



JAMES GOODNOW

CEO & President

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"There's a way to do it better. Find it." – Thomas Edison

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JAMES GOODNOW

James Goodnow is Fennemore's CEO. Nearly two decades after starting his career at the firm as a file clerk, he became the youngest known chief executive of a major law firm in U.S. history when he started in his current role in 2018. He holds his JD from Harvard Law School and dual management certificates from MIT, where he was an enrolled MBA student before pivoting to the University of Cambridge Business School (U.K.), where he earned a master's degree in entrepreneurship. He earned a BS at Santa Clara University, where he graduated first in his class.

During his time as CEO, James has focused on positioning Fennemore for the future. He has helped lead the M&A teams that have resulted in the opening of 10 new offices around the U.S. — allowing the firm to better serve its business client base. Fennemore's upward trajectory led to it being named the **#1 firm in the U.S. for year-over-year revenue growth according to the 2023 American Lawyer Am Law 200 rankings (45.6%)**. He has collaborated with his colleagues to implement AI-based technology and data analysis tools that have given the firm and its clients an edge. He and the firm's senior leadership team believe in listening carefully and always putting people first — a philosophy that contributes to Fennemore's industry-leading retention and job-satisfaction statistics.

James is known for his thought leadership at the intersection of law and business. He has been featured on the cover of *The American Lawyer* ("Meet the New Boss ... James Goodnow Shows What the Firm of the Future Might Look Like"), and *ABA Journal* named him one of "America's Techiest Lawyers" in a cover story. Apple profiled James on [Apple.com](https://apple.com) and in a worldwide "Apple in Business" ad campaign. He is a contributor to *Entrepreneur Magazine* and writes a **law firm management, leadership, and innovation column** for *Above the Law*. He is the co-author of *Motivating Millennials: How to Recognize, Recruit and Retain the Next Generation of Leaders*, which debuted at #1 on Amazon in the business management new release category.

James is involved in the community. He has chaired, served on the board, or been involved in many organizations, including Make-A-Wish AZ, TGen (Translational Genomics Research Institute), the National Kidney Foundation of Arizona, the AZ Center for the Blind & Visually Impaired, and more. He is married to his high school sweetheart and is the proud father of two children. Outside of the office, James can be found riding his road bike, hiking, or playing golf with his family. He enjoys wine because it's about people, culture, history, science, and relationships. He's a Level I sommelier with the Court of Master Sommeliers.

EDUCATION

- J.D., Harvard Law School
- Master's Degree, University of Cambridge Business School (United Kingdom), Entrepreneurship
- MIT Sloan School of Management, Dual Certificates in (i) Management & Leadership, and (ii) Strategy & Innovation
- Harvard Business School, Management Certificate ("Becoming a Better Manager," HBSO)
- B.S., *summa cum laude*, Santa Clara University (graduated first in class)
- Certified Mergers & Acquisitions Professional (M&AP), Institute for Mergers, Acquisitions and Alliances (IMAA)
- Certified International Mergers & Acquisitions Professional (IM&A), Institute for Mergers, Acquisitions and Alliances (IMAA)
- Phi Beta Kappa
- Pi Sigma Alpha Honor Society

- Alpha Sigma Nu Honor Society

AREAS OF PRACTICE

AWARDS AND HONORS

- Innovative Business Leader of the Year, *AZ Big Media*
- Best Lawyers in America®
- Southwest Super Lawyers®
- Top 100 Lawyers in Arizona, *AZ Big Media*
- AZ Business Leader, *AZ Business Magazine*
- Lifetime Achievement, America's Top 100 Attorneys®
- *Top 100 Lawyers*, *AZ Business Magazine*
- AZ Business Leader, *AZ Business Magazine*
- *Newsweek*, 20 Leaders (Law)
- AV® Preeminent™ Peer Review Rated (the highest rating available), by Martindale-Hubbell
- AZ Big 100, Business Leaders, *AZ Big Media*

ARTICLES AND PRESENTATIONS

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- Author, "Why Long-Term Strategic Planning is the Lifeline Your Business Needs Right Now," *Entrepreneur*, September 20, 2023
- Interview, "Returning to the office won't get 'Zoom Associates' back up to speed," Law.com, August 15, 2023
- Featuring, "Firms more Eager to use AI for Business Development, not so much Legal Services," Law.com, July 25, 2023
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- Featuring, "Law Firm Mergers May Accelerate in Second Half of 2023," Law.com, July 3, 2023
- Author, "That's How We've Always Done It' is Killing Your Business — Here are 4 Simple Ways to Cultivate Consistent Success," *Entrepreneur.com*, June 30, 2023
- Featuring, "Why is Big Law Growing When Demand is Dropping," Law.com, May 30, 2023
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- Featuring, "James Goodnow: Winner of the Most Innovative Business Leader Of The Year," *AZ Big Media*, May 18, 2023
- Featuring, "Pressures to grow are everywhere so are the hazards of doing so carelessly," Law.com, May 9, 2023
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- Featuring, "NextGen Legal Podcast Episode 4: The Platinum Rule With James Goodnow," *Withum*, March 13, 2023
- Author, "Big Law Rates in this Economy Midsize and Specialized Firms Poised to Gain Market Share in 2023," Law.com, February 2023
- Author, "The Business of Fun," *Above the Law*, February 17, 2023
- Featuring, "James Named One Of The Top 25 Business Leaders To Watch In Arizona for 2023," *AZ Big Media*, January 23, 2023
- Author, "The Lean Law Firm" *Above the Law*, December 16, 2022
- Author, "Has Yale Changed The Law School Rankings Game?" *Above the Law*, December 2, 2022

- Interview, "James Goodnow, CEO," inBusiness, December 1, 2022
- Featured, "19 Top Leaders Who Are Making a Real Difference!" inBusiness, December 1, 2022
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- Author, "The Haves And The Have Nots," Above the Law, October 21, 2022
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- Author, "A Letter To A New Associate: 2022 Edition," Above the Law, September 23, 2022
- Author, "How Biglaw Firms Can Think Like A Startup," Above the Law, September 9, 2022
- Author, "Down With The LSAT?" Above the Law, August 26, 2022
- Quoted, "'Ghosting Exposes the Shaky Foundation of Many Law Firm-Client Relationships,'" Law.com, August 18, 2022
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- Quoted, "What's Driving a Wave of Midsize Mergers," Law.com, July 25, 2022
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- Featured: James Goodnow Forbes bio
- Author, "Getting to Know," Above the Law, July 1, 2022
- Quoted, "'Aggressive' Corporate Lawyer Market Drove 2 Firms to Merge," Daily Journal, June 29, 2022
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- Author, "The Biglaw Recession Playbook," Above the Law, June 17, 2022
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- Quoted, "Fennemore Agrees Tie-up With 113-year Old East Bay firm Wendel Rosen," Global Legal Post, June 16, 2022
- Quoted, "Oakland Law Firm Wendel Rosen Merging With Phoenix-based Fennemore," San Francisco Business Times, June 15, 2022
- Quoted, "Fennemore Joins Forces With Bay Area's Wendel Rosen," AZ Big Media, June 15, 2022
- Quoted, "Fennemore Mergers to Add 56 Lawyers, Nearing 200 Biggest," Bloomberg Law, June 14, 2022
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- Author, "A How-To Guide For Summer Associates," Above the Law, June 3, 2022
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- Interview, "In Their Words: BigLaw Leaders On Why They Merged, Law360, May 18, 2022
- Author, "One Bar Admission To Rule Them All?" Above the Law, May 6, 2022
- Quoted, "Fennemore Craig CEO On Adding 24 Gresham Savage Attys," Law360, April 21, 2022
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- Author, "Don't Let Your Yule Log Burn Out," *Above the Law*, December 3, 2021
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- Author, "This One Factor Will Determine Winners And Losers In The New Legal World," *Above the Law*, October 30, 2020
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- Author, "Fundamental Success: A Conversation with Tom Livne," *Above the Law*, August 7, 2020
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- Quoted, "Fresno Law Firm Dowling Aaron Inks Merger With Regional Firm," *The Sun*, July 28, 2020
- Quoted, "Fennemore Craig Scoops California Firm in Rare 2020 Legal Merger," *Bloomberg Law*, July 28, 2020
- Quoted, "Fennemore Craig Merges With Calif. Firm Dowling Aaron," *Law360*, July 28, 2020
- Author, "Betting Boldly in a Bear Market," *Above the Law*, July 24, 2020
- Author, "The Dormroom Hacker Who Dropped A Bomb On The Legal Industry," *Above the Law*, July 10, 2020
- Quoted, "The New Abnormal," *Chief Executive*, July 6, 2020
- Presenter, "Navigating the 'New Normal': How to Thrive in the Age of Millennials, the Post-COVID Era, and a Shifting Legal Landscape," *State Bar of Nevada Webinar*, July 2, 2020
- Author, "Say Something, Biglaw," *Above the Law*, June 12, 2020
- Quoted, "Millennial Partners Help Speed Change In Virus' Wake," *Law360*, June 9, 2020
- Author, "Feedback: June 2020," *InBusiness*, June 2020
- Author, "Searching For Silver Linings During COVID-19," *Above the Law*, May 29, 2020
- Quoted, "Want to Boost Tech Adoption? Get Personal," *Law.com*, May 29, 2020
- Author, "What Is The Definition Of A Law Firm?" *Above the Law*, May 1, 2020
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- Author, "Naming Names: The Unsung Heroes of the Coronavirus Pandemic," *Above the Law*, March 20, 2020
- Author, "Peering Into Biglaw's Crystal Ball," *Above the Law*, March 6, 2020
- Quoted, "The Fight Over the Future of Law Firm Ownership Has Put An Industry At Odds," *Law.com*, February 24, 2020
- Author, "Atrium Pivots Away From the Shadow of Clearspire," *Above the Law*, February 21, 2020
- Quoted, "Law Loses Ground to Medicine, Engineering in Teen Career Goals," *Bloomberg Law*, February 20, 2020
- Author, "It's Time to Leave the Billable Hour Hot Mess Behind," *Law360*, February 13, 2020
- Author, "Non-Attorney – Distinction or Diss?," *Above the Law*, February 7, 2020
- Quoted, "The Biggest Hurdle for Legal Tech Innovation? Law Firms' Business Structure," *Law.com*, February 4, 2020
- Speaker, "With Over \$1B in Venture Backed Capital, Could We Be On The Verge of Another Tech Bubble?" *Legalweek*, February 2020
- Author, "Lawyers: Meet the CEO Trying to Make You Obsolete," *Above the Law*, January 24, 2020
- Quoted, "Here is Arizona's Business Outlook for 2020," *AZ Big Media*, January 16, 2020
- Author, "Don't Let the Law Suck Out Your Soul," *Above the Law*, January 10, 2020
- Quoted, "A Look Ahead: Midsize Firms' Fate in 2020," *Law.com*, December 20, 2019
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- Author, "The Guaranteed Marketing Solution[®]," *Above the Law*, September 20, 2019
- Interview, "Creating a Competitive Advantage with James Goodnow," *AZ Biz Link Podcast*, September 25, 2019
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- Author, "The Accidental Ponzi Scheme," *Above the Law*, September 6, 2019
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- Author, "The War on Law Firms," *Above the Law*, July 12, 2019
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- Author, "Why Lawyers Are Obsessed With Rankings," *Above the Law*, May 3, 2019
- Author, "Put Me In, Coach," *Above the Law*, April 5, 2019
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- Presenter, "Leadership in Law," Brophy College Preparatory, February 28, 2019
- Author, "Why Innovation Dies in Law Firms," *Above the Law*, February 22, 2019
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- Speaker, "Business of Law Panel," *Legalweek*, February 2019
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- Author, "Law School Has Failed the Profession," *Above the Law*, January 25, 2019
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- Author, "5 Steps Every Law Firm Leader Should Take Now to Prepare for 2019," *Above the Law*, January 11, 2019
- Interview, "2019 Trends to Watch," *AzBusiness Magazine*, January/February 2019
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- Interview, "Pop Quiz, Monday with James Goodnow, President and Managing Partner at Fennemore Craig," *Medium*, November 5, 2018
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- Author, "Will This Become Biglaw's App Store?" *Above the Law*, October 19, 2018
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- Author, "Law Potion #9," *Above the Law*, June 29, 2018
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- Speaker, 2018 Legal Executive Forum, Thompson Reuters Legal Executive Institute, New York, New York, June 7, 2018
- Author, "A Crisis of Confidence in Law Firms," *Above the Law*, June 1, 2018
- Quoted, "40 Under 40," *Phoenix Magazine*, June 2018
- Author, "In Defense of More Sizzle, Less Steak" *Above the Law*, May 18, 2018

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- Interview, "James Goodnow Breaks Ground as Millennial Leader in Law," *AZ Big Media*, April 27, 2018
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- Interview, "Exclusive: Tech-minded Millennial Named Big Law Firm CEO After Starting as File Clerk," *Phoenix Business Journal*, March 7, 2018
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- Co-Author, "Arizona Tort Law Handbook," *State Bar of Arizona*
- [JamesGoodnow.bio](#)
- [James Goodnow Facebook](#)
- [James Goodnow on FindLaw](#)

- [James Goodnow Entrepreneur Magazine Author Bio](#)
- [James Goodnow Above The Law Author Bio](#)
- [James Goodnow interview on InBusiness Greater Phoenix](#)

PROFESSIONAL AND COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

- Member, State Bar of Arizona
- Member, Board of Directors, National Kidney Foundation of Arizona (Immediate Past Chair)
- Member and Class Captain, Brophy Prep Alumni Association
- Member, Board of Directors, Make-A-Wish® Arizona
- Former Judge Pro Tempore, Maricopa County Superior Court
- Former Member, Board of Directors, Arizona Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired

ADMISSIONS

- Arizona
- New York
- District of Columbia (inactive)
- Colorado
- Illinois
- U.S. District Court, District of Arizona
- U.S. Court of Appeals, District of Columbia
- U.S. Court of Appeals, Ninth Circuit