



JAMES GOODNOW

CEO & President

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



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 earned his JD at Harvard Law School, a master's degree in entrepreneurship at the University of Cambridge Business School (U.K.), and a B.S. from 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 15 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 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), Brophy College Preparatory, 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 playing golf or pickleball 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 (Thesis/3L paper on research-focused LegalTech)
Master's Degree, University of Cambridge Business School (U.K.), Entrepreneurship (Thesis-"Reboot: Using Entrepreneurial Strategies to Infuse Innovation in Established Businesses").
- 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., Santa Clara University, *summa cum laude* (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







AREAS OF PRACTICE

Professional Services M&A Experience

James has led or co-led M&A transactions that have led to the opening of 10 new Fennemore offices across the United States.

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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- Quoted, "[Fennemore's Monumental Denver Expansion](#)," Business Wire, April 1, 2024
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- Quoted, "[Fennemore's Monumental Denver Expansion](#)," ADVFN, April 1, 2024
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- Featuring, "[Most Admired Companies](#)," AZ Big Media, September/October 2023
- 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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- 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
- Author, "[Tomorrow Is Here \(Again\)](#)," Above the Law, May 26, 2023
- 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
- Featuring, "[Here are the finalists for the 2023 Champions of Change Awards](#)," AZ Big Media, April 13, 2023
- 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

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- 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
- Author, "Does Biglaw Need Less Lawyering?" Above the Law, November 4, 2022
- Author, "The Haves And The Have Nots," Above the Law, October 21, 2022
- Author, "The Recessionary RULES," Above the Law, October 7, 2022
- Author, "A Letter To A New Associate: 2022 Edition," Above the Law, September 23, 2022
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- Interview, "James Goodnow of Fennemore: 5 Things I Wish Someone Told Me Before I Became a C-Suite Executive," *Authority Magazine*, April 26, 2021
- Author, "Why Are Lawyers Leaving Money On The Table?" *Above the Law*, April 9, 2021
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- Quoted, "'This is the gold rush.' The buzz about Arizona licenses," Law.com, March 12, 2021

- Quoted, "16 Useful Tips For Safely Reopening Offices," *Forbes*, March 10, 2021
- Quoted, "Working Together in a Post-COVID World: How and Where," *Law.com*, March 5, 2020
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- Interview, "Entrepreneurial law," University of Cambridge Judge Business School, February 22, 2021
- Quoted, "Let's Celebrate Random Acts of Kindness Day," *Fennemore Blog*, February 18, 2021
- Author, "What Will Be The GameStop Of The Legal World?" *Above the Law*, February 12, 2021
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- Author, "How to Run Your Practice Like a Tech CEO," *Above the Law*, January 8, 2021
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- Quoted, "Fennemore and Dowling Aaron Merger Finalized," *Nevada Business*, November 2, 2020
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- Author, "This One Factor Will Determine Winners And Losers In The New Legal World," *Above the Law*, October 30, 2020
- Quoted, "Law Firm Leaders Speak to the Power of Marketing," *JDSupra*, October 23, 2020
- Author, "2020 Will Be The Hardest Compensation Year Since the Great Recession," *Above the Law*, October 16, 2020
- Author, "Apologize, Or You'll Be Sorry," *Above the Law*, October 2, 2020
- Quoted, "Breaking Tradition: How New Law is Challenging Big Law," *Law.com*, September 25, 2020
- Author, "AI, Pandas, and the Future of Law," *Above the Law*, September 18, 2020
- Interview, "Fennemore Craig Continues 135-year Legacy of Innovation and Growth," *ASU Now*, September 16, 2020
- Interview, "What Sets Fennemore Craig Apart From Other Law Firms?" *ASU Law*, September 15, 2020
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- Quoted, "Arizona's Ownership Rules Have Major Implications for Consumer Law, the Big Four, Lit Funders and More," *Law.com*, September 1, 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
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- 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
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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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- [JamesGoodnow.bio](#)
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- [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