

TOP 40 UNDER 40

Justin Nahama

Nahama was in New York on 9/11. “It changed my life,” he said. His mother, a teacher, had pupils who lost parents when the Twin Towers fell. His father narrowly missed being at a meeting there. “Literally on the day after, my friends and I were on the phone with recruiters. I joined the Marines,” he said.

The Marine Corps saw him through law school at Boston University School of Law, then assigned him to Judge Advocate General duty as a military prosecutor, where he tried numerous cases to verdict and advised senior military commanders on military justice matters. “Every Marine is a rifleman, so I also did six months of entry-level weapons and leadership training,” he said. “Then you compete for duty stations. The West Coast was first on my dream sheet, and I was lucky enough to draw San Diego.”

Nahama rose to the post of chief prosecutor at Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego and prosecuted high-profile felony cases, including more than 50 courts martials involving homicide, crimes against children, sexual assault, financial crimes and fraud.

“I have always wanted to empower and protect people I care about, starting as an older brother,” Nahama said. Exiting the military, he worked first for Mintz, Levin, Cohn, Ferris, Giovsky and Popeo PC, then joined Troutman Sanders LLP in September.

In a personal and professional coincidence, Nahama said, he became a fan of the fitness regimen CrossFit while in the military and competed in the worldwide CrossFit Games, where his team achieved three top-five finishes.



Troutman Sanders LLP

Title: Partner

Age: 35

“It was completely serendipitous that I met a JAG instructor who had been general counsel for CrossFit,” he said. Today, CrossFit Inc. is on his Troutman Sanders client list, allowing Nahama to actively protect the brand and its community of 14,000 affiliate gyms by handling its numerous litigation matters. “CrossFit is the perfect intersection of my personal and professional interests.”

He’s out of the Marines, but remains strongly involved with the military. “I’m passionate about serving the veteran community,” Nahama said. He advises veteran entrepreneurs on starting and growing their businesses. He serves as pro bono general counsel for The Honor Foundation, helping Navy SEALs and other Special Forces personnel successfully transition from active duty.

He recently instituted Troutman’s “Office Hours” in San Diego to counsel entrepreneurs from The Rosie Network, a nonprofit that serves military spouses and transitioning service members.

“The firm is unconditionally supportive of veterans,” he said. “I’m so grateful that I can build the life I want here in San Diego.”

— John Roemer