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## **Deputy City Attorneys Receive National Recognition** *Phelps, Stephan honored for excellence in the legal field*

**Chief Deputy City Attorney Rayna A. Stephan** has been invited to join the American Board of Trial Advocates (ABOTA) following formal approval for membership by its National Board of Directors. ABOTA is the premier organization in the United States of skilled trial attorneys, with selective membership based on extensive jury trial experience, high personal character, and honorable reputation, including civility and professionalism. She will be formally inducted in October of this year.

Stephan, a Chief Deputy City Attorney in the City Attorney's Civil Litigation Division, has been practicing for 30 years, conducting civil jury trials in State and Federal Court, and has also argued before the California Court of Appeal. She has served for more than 10 years on the Legal Ethics Committee of the San Diego County Bar Association.

Stephan joined the San Diego City Attorney's Office in 2013, where she tries complex civil litigation cases and oversees a team of deputy city attorneys in the General Litigation Unit.

**Chief Deputy City Attorney M. Travis Phelps** was recently awarded the prestigious 2018 Jefferson B. Fordham Award in Advocacy by the American Bar Association. This national award is given annually to recognize sustained outstanding legal advocacy within the area of state and local government law.

Phelps has served in the San Diego City Attorney's Office for almost 17 years. He has developed extensive expertise in pension, land use, and environmental litigation, handling many of the City of San Diego's most high-profile, complex, and often politically sensitive cases. He is admitted to practice in all California State Courts, the U.S. District Court, Southern District of California, and U.S. Court of Appeals, Ninth Circuit.

Phelps currently supervises the Office's Land Use Litigation Unit, overseeing a specialized team of litigators and staff that handle up to 90 active land use cases at any one time.

**"Rayna and Travis are outstanding attorneys, and they could not be more deserving of their respective honors,"** City Attorney Mara W. Elliott said. **"We are proud to have these committed public servants leading our litigation teams. The City is better served because of the work of Rayna and Travis."**

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