

## She finds purpose in helping people solve tough legal problems that touch people's lives

I'm often asked by younger lawyers about my career path, and specifically, how I ended up working on issues, both in the public and private sector, that I care about deeply. The truth is, I could not have planned the path that my legal career has taken even if I had tried. From the time I was in law school, I knew that I wanted to find meaning in my work. And I knew that for me, "meaning" meant helping people find solutions to really tough problems.

I thrive when I'm helping my clients navigate crises and other complicated, high-risk problems that seem to have no clear or perfect solutions.

My desire to work on difficult, important issues is something that has remained constant during my time in both private practice and the federal government. I served as Associate Deputy Attorney General at the Department of Justice during the Obama Administration, where I worked on some of the Department's most significant civil rights policy, litigation and enforcement matters. For the first 18 months of the Biden Administration, I served as Deputy Counsel to the President in the Office of the White House Counsel, where my role was to lead a team that was responsible for a wide variety of legal issues related to advancing the President's equity agenda. On any given day, I was working on issues related to voting rights, policing and criminal justice reform, reproductive rights, discrimination and sexual misconduct on college campuses, health equity, fair housing, and LGBTQ rights – and none of it was easy. But I knew that the work we were doing mattered, and that no matter how intractable some of the problems seemed to be, there were people who were depending on us to find solutions.

Both in the White House and at DOJ, some of my most memorable moments involved sitting around a table with smart and thoughtful people, and turning over a really hard problem that had to be addressed carefully but quickly. Knowing that the decisions we made would impact people's lives in a very real and meaningful way made the pressure to get it right even greater.

Similarly, at Latham, I regularly work with companies, educational institutions, and nonprofit organizations facing high-profile and reputation-threatening challenges—from reported incidents of sexual misconduct, harassment, and discrimination to inquiries and enforcement actions brought by federal regulators. One of my strengths is my ability to help my clients quickly develop a strategy to effectively attack the problem and my willingness to work extremely hard to execute that strategy.

The legal profession can be incredibly demanding, and at times, all consuming. And while I do work hard to try to find balance, I have always loved the fast-paced and high-pressure nature of the legal jobs I've held – even if that means I have to miss some of my daughters' games or a school recital or play (which are almost never at convenient times for working parents!). One of my most memorable professional experiences to date was being a part of the team that helped shepherd Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson's historic nomination and successful confirmation to the US Supreme Court. Needless to say, that was an incredibly intense time at work, and I definitely missed more games and dinners and weekend outings than I can count.

But I'll never forget the feeling of watching my daughters watch the hearings; they were so proud – both because a woman that looks like them could ascend to the highest court in the land, and because their mom got to play a small part in making it happen. In the moments of guilt, I hold on to the fact that my girls know how much I care about my work, and how much that work has mattered to other people, too.



**Education:**

JD, Howard University School of Law;  
BA, Tulane University

**Company Name:** Latham & Watkins LLP

**Industry:** Legal

**Company CEO:** Richard Trobman

**Your Location:** Washington, DC

**Words you live by:**

Wherever you are, be all there.

**Who is your personal hero?**

My grandfather and US Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall

**What book are you reading?**

*The Heaven & Earth Grocery Store* by James McBride

**What was your first job?** Chuck E. Cheese

**Interests/Hobbies:**

Wine; all things Peloton; New Yorker crossword puzzles; musicals

**Family:** Aaron Stallworth (husband); Harper (daughter, 12); Marley (daughter, 10)