

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2007

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~ The 50 Women to Watch ~

(the following has been excerpted)

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MAUREEN MAHONEY

Partner

LATHAM & WATKINS

After Joseph Nacchio, the former Qwest Communications International Inc. chief executive, was convicted in April on insider-trading charges, he turned to Maureen Mahoney to



lead his appeal. It was the latest in a long line of high-impact appeals for Ms. Mahoney, a partner at **Latham & Watkins LLP**.

Perhaps her most celebrated win came in a 2003 case before the Supreme Court: She successfully argued that the University of Michigan Law School could use race in admissions decisions. In another high-court case in 2005, she won a reversal of the criminal conviction of accounting firm Arthur Andersen. That same year, her name was bandied about as a possible replacement for Justice Sandra Day O'Connor.

The next few months should be busy ones for the 53-year-old Ms. Mahoney. Aside from the Nacchio appeal, which she is scheduled to argue on Dec. 18, she will present a patent case at the Supreme Court early next year on behalf of Quanta Computer Inc.

Ms. Mahoney says she focused full-time on appeals in the late 1980s partly to avoid the travel associated with trial work. "I'd always been interested in it, but having two young kids is really what got me to make the move."

The shift was one of few she has made in her career. Apart from a two-year stint as deputy solicitor general, she has spent the past 27 years at Latham & Watkins in Washington, D.C. "I've been married for 29 years, had the same secretary for 22 years and had the same housekeeper since our son [now 24 years old] was born," she says. "I like stability."

—Ashby Jones