

YOUNG PROFESSIONALS SPOTLIGHT:

CHRIS SCHON

Christopher Schon is an associate in Tyson & Mendes' San Diego office and has successfully defended or resolved hundreds of matters for his clients. Most notably, Chris served as second chair in litigating a multi-million-dollar traumatic brain injury jury trial that resulted in a complete defense verdict for the client. Chris specializes in high-exposure and catastrophic personal injury; general liability defense; and assists privately held businesses in state regulatory and compliance matters. Chris is a member of the San Diego Defense Lawyers and a proud alum of San Diego State University. Learn more about this San Diego native below.

T&M: Why did you become a civil defense attorney?

CS: I am competitive and view civil litigation as an opportunity to compete professionally. Civil litigation defense was a natural fit because I strongly believe in the notion of "justice for all." Not only for plaintiffs, but individual civil defendants, corporations, and their insurers. There is something fun about standing in the way of the opposing side trying to beat you to accomplish their goal.

T&M: Compared to other firms you have worked for, what makes Tyson & Mendes so unique?

CS: Everyone is invested in each other's success. A true team atmosphere, the firm is committed to the growth of its attorneys. This is evident with internal training sessions, a student loan repayment program, and bi-weekly firm meetings with leadership. The transparency is nearly unheard of in the legal industry and that builds trust and ownership. The firm is continuously retained to defend the biggest cases against top plaintiff attorneys in the state, which makes the practice of law fun, interesting, and unique.

T&M: What has been the biggest challenge of your career thus far?

CS: At the beginning of my career, it was finding "my" practice style. I came to learn it was more beneficial to adopt different styles depending on the case and opposing counsel. Once I had children...



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balancing my career, family, and friends became a challenge. I discovered that if you focus on what matters and are present in what you are doing, everything tends to balance itself out.

T&M: Similarly, tell us about your biggest professional accomplishment?

CS: I am grateful for the various trial experiences early in my career. I came away confident as a practitioner and those moments helped tailor my practice style to focus on the important things when preparing every case for trial.

T&M: What did you want to be when you grew up?

CS: At one point I wanted to be an FBI agent, a psychologist, a sports agent, a sports executive, and then a lawyer. I entered SDSU as a business major but once I started taking political science and international relations classes, I switched my major and focused on law school. It helped that political science only required me to take one math class.

T&M: What is the best piece of advice you ever received?

CS: There is no one best piece of advice I have received but I often remind myself of several notes of advice: ignore the noise; focus on what you can control; never stop moving forward; and do not get too high or too low. There is a lot of “noise” in litigation, most that can be outside of one’s control, so it is important not to get bogged down in stuff that ultimately will not matter. There are good and bad days in the practice of law, so celebrate the wins, learn from the setbacks, and stay humble.

T&M: As a native San Diegan, any “hidden gems” you would recommend?

CS: It is not much of a hidden gem anymore, but if you are into microbreweries and do not visit Alpine Beer Company, you are missing out.

T&M: If not at work or home, where are we most likely to find you?

CS: On the golf course, at the gym, stuck in traffic, or outdoors with my wife and toddlers. Litigation can be stressful, and I find that doing something active or being outside helps me unwind and recharge.

