



Frost Brown Todd Recognized with 2024 Law Firm Leadership Award by the Hispanic National Bar Foundation

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Authors:

[Ruben A. Smith](#)
[Raúl F. Salinas](#)
[Jerry J. Ruiz](#)

Frost Brown Todd (FBT) is pleased to announce it is the 2024 recipient of the Hispanic National Bar Foundation's (HNBF) Law Firm Leadership Award, given annually to a firm that exemplifies the HNBF's commitment to diversity, empowerment, and equitable access to education, resources, and professional opportunities. In its announcement, the HNBF commended FBT's attorneys for their advocacy, diversity initiatives, and pro bono services supporting Hispanic entrepreneurs and advancing inclusivity and equity in the legal profession.

"Frost Brown Todd's dedication to the Hispanic community is evident in their impactful work with key Hispanic business and education organizations," said Justin Carlson, president of the HNBF. "Their attorneys' leadership underscores a commitment to growth and opportunity, while their dedication to diversity and inclusion sets a powerful example. The Hispanic National Bar Foundation is honored to present Frost Brown Todd with the 2024 Law Firm Leadership Award for their exemplary service and inspiring leadership."

Two FBT attorneys were recognized in conjunction with the HNBF Law Firm Leadership Award: [Ruben Smith](#) and [Raúl Salinas](#), who serve as partners-in-charge of the firm's Orange County and Los Angeles offices, respectively. Both attorneys joined FBT as a result of its 2023 merger with AlvaradoSmith, a minority-owned firm based in California with strong local roots and a solid foothold in the Latin American and AAPI business communities.

Following its [expansion to California](#), FBT was able to further amplify AlvaradoSmith's legacy diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives. This includes the [Raymond G. Alvarado Scholarship](#), a sub-fund of the Hispanic Education Endowment Fund (HEEF) that annually provides financial assistance to Hispanic students interested in pursuing a career in the legal field and who have demonstrated

leadership and extensive involvement in the community.

In addition to supporting pipeline programs for Hispanic students, Frost Brown Todd has executed internal employee affinity programming. Part of these efforts include firmwide panel discussions featuring prominent figures, such as Judge Marilyn Zayas, civil rights lawyer Efrén Olivares, as well as actors Tony Plana and Ada Maris discussing the plight of Latinos in the entertainment industry.

"Receiving this award is a testament to the values that Frost Brown Todd stands behind," said Smith. "For 30 years, AlvaradoSmith was a proponent of inclusivity in the legal profession, and our combination with Frost Brown Todd was certainly influenced by their demonstrated track record on these same values," said Salinas.

FBT Partner [Jerry Ruiz](#) agrees. "Frost Brown Todd has demonstrated its commitment to 'walk the talk' when it comes to advancing diversity and inclusion, not just within the confines of our firm but also in the broader community," said Ruiz, who previously served as regional president for the Hispanic National Bar Association and chair of its LGBTQ+ Division.

Salinas, Smith and Ruiz will accept the Law Firm Leadership Award on behalf of FBT at the HNBF Annual Awards Dinner and Celebration on July 25, 2024, in Washington, D.C.

Visit our [Inclusion, Diversity, Equity & Belonging](#) page to learn more.

[About Ruben Smith](#)

Ruben Smith counsels corporate, private company, and public entity clients, helping resolve the business and legal problems they encounter in a variety of redevelopment, transportation, affordable housing, water, and school projects. At FBT, Smith co-chairs the firm's Inclusion, Diversity, Equity & Belonging Committee. He is also a founding member of HEEF and served as president of the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce's and Hispanic Bar Association's Orange County chapters.

About Raúl Salinas

Raúl Salinas represents large multi-national corporations, government agencies, and small businesses in a variety of disputes, including employment claims, civil public-integrity prosecutions, and matters involving complex cross-border agreements and regulatory disputes. He is the chairman of the Center of Hispanic Health and sits on the boards of the U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, White Memorial Medical Center, Habitat for Humanity of Greater Los Angeles, and the Latino Business Action Network at Stanford University Graduate School of Business, among others. Salinas also serves on the Board of Regents for Loyola Marymount University.

About Jerry Ruiz

Jerry Ruiz has a diversified practice helping clients manage their real estate needs and close a broad range of commercial transactions, leading agreements, and property management arrangements. Ruiz is also a co-founder of the Academy of Special Dreams Foundation, a nonprofit organization promoting the creative talents of people with disabilities, and currently serves on the board of directors for Excellent Education Development and Grupo Nuevo Los Angeles, an affiliate of Camino Nuevo Charter Academy.

About the HNBF

The Hispanic National Bar Foundation's (HNBF) mission is to help Hispanics achieve their potential through access to higher education and increase diversity in the legal profession. It seeks to create a culture in the Hispanic community where higher education is the expectation rather than the exception. Since its establishment in 1985, the HNBF has been led by Hispanic lawyers who overcame the odds and became successful attorneys and community role-models. It has grown into a national organization providing programs, scholarships, fellowships, and other resources to inspire educational achievement. Visit the [HNBF website](#) to learn more.

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