unique and creative way of defending and trying cases that is unlike any other law firm. Tyson & Mendes also provides frequent training to all attorneys to ensure everyone is equipped to succeed in these specialized methods.

**Q:** What has been your favorite case to defend?

**A:** I have a hard time picking just one. I do, however, find cases involving complex injuries the most interesting - I enjoy digging into the medical evidence.

**Q:** Which accomplishment/win has made you most proud?

**A:** We recently received a full defense verdict in a products liability case against two highly regarded plaintiffs' attorneys where the plaintiff was seeking \$10 million. While it is always nice to win, to have success going up

against a formidable opponent makes it that much more rewarding. I was so proud of my team for all the blood, sweat, and tears they poured into that trial.

**Q:** What is the biggest challenge you face as a practicing female attorney?

**A:** Work-life balance. Time is a precious commodity as a working mother. I try to make the most of every minute I spend at work and at home, but it is sometimes a challenge to feel "present" in each space.

**Q:** What singular piece of advice would you give a fellow female professional - in the legal profession or not?

**A:** Cut yourself some slack. We all make mistakes and have bad days. Learn from them and use them as motivation to come back better and stronger.

**Q:** If you were not a lawyer, what would you be?

**A:** I love sports and I love to write so I would probably be a sports journalist/blogger or work in some capacity for one of the major sports networks.

**Q:** Have you been to any concerts recently? What was the last song you downloaded?

**A:** Wow, this is embarrassing - my last concert was Backstreet Boys in the 90s. That said, I have pretty diverse music tastes. Some songs I have recently added to my running playlist to keep me inspired include The Chainsmokers and Coldplay's "Something Just Like This," Sia's "The Greatest," and, of course, "Eye of the Tiger" by Survivor.

**Q:** Which five people would you chose to have dinner with - living or dead?

**A:** Conan O'Brien, Will Ferrell, Ellen DeGeneres, any one of my grandparents, and Leonardo Da Vinci.

**Q:** What is your idea of an ideal weekend?

**A:** Relaxing outdoors with nice weather, good food and drinks, surrounded by family and friends.

**Q:** What do you have streaming regularly on your TV?

**A:** Right now it is the offseason for most of my favorite shows - Game of Thrones, Better Call Saul, and Stranger Things. I regularly enjoy watching Family Guy, older episodes of The Simpsons, and a variety of sports - currently March Madness!