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Committee Spotlight: Environmental & Sustainability

Environmental

Interviews and Profiles





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Tell us about your background and your law department.

I began my law practice in 2003 in the environmental group of a large law firm where I focused on environmental risks in transactions. After almost 10 years, I realized that the law firm life was not for me and so I started my own practice primarily focused on brownfields development. This led to an opportunity to join GE Capital's real estate investment business as environmental risk counsel. Shortly after my arrival, GE decided to sell off most of GE Capital, including the real estate investment arm, and so I was laid off. I had enjoyed my in-house work and prioritized that in my job search. I was extremely fortunate to find my current role with HP Inc.

What interested you in the in-house practice of law and how did you come to be in your current position?

My interest in in-house work was a result of both personal and professional goals. Personally, I felt the right in-house role would be fulfilling to me and provide a good work/life balance. Professionally, I wanted to continue to do sophisticated work without the pressures of client development and billing time. I applied for my current position cold following my layoff from GE Capital. My background was a good fit with the job posting and I hit it off right away with the hiring manager (now my boss) when we spoke. I was the right person at the right time.

What is the single greatest challenge that your law department is facing today, and how are you dealing with it?

Continuing to meet internal client needs with reduced resources (staff and budget).

**In October 2016, you were elected as chair of the Environmental & Sustainability Committee?
How did you initially get involved?**

My first experience with ACC was as chair of the Environmental & Sustainability Committee. In 2016, I expressed interest in becoming involved in leadership of the committee. The outgoing chair convinced me to take the role after the incoming chair had to bow out due to unexpected change in circumstances. It's been quite a learning curve but I'm enjoying it.

What are some of the ways that the Environmental & Sustainability committee provides value to its members?

I may be biased but I think our monthly Legal Quick Hits are awesome. Our committee sponsor provides timely content on emerging areas of concern. This year, we've focused a lot on changes contemplated by the Trump administration and other evolving areas of law (e.g., the Toxic Substances Control Act).

What substantive practice issues does your committee address?

Our committee focuses almost exclusively on substantive areas of law (e.g., air, water, waste, chemicals, cleanup, supply chain, green marketing claims).

How has the Environmental & Sustainability Committee helped you in your career?

It has helped me remain current on changing areas of law. Even if a topic is not top of mind for me in my current practice, I believe it is important to remain at least conversant in the broader discipline of environmental and sustainability law. Participating in the committee is a great way to do that.

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