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LAWYER TO LAWYER

## Q&A: Who are your greatest influences in the legal profession?

August 2014

 **Edward J. Loya Jr.**

My mother Virginia Loya has had the biggest influence on me personally and professionally. When I was twelve, she served as a juror in the Rodney King trial. During deliberations, she tried to convince the other jurors to convict Officer Laurence Powell, who was principally responsible for the beating. Some mocked her for wanting to replay the videotape of the incident, but she held firm -- she and three others hung the jury on the excessive force charge. My mother's courage to stand by her convictions gave me the courage to do the same when I later held a position of public trust.

My former colleagues at the Justice Department's Public Integrity Section in D.C. also hugely influenced my career. I truly respect their work ethic and the sacrifices they make to protect the integrity of our system of government. They are responsible for conducting investigations and prosecutions on a nationwide basis of elected, appointed, and career officials at all levels of government, and hold themselves to the highest standards of the profession. My time with them proved to be incredible training for a trial lawyer, and I'm able to better represent my clients because of the skills that I learned from working with these attorneys.

*Edward J. Loya, Jr. is a litigation associate in Venable's West Coast Commercial Litigation and Investigations and White Collar Defense Practice Groups.*

### Anabella Bonfa

One person who greatly influenced me is Ray Townsend, opposing counsel in a civil case I handled shortly after law school. It involved an automobile accident in which my client struck a concrete pole blocking the freeway entrance. Back then, I didn't realize how difficult it was to sue a governmental agency. I didn't give up, and was able to prove my case.

Ray was the city's brilliant attorney, 20 years my senior. We had a nice working relationship, even as opponents. He kept telling me, good-naturedly, that I was going to lose the case. Later, he said, "You know, I saw your bar number and kind of wrote you off, thinking this was an easy win, but you stuck with it and now I have to go tell the city to pay up. I could be bitter about being beaten by a rookie, but this taught me a valuable lesson: Never underestimate the opponent." Ray taught me that hard work earns the respect of other lawyers, and that lawyers should have class, civility and professionalism. I mentor law students now because of Ray, because I promised myself if I ever had Ray's experience that I would teach young lawyers what is really important about practicing law.

*Anabella Bonfa is a litigator with Wellman & Warren LLP in Laguna Hills. She handles business and partnership disputes, theft of trade secrets and unfair competition.*

### Josh Maxwell

Bruce Stelzner, my partner at KPMG, and Richard Carpenter, the attorney I worked for who focused on tax controversies were both very influential. Each has a very different approach with clients. Bruce is highly technical, assertive, and direct. Richard is calculated, calm under pressure, and chooses his words wisely. I have incorporated both styles into my practice.

Also, I wouldn't be where I am today were it not for my partner, Aubrey Hone. She started the practice and gave me the motivation to join her. She had established the firm's foundation and worked through the growing pains, and although we are partners, she has also been a mentor.


I am much happier now than I have ever been both professionally and personally. It never would have crossed my mind to strike out on my own, and Aubrey convinced me I could do it and be successful.

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*Josh Maxwell is a partner at Hone Maxwell in San Diego. His practice focuses on federal, state and local tax issues, particularly civil and criminal tax controversy defense.*

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#### **Tara R. Burd**

One of my greatest influences was Malcolm Schick, who was my supervising attorney during a clinical internship program in my final semester at law school. In conversation one day, he told me that an attorney who brings in clients is more valuable to a firm than the attorney who writes the motions and performs discovery. A light bulb went on in my head. I don't know what I expected attorney life to be like, but I certainly had never thought of the profession as a business that required networking and developing client relationships. My parents are realtors, so I thought becoming an attorney was the opposite of what they do -- being self-employed and taking weekend client calls.

From that conversation, I researched the topic of "rainmaking," and made a presentation to the class. This information became absolutely invaluable to me because I hung out my own shingle within my first year of practice. I immediately realized the business of law, rather than the practice, easily consumed 50 percent of my time. And for solos and small firms, without the business there is no practice.

*Tara R. Burd is the principal and founder of the Law offices of Tara Burd, a civil law and litigation firm in San Diego.*

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#### **Erin Balsara Naderi**

I didn't grow up thinking I was going to be a lawyer, but my first year in college I began taking some legal classes, specifically a constitutional law class that looked at the historical background of the Supreme Court. As part of the curriculum I read a bunch of landmark cases, particularly those from the Warren years, and that really sparked my interest in the law.

Knowing that practical application of the law is different than reading it, I started working for sole practitioner Paul Barba while still in school. I was the second in what is now a long line of college students who have been mentored by him.

Working for Paul, I saw inside the practice of law, and was allowed to do tough legal research, which enabled me to really delve into the work. Paul also took an interest in fostering career development and having us read books such as, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*. Through this, I realized I really wanted to do litigation, so I went to law school, worked as a summer associate, and was hired right out of school.

*Erin B. Naderi is an associate at Palmieri, Tyler, Wiener, Wilhelm & Waldron in Irvine. She represents private businesses and landowners involved in eminent domain disputes, both direct and inverse condemnation, valuation, and lease renewal valuation.*

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#### **Stephanie M. Barnett**

I am incredibly fortunate to work with and learn from Dan Jaffe, a consummate gentleman whose approach to conflict resolution is practical and goal oriented. As family law lawyers, most of our cases involve heightened emotions. Dan begins difficult conversations with humor, which diffuses any tension. I work hard to replicate his calm demeanor, which he maintains even when opposing counsel attempts to ramp-up emotions.

Leah Bishop (a partner at Loeb & Loeb) is another lawyer who inspires me both personally and professionally. Her dedication to philanthropic causes, such as involvement with the [Harriett Buhai Center for Family law](#), is admirable, and, significantly, she has long been a vocal supporter of women lawyers, inspiring us to meet our fullest potential.

*Stephanie M. Barnett is a family law attorney at Jaffe & Clemens representing high net worth individuals in a variety of domestic matters, including divorce, custody, premarital and post-nuptial agreements, and paternity.*

#### **We welcome your comments!**

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