



JOHN C. PEIFFER II, J.D., A.M.

PARTNER

John.Peiffer@brownandstreza.com

PRACTICE AREAS

Philanthropist Representation

Educational Organizations

Religious Institutions

Higher Education

Nonprofit Organizations

ABOUT

John Peiffer is a partner with the Orange County, California law firm of Brown & Streza, LLP. John counsels a wide range of nonprofit and tax-exempt organizations, including both public charities and private foundations, with a particular emphasis on religious organizations. He advises dioceses, religious orders, private religious schools, and other religious institutions on mission-focused corporate restructuring, governance, and compliance.

John also co-founded and serves as Vice Chairman of the Napa Legal Institute, a nonprofit organization focused on providing corporate, tax, philanthropic, and other non-litigation legal and financial education for faith-based nonprofits.

John has negotiated and documented numerous pledges, endowments, and other major gifts to charitable, educational, and religious organizations.

John also regularly counsels business owners and their families on charitable planning through charitable trusts, private foundations, supporting organizations, and other structures designed to accomplish clients' philanthropic goals. He advises nonprofit clients on business transactions, entity structures, and corporate formation and governance.

John received his Juris Doctor from the University of Notre Dame Law School after receiving a Bachelor of Arts in Classical Studies and English from Santa Clara University and a Master of Arts in Religious Studies from the University of Chicago Divinity School.

PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND

Brown & Streza LLP, Irvine, California
Partner, 2021-Present

The Busch Firm, Irvine, California
Chief Executive Officer, 2016-2020
Attorney and Shareholder, 2015-2020
Attorney, 2010-2014

Baker McKenzie, San Francisco, California

Senior Associate Attorney, 2014-2015

Associate Attorney, 2008-2010

Dowling Aaron & Keeler, Fresno, California

Associate Attorney, 2006-2008

O'Melveny & Myers LLP, Los Angeles, California

Litigation Paralegal, 2001-2003

Juris Doctor, cum laude, **Notre Dame Law School**, Notre Dame, Indiana, 2006

Master of Arts, Religious Studies, **University of Chicago**, Chicago, Illinois, 2000

Bachelor of Arts, magna cum laude, Classical Studies and English, **Santa Clara University**, Santa Clara, California, 1998

PROFESSIONAL RECOGNITION

2024 Attorney of the Year, St. Thomas More Society of Orange County

2023 - 2025 "Southern California Super Lawyer"

2015 "Southern California SuperLawyers - Rising Star"

PUBLICATIONS

Philanthropy Daily, February 2025, Article

- New Year's Resolutions for Civil Society: Faith and Freedom Index

Napa Legal Institute, August 2020, White Paper

- Toward a Spirituality of Compliance

Napa Legal Institute, revised July 24, 2020

- Co-author, Sample Employee Handbook for Catholic Schools

Napa Legal Institute, White Paper

- Why a Religious Corporation?

MEDIA MENTIONS

The Catholic World Report, July 2, 2024

- Inaugural Nonprofit Summit to focus on leadership in faith-based nonprofits

SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

TEGE Exempt Organizations Update, Live Interactive Webinar, November 21, 2025

- Co-Presenter, Distress Relief for Nonprofits: What to Do to Avoid Financial Peril and What to Do When You're In it

Napa Legal Institute Nonprofit Summit, Napa, California, July 23, 2025

- Co-Presenter, Nonprofit Legal Issues That May Not Keep You Up At Night, But Should...

Notre Dame Church Properties Initiative Conference, Notre Dame, Indiana, September 17, 2024

- Co-Presenter, Canon and Civil Legal Considerations for Church Property Stewards

Napa Institute Conference, Napa, California, July 26, 2024

- Co-Presenter, Mission Based Planning with Catholic Values

Napa Legal Institute Nonprofit Summit, Napa, California, July 24, 2024

- Co-Presenter, Nonprofit Excellence: Governance and Fiduciary Duties

Notre Dame Religious Liberty Summit, Notre Dame, Indiana, July 11, 2024

- Panelist, Religious Liberty at the State Level

Knights of Columbus Charitable Fund, Live Interactive Webinar, June 11, 2024

- Co-Presenter, Mission Based Planning with Catholic Values

Napa Legal/Charles Institute, Irvine, California, February 21, 2024

- Representing Faith-Based Nonprofits: Analyzing the Impacts of State Laws

Family Enterprise USA, Live Interactive Webinar, September 13, 2023

- Co-Presenter, Philanthropic Strategies for Successful Families

First American Trust, Santa Ana, California, May 1, 2, and 3, 2023

- Philanthropic Strategies for Successful Families

ProVisors Estate & Succession Planning Affinity Group, Irvine, California, April 27, 2023

- Philanthropic Strategies for Successful Families

Napa Legal Institute Continuing Legal Education, New York, New York, October 11, 2022

- Model Rule 2.1: Understanding and Fulfilling the Duty of the Lawyer as Counselor

Napa Legal Institute Conference, Washington, DC, September 23, 2022

- Model Rule 2.1: Understanding and Fulfilling the Duty of the Lawyer as Counselor

Napa Institute Conference, Napa, California, July 29, 2022

- Co-Presenter, Bracing for Impact: Protecting Faith-Based & Pro-Life Organizations Post Dobbs

Napa Institute Conference, Napa, California, July 28, 2022

- Co-Presenter, Creative Generosity: Effective Multi-Generational Philanthropy

16th Annual John F. Scarpa Conference on Law, Politics and Culture, Live Interactive Webinar, May 2, 2022

- Aim Small, Miss Small: Lessons for Life and Liberty

Napa Institute Principled Entrepreneurship Conference, New York, New York, October 13, 2021

- Panelist, Faith, Family, & Charitable Giving

Napa Institute, Napa, California, July 23, 2021

- Moderator, Panel Discussion, Cancel Culture: How to Protect Your Nonprofit Against Big Tech

Stand Together, Live Interactive Webinar, March 30, 2021

- Co-Presenter, Strategic and Personalized Approaches to Family Philanthropy

Napa Legal Institute, Live Interactive Webinar, October 12, 2020

- Co-presenter, Practice What You Preach: Securing and Communicating Religious Identity in Cancel Culture

OSV Institute, Live Interactive Webinar, September 30, 2020

- Co-presenter, Human Resource and Employment Considerations for Religious Organizations

Napa Legal Institute, Live Interactive Webinar, August 13, 2020

- Co-presenter, Hardening the Target: Protecting Your Lay Apostolate in the Next America

Napa Legal Institute Webinar, recorded September 16, 2019

- Co-presenter, Steps for Success for Catholic Lay Apostolates, Part I

Napa Legal Institute Webinar, recorded October 3, 2019

- Co-presenter, Steps for Successor for Lay Apostolates, Part II: Becoming and Staying Exempt

EWTN Catholic Radio Conference, Birmingham, Alabama, November 8, 2018

- Bylaws Tune-ups: Principles and Proposals

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Napa Legal Institute – Co-Founder & Vice Chairman

TEGE Exempt Organizations Council – Member

California Lawyers Association, Trusts & Estates Section – Member

California Lawyers Association, Business Law Section – Member