

Recap: “The Scott Carey Speaker Series — The Global Chairman”

By Patrick Atchison, J.D. Candidate 2018 | April 5, 2016

On March 30, 2015 the [California Law Review](#), [Berkeley Center for Law & Technology](#), and [Berkeley Business Law Journal](#) welcomed [Mitchell Zuklie](#) '96, the global Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of [Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe LLP](#) (Orrick) for a Q&A discussion about his career as one of the country's leading technology attorneys and his current role managing a major global law firm.

A graduate of UC Berkeley School of Law '96, Mr. Zuklie began his legal career working on technology transactions during the height of the nineties dotcom boom. He fondly remembers the excitement in Silicon Valley at that time, and how cash-strapped start-ups looked to young attorneys such as him for advice on a wide array of legal issues. Zuklie noted that the relationships he built early in his career with entrepreneurs and other young associates have lasted and played a vital role in his ascent to global Chairman at Orrick.

Since being named global Chairman and CEO in 2012, Zuklie has implemented a bold strategy for expanding Orrick's global reach, while remaining a major player in exceedingly competitive U.S. legal markets. This strategy consists of focusing the firm's efforts on the finance, energy, and technology industries in order to attract high profile clients and provide the highest quality legal services. In addition, Zuklie has increased the firm's litigation practice and opened several international offices, including the first U.S. based law firm office in West Africa.

Beyond his efforts to increase Orrick's market share, Zuklie feels his more challenging task as global Chairman is attracting and retaining talented lawyers. His mantra is making “Orrick the best place to work.” For Zuklie, this means developing trusting relationships with employees, allowing for workplace flexibility, providing pro-bono opportunities, and increasing diversity. Under his leadership, Orrick has expanded employee opportunities to work remotely and instituted an industry leading maternity leave policy. Zuklie admitted that the single biggest challenge facing law firms today is retaining female attorneys, and that large firms must find ways to increase the number of female partners in order to remain competitive.

Although this year signals slower growth in the technology sector and sluggish capital markets, Zuklie is optimistic that young attorneys are entering the legal profession at a time of exceptional opportunity as businesses face increasingly complex, multidisciplinary obstacles. In order to address the evolving needs of clients, attorneys and law firms must take a more collaborative approach to legal services. He suggested that legal education encourage a more collaborative learning environment, similar to business school, in order to produce better-equipped attorneys.

In his parting words of wisdom to students, Zuklie stated that the most successful attorneys approach their career “as a marathon, not a sprint.” A long-term perspective that prioritizes a balanced work life, strong interpersonal relationships, and building an upstanding reputation is essential to excelling in the legal industry.