

TEODORA D. PURCELL (aka TEO PURCELL), Esq.

BAR ADMISSIONS

California (US) (June 2002) and Bulgaria (February 2001)

LEGAL SPECIALIZATION

Specialist in Immigration and Nationality Law, certified by the California State Bar, Board of Legal Specialization (April 2011 - Present)

COURT ADMISSIONS U. S. Courts of Appeals for the Ninth, Tenth and Fifth Circuits U.S. District Court for the Southern District of California

HONORS

San Diego Business Journal Top 100 Leaders in the Law (2022)

Super Lawyers, Immigration law (2022, 2021, 2020, 2019, 2018, 2017, 2016) (Thompson Reuters)

Super Lawyers, Top 25 Women, San Diego (2021, 2020, 2019) (Thompson Reuters)

KPBS Local Hero Award (2016)

American Immigration Lawyer Association San Diego Chapter Pro Bono Award (2016)

San Diego Daily Transcript Top Attorney List in Immigration Law (2015, 2014)

Global Awards 2016 – Winner – Relocation Category (Corporate LiveWire)

La Mancha Award, Distinguished Pro Bono Attorney of the Year, Casa Cornelia Law Center, San Diego, California (2015)

Pro Bono Publico Award, Casa Cornelia Law Center, San Diego, California (2011, 2014,)

Wiley W. Manuel Award for Pro Bono Legal Services, State Bar of California (2014-2020, 2012, 2002)

EDUCATION

University of San Diego School of Law, San Diego, California, LLM Degree, Master of Laws in Comparative Law, 2001

Sofia University “St. Clement Ohridski” School of Law, Sofia, Bulgaria, LLM and JD Degrees, Master of Laws in Bulgarian Law, 1998

EXPERIENCE

Partner, Larrabee Albi Coker, LLP, San Diego, CA, September 2021 – Present

As part of the Firm’s Leadership Team, manage the immigration practice with focus on business and family immigration matters and immigration compliance. Represent entrepreneurs, scientists, employers in biotech, IT, fintech, life science sectors, research institutions in various immigration matters. Provide advice to clients regarding immigration implications of corporate restructuring, global mobility, business travel, I-9s, and related matters. Devise creative strategies to complex legal issues related to inadmissibility, removability, eligibility for immigration benefits. Manage and mentor a team of junior attorneys, paralegals and legal professionals. Responsible for business development, social media marketing, client presentations.

UCSD Faculty Instructor, Immigration Law ABA Approved Paralegal Program, University of California San Diego, September 2013 - Present

Responsible for teaching a CLE course in Immigration Law for paralegals in Spring and Fall semesters.

Special Counsel, Duane Morris, LLP, San Diego, CA, August 2019 – August 2021

San Diego Immigration Practice Management. Responsible for all immigration matters as part of the Employment, Labor, Benefits & Immigration Practice Group. Handle various employment-based and family-based immigration cases. Provide advice to clients regarding immigration compliance, I-9 audits, and related matters. Strategic guidance on global and US immigration matters. Active contributor to Firm’s blogs and client alerts on immigration matters. Oversee paralegals and junior attorneys. Active pro bono committee member. Responsible for client development for all the Firm’s practice areas. Participate in presentations to various groups to increase the Firm’s visibility.

Senior Attorney, Tafapolsky Smith Mehlman, LLP (nee Tafapolsky Smith LLP), San Diego, CA, November 2017 – July 2019

Fast-Paced U.S. Business and Family Immigration: At a boutique immigration law firm, provide customized approach and quality legal services to corporate and individual clients on a variety of employment and family-based nonimmigrant and immigrant petitions, I-9 compliance, applications for U.S. citizenship and other immigration benefits. Lead the San Diego's O-1 and EB-1A and EB-1B, and L-1/ EB-1C practice. Provide legal analyses to large corporate clients regarding the immigration implications of corporate restructuring and devises immigration strategies. Also handle administrative (AAO and BALCA) appeals and motions to reopen/ reconsider, as well as naturalization and family-based immigrant petitions.

Business Development and Social Media Marketing: Responsible for regularly posting announcements, immigration news alerts, and related information on the Firm's social media accounts. Organized events and presentations on behalf of the Firm in the community. Assist with the Firm's three US office integration. Management and Training of Team: Assists with recruiting, hiring, interviewing team members at all levels, - junior attorneys, paralegals, legal assistants. Manages and trains paralegals on a regular basis.

Senior Attorney, Fragomen, Del Rey, Bernsen & Loewy, LLP, San Diego, CA, July 2006 – October 2017

Senior Attorney, Fragomen Global, LLP, Frankfurt, Germany – January – April 2016

High volume U.S. Business and Family Immigration: Provide legal advice on a variety of employment and family based nonimmigrant and immigrant petitions, I-9 compliance, applications for U.S. citizenship and other immigration benefits. Fast paced-practice includes labor certification (PERM) cases, EB-1 petitions (multinational manager, outstanding researcher, extraordinary ability) cases, EB-5 investor immigrant visa cases, and all types of nonimmigrant visas (H-1B, L-1, TN, O-1, P, R, etc.). Regularly represent individual clients before the Department of Homeland Security and its agencies. Research and analyze complex legal issues related to inadmissibility, removability, eligibility for immigration benefits, and prepares corresponding memoranda and client opinion letters. Provide legal analyses to large corporate clients regarding the immigration implications of corporate restructuring. Handle administrative (AAO and BALCA) appeals and motions to reopen/ reconsider, as well as naturalization and family petitions.

US and Foreign Consular and Global Immigration Practice: Work with Fragomen overseas offices in assisting clients with obtaining business related visas outside the US. Lead a team of junior attorney and paralegals on US Consular matters in Europe in Fragomen's office in Frankfurt, Germany and significantly expand the Frankfurt office's US immigration practice.

Personnel and Project/ Case Management: Manage a team of paralegals and legal assistants. In charge of several large programs for corporate clients involving successful handling of high volume of complex immigration cases. CLE and Client Presentation/ Training: Also responsible for CLE and client presentations on various immigration issues, on both US and global immigration.

Serve as the San Diego office pro bono liaison with local nonprofit legal service organization and provides pro bono representation to indigent clients on VAWA, U visa, T visa, asylum applications, including pro bono representation to unaccompanied minors and asylum seekers in Immigration Court. Mentor junior attorneys and paralegals.

Pro Bono Volunteer Attorney and Inn of Court Benchers' Committee Member, Casa Cornelia Law Center, San Diego, CA, 2009 – Present

Legal Screening and Pro Bono Representation of indigent immigrants, victims of persecution, domestic violence, or unaccompanied minors. Handles affirmative and defensive asylum cases pro bono, VAWA and U visa applications. Recruit and mentor volunteer attorneys.

Associate Attorney, Aguirre Law Group, San Diego, CA, April 2004 – April 2006

Immigration Court Litigation and Federal Appeals: Represent clients at master calendar, bond, and merits hearings in Immigration Court. Prepare motions, pre-hearing briefs on cancellation of removal, asylum, and other removal defense cases. File appellate briefs and motions on immigration issues with the Board of Immigration Appeals and with the Federal Courts of Appeals for the Ninth and Fifth Circuits. Submit petitions for a writ of habeas corpus before San Diego Federal District Court. Successfully present an oral argument before the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals. Manage the firm's substantial appellate practice.

Staff Attorney, Casa Cornelia Law Center, San Diego, CA, June 2002 – October 2003

Asylum and Removal Defense Work: Assist indigent clients apply for asylum before the Asylum Office (DHS) and San Diego Immigration Court. Provide pro bono legal representation to clients in removal proceedings. Prepare VAWA and naturalization petitions. File BIA and Ninth Circuit appeals on immigration cases. Train and oversee the work of legal interns. Provide MCLE training to volunteer attorneys on asylum law.

LANGUAGES

Fluent in English and Bulgarian; good Spanish; conversant Russian; some German and Italian.

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION, LEADERSHIP AND VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES:

University of San Diego School of Law Alumni Advisory Board (July 2022 – Present)

Corporate Directors Forum, Board Member (July 2022 – Present)

San Diego County Bar Association, Committee for Diversity and Inclusion (Jan. 2020- Present)

Women of Color in Law San Diego, Board Member (July 2020 – Present)

San Diego County Bar Association, Board of Directors (Jan. 2018 – Dec. 2020)

San Diego County Bar Association, Immigration Law Section Chair (2013- 2015).

American Immigration Lawyer Association (Executive Committee Member/ Treasurer, San Diego Chapter 2013),

USCIS Committee (2014), Consular Corp. Liaison Committee Chair (2014 – 2015)

Casa Cornelia Law Center Inn of Court Benchers' Committee (invited member, 2013 - 2016)

Lawyers Club San Diego, Professional Advancement, Community Outreach, Diversity Women Committee member (2013- present)

American Corporate Counsel, San Diego Chapter – Pro Bono Committee (2016 – 2017)

BIOCOM San Diego, International Committee and Capital Development Committee member (2014-2015)

Life HR Member (2020- 2022)

Board Member, Vasil Levski Education and Cultural Foundation (2007- 2016)

SELECTED SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS AND MEDIA COVERAGE

Speaker, "U.S. Immigration – 2021 Year in Review", Larrabee Albi Coker, LLP, December 4, 2021

Speaker, "State of the Workplace in 2021: Reopening in a Partially Vaccinated Environment and the New Administration," Duane Morris LLP, May 19, 2021

Speaker, "Immigration Compliance Update in 2021," DMi, April 27, 2021

Speaker, "Immigration & the Biden Administration - 100 days in, what has changed?" University of San Diego School of Law, April 8, 2021

Moderator, "2020 All Day MCLE La-LAW-palooza," Association of Corporate Council, San Diego, California, January 29, 2020

Featured on "[It's a Heckuva Time to Be an Immigration Attorney in Our Border City](#)," San Diego County Bar Association's Meet and Confer Podcast, August 2019

https://www.sandiego.edu/news/law/detail.php?_focus=86096

<https://www.sandiegouniontribune.com/lifestyle/making-a-difference/sdut-volunteer-attorney-casa-cornelia-teodora-purcell-2015nov03-story.html>

<http://www.kpbs.org/news/2016/mar/01/womens-history-month-teodora-purcell/>

<http://www.sddt.com/News/article.cfm?SourceCode=20150331cwf>