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CHAMPIONSHIP PEDIGREE Richard Chernick spent 25 years as a trial lawyer with Gibson Dunn. Early in his career, he was assigned to be an advocate in a construction arbitration. “The powers that be thought it was something a young associate could handle. It turned out I had an aptitude for that kind of advocacy, and I became the local arbitration expert. As a result of spending so much time at AAA, they invited me to begin hearing some cases and offered me a spot on the board. In the early 1990s I became an arbitrator full-time.”

EXPERIENCE & EXPERTISE Chernick has spent the last 17 years as managing director of JAMS’ arbitration practice. “Personally, I have developed a robust national and international practice. With JAMS, I’ve created effective rules, trained case managers, recruited arbitrators and managed internal quality control processes. We’ve provided the lawyer community with the highest level of arbitration practices and procedures.” Chernick has also held leadership positions in the ABA, California Bar, Los Angeles County Bar, and other organizations. “While serving as the ABA dispute resolution chair, I was an appointed advisor to the Uniform Law Commission’s effort on the Revised Uniform Arbitration Act. It’s been adopted in about half the states. It’s the most advanced rules and procedures for domestic arbitration—it’s much more detailed than the Federal Arbitration Act.”

FUTURE VISION Commercial arbitration is alive and well, although consumer arbitration has a less certain future. “All areas of sophisticated business practice rely on domestic and international arbitration agreements. It’s distinguished from consumer arbitration, which is controversial. Recently two or three major law firms have stopped requiring their staff to sign arbitration agreements as part of #MeToo. While the U.S. Supreme Court is largely supportive of consumer arbitration, it continues to be challenged in places.”

