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National Women in Law Awards

RECOGNIZING TRANSFORMATIVE LEGAL LEADERSHIP

These 2018 awards 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.

JAMI WINTZ MCKEON

MORGAN LEWIS & BOCKIUS LLP - CHAIR (SINCE 2014)

WHAT WAS YOUR ROUTE TO THE TOP? I felt at home from the minute I interviewed at Morgan Lewis and began my career here as an associate in 1981. My early practice focused on high-stakes crisis litigation and investigations. I was elected to the partnership in 1989 and spent the next two decades advising clients in the financial services and technology industries. In addition to great mentors, I had many leadership opportunities at the firm, from key committee appointments as an associate to local office practice leadership roles as a young partner. Over the years, I served successive terms on the firm Advisory Board and Compensation Committee. In 2003, 160 lawyers from Brobeck, a leading California law firm, joined Morgan Lewis. At the request of our Chair, I moved with my family from Philadelphia to San Francisco to lead the integration, which was a success due to our approach to bringing everyone together and expanding our relationships with clients. It gave us a template for later combinations. In 2009, I was appointed head of the global litigation practice and, in 2013, I was elected to my first term as Chair to begin in 2014. Six weeks into my term, we announced a historic combination, adding more than

700 lawyers and hundreds of staff from the former Bingham McCutchen firm. Again, the integration worked because we understood the importance of connecting with each other throughout the process and shared a commitment to our clients. In March 2015, we announced another novel combination, with Singapore's Stamford Law.

WHAT KEEPS YOU UP AT NIGHT? (I.E. WHAT ARE YOUR BIGGEST BUSINESS-RELATED CONCERNS?) I worry about the same things our peer firms worry about—always adding value to our clients, technological change, etc. Though I prefer to think of challenges as opportunities; they're how we will differentiate ourselves over time. Honestly, it's the things you don't know that worry you, and my job is to watch the horizon for potential obstacles and to build capabilities so that our people can excel and concentrate on our clients. Among my priorities are the lives of our people; they are Morgan Lewis. We've worked hard to create a culture of high-quality collaboration and support from which our talent and, ultimately, our clients, benefit, offering remote working, an extended leave and ramp-up policy, diversity and inclusion affinity groups and mentoring, and world-class professional development on



INNOVATIVE LEADERSHIP

topics including client service excellence and implicit bias.

WHAT IS THE BEST LEADERSHIP ADVICE YOU PROVIDED, OR RECEIVED, AND WHY DO YOU THINK IT WAS EFFECTIVE? Leadership is not telling other people what to do. It's about starting a conversation and arming them with tools to make informed judgments, and listening to what's important to them, in exercising the responsibility that you have to make hard decisions. When you think of leadership in that way, you naturally focus on doing the right thing as opposed to doing the thing that seems to lead to advancement. I like this guidance because it transcends time, and it applies to everyone, at every stage of their careers. ■