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CALIFORNIA

TRAILBLAZERS

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JOHN CHESLEY

ROPES & GRAY



PIONEER SPIRIT One party was an academic medical center with a global reputation. The other was a community hospital with a strong religious affiliation. John Chesley's challenge was to meld their financial interests – and their cultures – to create a new entity. The result was the Providence Cedars-Sinai Tarzana Medical Center, which brought Cedars-Sinai Medical Center's expertise to the San Fernando Valley, where Providence St. Joseph Health had a long-time presence. For Chesley, the deal was both complex and enjoyable. "I really get a kick out of watching people and helping people get around a table and trying to build something that's greater than the sum of the parts."

TRAILS BLAZED Chesley specializes in health care financing and restructuring, often through joint ventures between two very different organizations. He designs agreements that ensure a smooth partnership. "How do you build a relationship into documents that are flexible but clear, that set up guardrails for a new road for people to travel? That's where the joint venture know-how really comes in." Patients are the real beneficiaries of such deals. He put together a joint venture between Community Medical Centers Healthcare Network and Sante Health Foundation for co-management of a clinical and research oncology program where cancer patients could access all the care they needed in one location.

FUTURE EXPLORATIONS Throughout Chesley's career, the health care industry has experienced big change after big change. He thinks the coronavirus pandemic might pose the most significant challenges yet for the industry, especially in areas like telemedicine. For instance, he thinks it might make more sense to invest more in remote technology rather than floating bonds to build expensive outpatient clinics. "This is a fascinating time. I'm sorry for the reason for it. But we're going to see a lot of change that's been hard coming."