

# WOMEN LEADERS IN TECH LAW

**S**AN FRANCISCO – After the events that have rocked Silicon Valley this year, are you more or less hopeful about the prospects for women in the tech industry? That’s the question that we put to all 65 of The Recorder’s Women Leaders in Tech Law this year.

From a viral blog post about Uber’s culture, a Google engineer’s internal memo suggesting women are biologically less apt to succeed in technical fields, and allegations of harassment at some of the Valley’s most prominent VC firms, this year’s biggest tech stories are a reminder of the challenges that women still face in the field.

But the response from our honorees was a resounding chorus of optimism. They pointed out that you can’t address a problem until you define it and that sunshine is often the best disinfectant.

As lawyers, advocates and advisors, they also have a special role to play in helping the tech industry take on issues of discrimination, bias and harassment. They have tackled some of the industry’s biggest courtroom challenges, negotiated market-moving deals, and helped protect the industry’s most valuable intellectual property assets. Given all these accomplishments, the optimism is understandable.

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## ROSE LEDA EHLER

Munger, Tolles & Olson

Less than six years out of law school, Rosa Leda Ehler played a primary role in winning a preliminary injunction against streaming service VidAngel on behalf of Hollywood studios Disney, Fox and Warner Brothers. Ehler drafted key portions of the intellectual property motion taking aim at the service which claimed its technology immunized it from copyright infringement claims.

**Who is the most important mentor you’ve had thus far in your career? Why?**

I have been incredibly fortunate to have many great mentors. Among them, Carolyn Luedtke (a several-time named Women Leader in Tech Law) is my role

model in how to be a great lawyer (not just a great woman lawyer), great colleague, and great all-around person outside of work.

**What’s the best part of working in the tech sector?**

Learning about my clients’ businesses and getting to play a small part in their enterprise. The technology sector is so creative and there are so many great ideas and products in development. As lawyers, we get to facilitate that innovation, even if we aren’t doing the creating ourselves.

**What’s the biggest challenge?**

The ever-changing nature of technology means that by the time you’ve mastered one aspect, it



changes! That is also what makes it exciting and motivates me to stay engaged and help my clients look around corners in anticipation of whatever issue we need to tackle next.

**How do you describe what you do for a living to people you're meeting for the first time?**

I describe myself as a problem-solver. While I'm a litigator, at the end of the day, the solution for my clients might be outside the courtroom.

**What's one way technology has made your life easier?**

There are so many—I order my groceries online and they're delivered that night!

**One way it's made your life more difficult?**

I love technology a little too much. I need to be better at carving out tech-free times to maintain some semblance of balance and focus on my family.

**Name an important opportunity you've had in your career and what you did with it?**

I had the chance to be seconded in-house as product counsel at Square for four months in 2015. I learned as much as I possibly could from my mentors and colleagues at Square, both in terms of their view as in-house counsel and the perspective of a

quickly growing tech company. I am now able to draw from that experience, as outside counsel to Square, but also to be a better lawyer for my other clients.

**What drew you to practicing law in the technology industry?**

The tech industry is rapidly evolving and that means lawyers need to figure out how to apply old legal concepts to new technology to best advise their clients. Copyright law is a great example. How do these old concepts from a predigital world apply to digital content? The legal issues in the technology are both fascinating and important.

**What's the best piece of career advice anyone ever gave you?**

Put yourself in your clients' shoes. As outside counsel, we can always be doing more to make our clients' lives a little easier.

**In 50 words or less, what's the best way to address tech's gender gap?**

Men need to care and be proactive too. I've been incredibly

fortunate to have great male sponsors, including Kelly Klaus, who have encouraged me and helped me take next steps in my career. When everyone (men included) cares about the recruitment, retention, and promotion of women, we can make it happen.

**What kinds of new technologies should tomorrow's lawyers be able to use effectively?**

Lawyers to tech companies need to know the ins and outs of their client's tech. I keep as up-to-date as possible on my clients' tech products (and their competitors' products). That is the only way to truly understand their business and legal needs.

**What's one area of technology that you're most excited about and why?**

Working mostly in the consumer and entertainment technology space, I'm excited to see how connected home technology continues to expand and, on the entertainment side, how we engage with virtual-reality entertainment.