



John R. O'Brien, Senior Partner

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John R. O'Brien is the firm's senior partner and senior business partner. He was born in Omaha, Nebraska. He specializes in business, corporate and real estate law, as well as non-profit law, estate planning, probate and trust administration. He represents many closely held and family owned businesses and handles their business, contract and real estate transactions and estate planning needs. Mr. O'Brien also represents numerous non-profit, tax-exempt organizations. Mr. O'Brien received his Bachelor of Arts degree in economics from Creighton University in 1965. He graduated from Hastings College of the Law, University of California, in 1968 in the top 5% of his class. He was a member of the **Hastings Law Journal**, a member of the Order of the Coif (top 10% of all law school graduates) and admitted to the Thurston Society (Hastings' scholastic honor society). After law school, he served four years as a captain in the U.S. Army as a lawyer in the Judge Advocate General's Corps. Following his military service, Mr. O'Brien became an associate with the San Francisco law firm of Bancroft, Avery & McAlister. In 1975, he moved to Santa Rosa and joined its then oldest and largest law firm, Spridgen, Barrett, Achor, Luckhardt, Anderson, James & Zeigler, becoming a partner in 1978. In 1981 he left that firm to start his own law firm which became the present firm of O'Brien Watters & Davis, LLP in 1982. Mr. O'Brien is a member of the State Bar of California and the Sonoma County and American Bar Associations and the Redwood Empire Estate Planning Council.

Mr. O'Brien has served in leadership positions as an officer and a member of the Boards of Directors of numerous charitable organizations. He was a long-time member of the Board of Directors of the Community Foundation Sonoma County (President, 1993-1995). He served two terms as President of the Sonoma County unit of the American Cancer Society (1984-1986) and served on the Legal Advisory Committee of the California Division of the American Cancer Society. He was a member of the Board of Directors of the Santa Rosa Chamber of Commerce for six years (Chairman, 2001) and served on the Board of Trustees of Santa Rosa Memorial Hospital Foundation (Chairman, 1999-2001) and on the Board of Directors of the Santa Rosa Junior College Foundation (2004-2010). He now serves on the Board of Directors of the Catholic Professional & Business Club (President 2006-2008). He has been the top individual fund-raiser for the Volunteer Center's Human Race for many years and has raised \$295,000 for charity. He was awarded the *Spirit of Santa Rosa* award by the Santa Rosa Chamber of Commerce, a Lifetime Achievement Award from the American Cancer Society, and the 2010 Keegan Leadership Award from Santa Rosa Memorial Hospital Foundation. Mr. O'Brien stresses the use of preventative law by the proper planning, negotiation and documentation of all clients' transactions to avoid later problems.

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