



# CALIFORNIA LAWYER ATTORNEYS OF THE YEAR AWARDS



JEFF G. KICHAVEN

JEFF KICHAVEN, A PROFESSIONAL  
CORPORATION, LOS ANGELES

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## ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION

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AS THE 2005 PRESIDENT of the Southern California Mediation Association, Kichaven used his bully pulpit to push a reexamination of Los Angeles County's court-annexed program using pro bono mediation services, charging that the program both siphoned off public resources for high-stakes cases and unfairly denied mediators adequate compensation. Kichaven earlier spearheaded the group's first amicus brief filing in the seminal case of *Rojas v. Superior Court* (33 Cal. 4th 407 (2004)), urging the California Supreme Court to define limitations to confidentiality in mediation—a challenge to the mediation community's widely held assumption of absolute confidentiality.

"The easier path concerning both of these issues would have been not to rock the boat. But Jeff was willing to be the lightning rod on important and controversial topics—and that has made a huge difference in the profession," says Peter Robinson, associate director of the Straus Institute for Dispute Resolution at Pepperdine University School of Law.

Kichaven, who also was one of the authors of *A Litigator's Guide to the Effective Use of ADR in California* (Cal CEB 2005), began a full-time mediation practice in Los Angeles nearly a decade ago. "Maybe that is one of the most noteworthy things a mediator can do: start a practice from nothing," observes Richard Chernick, vice president and acting director of JAMS's arbitration practice.