

**PATRICIA C. PÉREZ, ESQ., SPHR**  
**PUENTE CONSULTING, APC**  
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**PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**

**Puente Consulting, APC**  
San Diego, California  
*President*

Manage all aspects of employment law/human resources consulting firm which provides services in the areas of compliance, training and development, workplace investigations, litigation consulting, Spanish-language business services, and expert witness services, among others. Work includes conducting workplace investigations spanning the entire gamut of employment law topics (harassment, discrimination, claims of wage and hour violations, disability issues, employee misconduct, etc.) involving all levels of employees, with particular expertise in conducting investigations requiring bilingual skills. In addition to conducting hundreds of investigations, conduct seminars to in-house personnel on how to properly conduct investigations. Body of work includes publication of a Workplace Investigation Toolkit outlining the steps required to perform fair and thorough investigations. Author of chapter on workplace investigations for CEB's *Advising California Employers and Employees*. Consulting work includes providing assistance with the interactive process and the reasonable accommodation analysis on issues related to disabled and pregnant employees. In addition to assisting in the drafting of regulations on these topics (disability and pregnancy), author of numerous articles on these topics as well as a chapter on the interactive process/reasonable accommodation analysis for a book to be published by CEB in October of 2011. Audit work includes conducting wage and hour audits covering both exemption (misclassification) issues, and issues involving non-exempt employees, and also includes conducting comprehensive HR audits covering the entire range of HR issues. Training work includes compliance training (including AB1825 training in California) as well as a wide variety of HR, management, leadership and diversity training. Expert witness work includes document review and testimony involving all aspects of HR practices and employment law topics.

**Fair Employment and Housing Commission**

San Francisco, California

*Commissioner/Vice Chair (2008-2011)*

Appointed by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger in 2008 and confirmed by the California Senate in 2009, Commission work included adjudicating numerous matters brought before the FEHC through the administrative adjudication process (on matters involving various civil rights issues, with an emphasis on employment and housing matters), participated in drafting regulations clarifying the Fair Employment and Housing Act, mediated disputes on matters brought by the Department of Fair Employment and Housing, and participated in a series of presentations aimed at educating the public on how to comply with California's civil rights laws. In addition to assisting with the development of regulations in the area of pregnancy discrimination, work included being one of two Commissioners on the subcommittee to draft regulations clarifying the law on disability discrimination.

**Skadden Arps Slate Meagher & Flom LLP**

Washington, DC

*In-House Employment Counsel/Head of Human Resources*

As part of the senior management team for the 600-employee DC office, established and oversaw all functions of a 7-person HR Department. Responsibilities included providing in-house legal advice and counsel to attorneys, staff managers and supervisors on all aspects of employment law (including discrimination questions, disability issues, wage and hour law, FMLA and workers compensation issues). Also oversaw training and development for managers, supervisors and staff (including researching, developing and presenting training sessions on all applicable employment laws, general employment practices and leadership/management techniques). Assured compliance with federal, state and local employment laws (for DC and Virginia). Investigated and resolved claims of harassment and discrimination and drafted all necessary reports regarding those claims. Developed policies, administered all aspects of the compensation and benefits programs, oversaw all phases of support staff recruitment and maintained the HR information system (HRIS). Supervised the development of short and long-term strategic plans for the department.

**National Center for State Courts, International Programs**

Mexico City, Mexico

*Project Director in Mexico*

Responsible for the implementation of all facets of a government-sponsored U.S.-Mexico Judicial Exchange and Education Program. In collaboration with other senior NCSC staff and an external judicial advisory board, responsible for designing and conducting substantive conferences in the U.S. and Mexico for U.S. and Mexican federal and state court judges, prosecutors, academics, and others focusing on criminal law, environmental law, employment law, family law, comparative law and commercial trade issues affecting

the court systems of both countries. Responsibilities included organizing and conducting mock U.S. and Mexican trials. In addition to developing program agendas, conference-related duties included identification and briefing of conference speakers, facilitators, and reporters, as well as drafting follow-up reports to representatives of the U.S. Agency for International Development and the Department of State (at the U.S. Embassy in Mexico City and in Washington D.C.). Performed all start-up work for opening NCSC's Mexico City office, including hiring, training and supervising U.S. and Mexican staff. Maintained close contacts with U.S. representatives and Mexican counterparts. Developed work plans and budgets for the Program and drafted periodic reports on the progress of the Program. Responsible for keeping abreast of Mexican law, developments in the U.S.-Mexico relationship, and drafting comprehensive research documents on each topic.

**Barnhorst, Schreiner & Goonan**  
San Diego, California

**Balestreri, Dorigan & Pendleton**  
San Diego, California

*Litigation Associate*

Represented clients in all facets of labor and employment law, from counseling to litigation. In role as employment counselor, duties included: assisting employers in complying with federal, state and local employment laws; drafting, reviewing and analyzing employment contracts, employee handbooks and harassment/discrimination/affirmative action policies; investigating claims of harassment and/or discrimination, and drafting reports regarding those investigations; and training supervisors in employment laws and in appropriate and effective management techniques. Developed expertise in performing investigations and conducting training in Spanish for employers with many Latino and/or Spanish-speaking employees. As a litigator, handled all types of employment law matters, including claims of discrimination and harassment, wage and hour claims, and FMLA/disability matters. Participated in all aspects of pre-trial litigation including drafting and arguing motions, taking depositions and settling claims. Resolved matters to final judgment in both administrative and arbitration proceedings.

**EDUCATION**

**UCLA School of Law**, Los Angeles, California

J.D., 1992

*Extern to the Hon. Howard B. Wiener, California Court of Appeal, Fourth District, Division One; Lubic Scholarship Recipient; Graduate Student Association Vice President*

**UCLA**, Los Angeles, California

B.A., English Literature, 1989

*Mortar Board Honor Society, Chancellor's Marshal Award Recipient*

## **BAR MEMBERSHIPS/CERTIFICATIONS**

California State Bar, *Admitted to Practice December, 1992* (State Bar Number 163598)

U.S. District Court for the Southern District of California, *Admitted to Practice December, 1992*

U.S. District Court for the Central District of California, *Admitted to Practice May, 1997*

Human Resources Certification Institute, Certified as a Senior Professional in Human Resources (SPHR), 2000

## **PUBLICATIONS/PRESENTATIONS (REPRESENTATIVE SAMPLE)**

*Eight Steps to Conducting Workplace Investigations*, Co-Speaker with Neal S. Meyers Daley & Heft LLP, ACWA 2011 Fall Conference, Human Resources Program, Anaheim, California, November 2011

*Workplace Investigations* (Chapter 16A), *Advising California Employers and Employees*, published by CEB, February 2012

Chapter on Disability Discrimination Issues (Chapter 6) in *Drafting Employment Documents for California Employers* published by CEB, October 2011

*Ethical Rainmaking: Strategies of Difficult Ethical Times*, Speaker, State Bar of California Labor and Employment Section Annual Meeting, Anaheim, California, October 2011

*Fundamental of Employment Law Seminar*: Speaker, CEB, Los Angeles, CA, October 2011

*Workplace Investigations on Trial: Can an Investigator Make or Break Your Case?* Speaker, California State Bar 84<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting, September 15, 2011

*Recent Developments in Disability Discrimination Law in California: The Continuing Saga*, State Bar of California Labor and Employment Section, Webinar Moderator, June 2011

*Disability Discrimination – Brown Bag Series*, State Bar of California Labor and Employment Section, Organizer/Moderator, February 2011, April 2011, July 2011 and October 2011,

*Navigating California Disability Law: Lessons for the Business Savvy*, California Business Law Practitioner, Volume 26/Number 2, Spring 2011, published by CEB

*The Interactive Process: How To Make It Work Effectively for The Employer and The Employee*, Speaker, State Bar of California Labor and Employment Section, 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Public Sector Conference, May 2011, Sacramento, California

*Litigating A Disability Discrimination Case – From Intake Through Trial*, Speaker, State Bar of California Labor and Employment Law Section's 28<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting, October 2010, San Francisco, California

*Mastering the Art of Conducting Workplace Investigations*, Speaker at the 2010 Litigation and Labor & Employment Group Meeting for MERITAS, October 2010, San Antonio, Texas

*It Takes Two to Tango: The Interactive Process Dance*, California Labor & Employment Law Review, Volume 24 No. 5, September, 2010

*Hot Topics In Investigations of Workplace Complaints*, Speaker, State Bar of California's 83<sup>rd</sup> Annual Meeting, September 2010, Monterrey, California

*Investigations: Seven Critical Steps to Success*, Puente Consulting, Inc. reference manual for conducting workplace investigations

*City of Ontario vs. Quon – Electronic Privacy in the Workplace*, Speaker, State Bar of California Labor and Employment Law Section, July, 2010

*Mastering the Art of Investigations*, Speaker, California Association of Workplace Investigators and the Bar Association of San Francisco, June 2010

Guest lecturer at Thomas Jefferson School of Law, Employment Discrimination, San Diego, Fall 2009

*How to Conduct Employment Investigations*, panelist at the California State Bar's Labor and Employment Law Section's 2009 Annual Meeting, Berkeley, California, October 2009

*So Much to Talk About, So Little Time: Recent Developments in the Area of Disability Discrimination*, panelist at the California State Bar's Labor and Employment Law Section's 2009 Annual Meeting, Berkeley, California, October 2009

*The Nuts and Bolts of the DFEH Administrative Process*, panelist at the California State Bar's Labor and Employment Law Section's 2009 Annual Meeting, Berkeley, California, October 2009

*The Importance of Compliance Training*, California Chamber of Commerce (webinar), July 2009.

*How to Prevent Harassment*, panelist, program presented by the California State Bar's Labor and Employment Law Section, Los Angeles, California, June 2009

*Jerks at Work: Practical Tips for Working with Workplace Bullies*, co-presenter at the California Public Employers Labor Relations Association's 33<sup>rd</sup> Annual Training Conference, Monterey, California, November 2008

*Ethical Issues in Workplace Investigations*, co-presenter at the California State Bar's Labor and Employment Section's 2008 Annual Meeting, San Diego, California, November 2008

*Practical Ways to Deal with Workplace Bullies*, California Labor and Employment Law Review, Volume 22 No. 3, May 2008

*Employment Law Issues in the Biotechnology Industry*, co-presenter, Presented by the California State Bar and San Diego County Bar Association's Labor and Employment Law Sections, March 2008

*Ethical Issues in Workplace Investigations*, co-presenter at the California State Bar's Section Education Institute Meeting, San Diego, California, January 2008

*Crisis Management During Corporate Scandals-An In House Perspective*, co-presenter at the California State Bar's Labor & Employment Law Section Annual Meeting, October 2007

*Employers Face a Hobson's Choice Under DOJ's McNulty Memo*, contributing author, ABA Labor & Employment Law Section's Hot Topics Newsletter, May 2007

*Five Steps to Updating Sexual Harassment Prevention Training: Educating Supervisors is Key to Complying with State Law AB1825*, San Diego Business Journal, February, 2007

Guest speaker on sexual harassment training, *These Days with Tom Fudge*, KPBS San Diego, January, 2007

*Ethical Issues in Class Action Matters*, co-presenter at the American Bar Association's Labor & Employment Law Section's Ethics Subcommittee Midwinter Meeting, Manzanillo, Mexico, February, 2007

*An Introduction to Employment Law*, speaker, California State Bar Labor & Employment Law Section Annual Meeting, San Jose, California, October, 2006

*Beyond Harassment and Discrimination: Getting to the True Meaning of Diversity*, Presenter, Society for Human Resource Management National Diversity Conference, Los Angeles, October, 2007

*Finding the Right Balance in Your Diversity Initiative by Including Your Allies and Opponents*, Society for Human Resource Management National Diversity Conference, Los Angeles, October, 2007

*Esquire, Private Eye: Ethical Dilemmas in Workplace Investigations*, California State Bar Labor & Employment Law Section Annual Meeting, Anaheim, California, October, 2005

Instructor, Employment Law (part of the HR Certificate Program at UCSD Extension), Fall 2003

Ms. Perez has made numerous other presentations involving a wide range of HR and employment law issues to the San Diego County Bar Association's Labor & Employment Law Section, the San Diego Society for Human Resource Management ("Law Day"), the San Diego Employer's Council, the Hospitality Human Resources Association, the California Restaurant Association (at its Annual Conference), MANA of San Diego (at two Annual Conferences), as well as other local, state and national organizations. Through hundreds of in-house training sessions, Ms. Perez has also trained thousands of employees, business executives, HR professionals and attorneys in a variety of employment law and HR topics including harassment, discrimination and retaliation (including AB1825-compliant training sessions), interviewing skills, performance evaluations, discipline and conducting workplace investigations, among many others. She has also been quoted in a wide variety of business, legal and HR publications, including the San Diego Business Journal and HR Magazine (national magazine of the Society of Human Resources Management), among others.

### **PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS**

Fair Employment and Housing Commission, *Vice Chair (2008-2011)*

California State Bar Association, *Advisor and Past Chair of the Executive Committee of the Labor & Employment Law Section (Chair in 2010)*

UCLA School of Law Alumni Association, *Member, Board of Directors*

Association of Workplace Investigators, *Member of the Best Practices Subcommittee*

UCLA Alumni Association, *Member, Board of Directors (1996-1998)*

San Diego County Bar Association, *Member, Labor & Employment Law Section*

Society for Human Resource Management (National and San Diego Chapter), *Member*

Lawyers Club of San Diego, *Member*

San Diego La Raza Lawyers, *Member, Board of Directors (1995-1996)*

William B. Enright American Inn of Court, *Associate (1994-1995)*

MANA of San Diego, *Member, Board of Directors (1996-1997)*

**AWARDS (REPRESENTATIVE SAMPLE)**

Featured/profiled Businesswoman, *SanDiegoBiz Magazine*, March 2008

2007 Woman Business Owner of the Year, *San Diego National Association of Women Business Owners (NAWBO)*, May 2007

Pinnacle Award Finalist, presented by San Diego *ATHENA*, April 2007

Cesar Chavez Community Service Award Recipient, a national award presented by *Minorities in Business Magazine*, December 2006

Women Who Mean Business Award Finalist, presented by *San Diego Business Journal*, November 2006

40 Under Forty Award Recipient, *San Diego Metropolitan Magazine*, September 2006

**LANGUAGES**

Speak, read and write Spanish fluently.