



**Education:** JD, The George Washington University Law School; BBA, international business, University of Georgia

**Company Name:** Latham & Watkins

**Industry:** Law

**Company CEO:** n/a

**Company Headquarters Location:** n/a

**Number of Employees:** 5,000+

**Your Location:**

San Francisco, California

**Words you live by:** Don't let fear of failure stop you from trying.

**What book are you reading?** Zak George's *Dog Training Revolution: The Complete Guide to Raising the Perfect Pet with Love* by Zak George & Dina Roth Port.

**What was your first job:** My first "real" job (not babysitting or mowing lawns) was working at a hotel coffee shop.

**Interests:** Travel, food, wine, both excellent and garbage TV, and training my new puppy (see book above)

**Family:** My partner, Moira (in life not law), and our two dogs, Murray and Kirby

## The Value of a Whole Lot of Other

Many years ago, at an event on diversity and inclusion, a fellow attendee asked me about my background. I explained that my mom was Colombian, my dad was from Ohio, both were conservative, I grew up in the deep South (a Southern sorority girl), I spent three years between college and law school working for the National Council of La Raza (now UnidosUS), and I am a member of the LGBTQ+ community. He stared at me wide-eyed and said, "Wow! You're a cultural oxymoron."

I'm not sure his description was apt, but I got the point. I suppose that, to him, my description seemed like a whole lot of "other" wrapped into one person. But I'm grateful for every bit of it because, over the years, having that much "other" has provided me with many more ways to connect with people in my practice and personal life. Whether I am talking college football with opposing counsel (yes, I'm a HUGE Georgia Bulldogs fan) or applauding the signature Costeño references in Disney's *Encanto* with my Colombian colleagues, my background has made it easier to find common ground with all sorts of people.

As a litigator, my ability to draw from my varied experiences has been particularly helpful in framing case themes and relating to witnesses and jurors. Success in the legal profession, as in so many others, depends heavily on making immediate connections with complete strangers. My background has helped tremendously in this regard. The ability to bring one's whole self to work and to see the value of having varied backgrounds are just two of the many reasons that I maintain a deep commitment to diversity and inclusion in the legal profession. It's why I work hard to staff my matters with diverse teams; they bring different perspectives that deliver creativity, thoughtful analysis, and robust debate, among other things—all to the benefit of clients and to the profession itself.

These days, the diversity and inclusion mantra may seem well-worn, but I believe there's still much work to do so we can help the next generation of Latino and other diverse business leaders achieve their full potential. We can do this by hiring great people and investing our time in training them, providing them with substantive opportunities to learn and advance, introducing them to the right networks, and vouching for them as they move up the ladder. Diversity and inclusion is good for the community and good for business, a winning combo that never gets old. I'm proud to work for a firm and with clients that understand the importance of those efforts and support them.