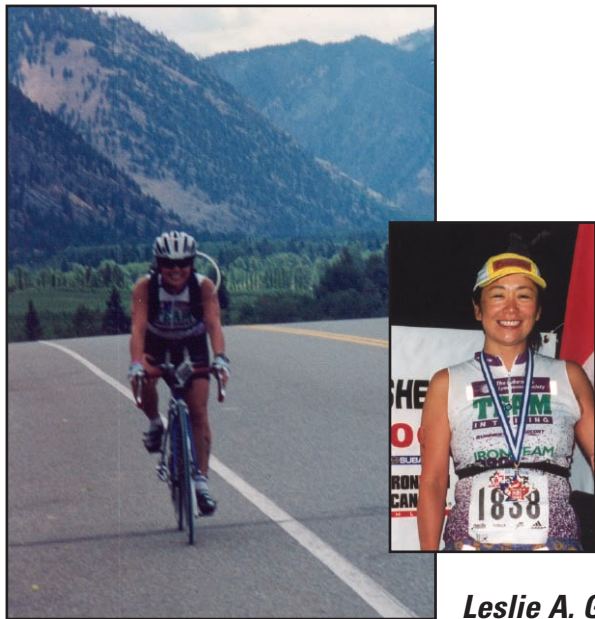


PROFILE

OF A PRESIDENT



Leslie A. Gordon

Joan Haratani's idea of a great vacation is spending a week on a bike, standing in line for a shower, and sleeping in a tent. An addict of charity races like the San Francisco–Los Angeles AIDS Ride, marathons, and even Ironman, the world's most challenging triathlon, Haratani believes her years of race training will serve her well during her term as the first female minority president in BASF's 133-year history.

"People ask me, 'How will you be BASF president and work at the same time?' I tell them, 'That's nothing compared to training for an Ironman when you're dead tired and starving and you have to work,'" quips Haratani, who trained twice a day every weekday and all day Saturdays and Sundays to prepare for the Ironman's 2.4-mile open-water swim, 112-mile bike ride, and 26.2-mile run. She not only completed the race, but she also met her husband, "a recovering lawyer" who was part of her training group.

A Morgan Lewis litigator specializing in products liability and commercial disputes, Haratani has been known to organize weekend picnics and relay races to motivate and bond with her legal team. We caught up with the Oakland resident to find out more about what makes her tick.

What makes you happy?

Working out. Spending time with family and friends. Community service, mentoring. A great meal and a good book.

What gets on your nerves?

People who do not respond or follow up as promised. People who don't give back to the community in proportion to their abilities. People who complain but don't problem-solve.

What makes a good lawyer?

Attention to detail with the ability to understand the big picture. Understanding the client's objective. Good communication. Good team leadership. Being well-prepared.

What makes a good person?

Compassion. Being a good listener, being someone who cares. Being willing to admit when you've made a mistake.

What's a lawyer stereotype that fits?

That lawyers love to hear themselves talk.

What's a stereotype that doesn't fit?

That they don't give back and are not generous.

What's your favorite place to relax?

Any place outdoors, with a slight preference for the ocean.

What's your favorite Bay Area view?

The view from the Westridge Trail in the East Bay regional park system, looking over the hills in the morning. That ties with the view from my office, where I can see the Bay Bridge, the East Bay, Angel Island, and, on a clear day, the Richmond–San Rafael Bridge.

What do you like about yourself?

That I'm approachable. That I'm a good listener and empathetic.

Who is your idol in the legal profession?

It changes, but right now my idol is Jami McKeon, chair of my firm's commercial litigation practice. She's a mother of four, a very successful lawyer, a nice person, extremely supportive of women, and extremely generous. She's got it all.

If you couldn't be a lawyer, what would you do?

I'd be a professional cyclist or, like any lawyer, I'd like to write—I'd like to author mystery novels.

What's your ideal Sunday?

Hanging out with my husband at my sister's by Davenport Beach [near Santa Cruz] with her kids.

What's your favorite city?

San Francisco.

What are your goals as BASF president?

To motivate and to successfully lead the organization so we have another dynamic year.

Every attorney should . . .

. . .do pro bono work.