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National Women in Law Awards

RECOGNIZING TRANSFORMATIVE LEGAL LEADERSHIP

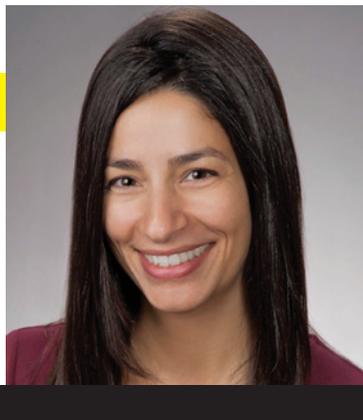
These profiles recognize North American women general counsel, in-house leaders and law firm partners who have demonstrated extraordinary leadership and business acumen as they have guided their organizations through often treacherous roads to success. These women stand out because they are business strategists, complex problem-solvers, and of course, great lawyers. And as important (especially to them) is that they are great leaders of people: They care more about the success of the team than their individual success.

NADIA SAGER

COLLABORATIVE LEADERSHIP

LATHAM & WATKINS LLP

Partner
(Since 2005)



WHAT WAS YOUR ROUTE TO THE TOP? I joined Latham & Watkins straight out of UCLA Law School. As a new associate, I devoted myself to working really hard, building my expertise and developing strong business relationships. I discovered that I loved helping people create long term strategic partnerships, which led me to pursue my career forming investment fund partnerships among top global players and raising billions of dollars in capital for investment through these partnerships. I made partner at the law firm while pregnant with my first child, and had my second child a few years later. As my kids got older I took on greater leadership roles within the firm and expanded my law practice. In 2014, the firm's Executive Committee asked me to spearhead the expansion of the firm's innovative global diversity strategy for over 2,500 attorneys with the creation of the Diversity Leadership Committee. As Chair

of the Committee, among many other initiatives, I helped the firm create its highly successful Women's Leadership and Diversity Leadership Academies, which have each served hundreds of attorneys, seeking to inspire and propel women and diverse attorneys into leadership roles.

WHAT KEEPS YOU UP AT NIGHT? (I.E. WHAT ARE YOUR BIGGEST BUSINESS-RELATED CONCERNS?) More than 20 years into my career, it's pretty tough to rattle me. Deal-making on nine- and ten-figure transactions keeps me up working at night, but very little keeps me up worrying. There's almost always a way to get a good deal done, and my team will find it.

WHAT IS THE BEST LEADERSHIP ADVICE YOU PROVIDED, OR RECEIVED, AND WHY DO YOU THINK IT WAS EFFECTIVE? Find the hidden gems and train them to be even better than you are.

Don't join the crowd in grabbing for the obvious talent. Turn over new stones and find the gems underneath. And realize that you may not know it's a gem when you first find it. But if you keep working at it, and don't give up, the gem just might be revealed and surprise you.

LOOKING BACK, WHAT DO YOU WISH YOU HAD KNOWN WHEN YOU STARTED OUT IN THE LEGAL PROFESSION? I would love to have been a better strategist early on. It took me years to figure out how to be truly strategic about my career. In the early years I said yes to everything, which often yields a low return on your investment of time. In my later years, I have learned to make much more effective use of my time.

WHAT IS THE MOST VALUABLE CAREER ADVICE ANYONE HAS EVER GIVEN YOU? Go out to lunch. It sounds simple, but it's really a broader metaphor for getting away from your desk, spending time with people, networking, building important relationships. Those who go out to lunch frequently get ahead so much more quickly, because they have spent time building key relationships rather than just putting their heads down and doing the work. Business thrives on relationships, and the most successful lawyers have wide networks of very strong relationships. ■

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