



## STEVEN H. KRUIS, ESQ. CURRICULUM VITAE



*Earning people's trust, keeping them talking, thinking creatively, and not giving up – these are the attributes of a good mediator. For more than twenty years, I have been successfully mediating real property, business, trust/probate, employment, and other matters.*

**Steven H. Kruis, Esq.** has mediated thousands of matters throughout Southern California since 1993, and is with the San Diego office of ADR Services, Inc. He settles real property, business, employment, trust/probate, professional liability, and personal injury disputes.

A balance between legal acumen and a keen understanding of people is the key to his effectiveness. He demonstrates a passion for settling disputes and makes the extra effort to lead the parties to settlement rather than impose it upon them. As a result, parties have reached settlements ranging from over \$10 million to less than \$10,000.

He graduated with honors from the University of Notre Dame in 1977 with a degree in government and international studies. Selected as a 1978-1979 Rotary International Scholar, he studied in London, England, and subsequently received his Juris Doctor degree from the Notre Dame Law School in 1980.

Mr. Kruis began his legal career as an assistant district attorney, and then became a partner with Higgs, Fletcher & Mack LLP, San Diego's oldest and one of its largest law firms, where he ultimately served as the firm's managing partner. Since 1980, and before becoming a full-time neutral, he litigated a wide variety of cases, and earned an "AV" rating from Martindale-Hubbell.

He lives in San Diego with his wife, Katherine, who also is an attorney.

### Primary Areas of Focus

#### Real Property

Mr. Kruis was one of the original members and chair of the San Diego Association of Realtors® mediation committee, now known as the Real Estate Mediation Center, formed in 1991 to mediate commercial and residential real property matters and real estate licensee disputes. He has authored two California Department of Real Estate approved courses for real estate licensees, represented the San Diego Association of Realtors®, has been a licensed California real estate broker since 1985, and has testified in court as an expert witness on real property issues. For over 21 years, he has mediated all facets of commercial and residential real property disputes involving **boundaries, eminent domain, encroachment, HOA & CC&R's, leases, land use planning, MLS, mobile home parks, mold infestation, nondisclosure, nuisance, prescriptive easement, real estate broker commissions, specific enforcement, title (lien priorities, equitable subrogation, judicial and non-judicial foreclosure, slander of title) and view obstructions.**

#### Probate and Trust Matters

Mr. Kruis gained expertise in the probate and trust area when he litigated will contests and trust disputes for his law firm's estate planning practice group, and



now mediates a substantial number probate and trust matters, including **will contests based upon lack of testamentary capacity and undue influence, Probate Code Section 17200 claims, and claims for breach of fiduciary duty by trustees.**

## Employment

As a lawyer, Mr. Kruis handled ERISA and employment-related matters in State and Federal court for a Fortune 500 corporation that he represented for many years, and now mediates the full spectrum of employment disputes involving **wage and hour, discrimination and harassment (based upon age, disability, gender, medical condition, national origin, pregnancy, race, religion, sexual orientation), family/medical leave, Labor Code 970, retaliation, and public policy violation.**

## Professional Liability

Mr. Kruis mediates disputes involving the liability of professionals in the areas of **real estate brokerage, insurance brokerage, financial adviser, accounting, legal, dental, medical, home inspection, and architecture.**

## Personal Injury

As an attorney, his personal injury experience ranged from winning a seven-figure jury verdict on behalf of a plaintiff who suffered an organic brain injury in an automobile accident to defending a complex, seven-figure claim by plaintiffs who were allegedly exposed to debilitating doses of toxic substances. Subsequently, as a mediator he has handled all types of cases from soft-tissue to catastrophic injury, including **premises liability, automobile, pedestrian, bicycle, boat, dog bite, civil assault, sexual assault, defamation, elder abuse, false imprisonment, food poisoning, industrial accident, injury to reputation, invasion of privacy, maritime, medical and dental malpractice, mold exposure, products liability, premises liability, shooting, toxic substance exposure, and wrongful death matters.**

## Business/Partnership

As a former managing partner of a major law firm, Mr. Kruis understands partnership and business dynamics that have enabled him to bring a practical approach to mediating business disputes including **breach of contract, partnership and corporate dissolution, securities fraud, franchise, intellectual property, and unfair competition.**

## Recognition

Martindale-Hubbell Top Rated Lawyers "AV" Preeminent Rated Lawyer Status.  
Listed in Best Lawyers in America – Practice Area: Mediation.  
Listed in San Diego Super Lawyers - Practice Area: ADR.

*My broad subject matter expertise and passionate commitment to helping the parties reach satisfactory settlement have earned me the genuine, widespread respect of counsel and their clients.*