

WOMEN, INFLUENCE & POWER IN LAW AWARDS

RECOGNIZING TRANSFORMATIVE LEGAL LEADERSHIP

Our 2020 special report honors women who have demonstrated a commitment to advancing the empowerment of women in law.

Law Firm Honorees

JENNIFER HOBBS

SIMPSON THACHER & BARTLETT

Partner

WOMEN'S LEGAL AWARDS

RECOGNIZED AS ONE OF THE LEADING BANKING AND FINANCE

lawyers in the nation by Chambers USA, Jennifer Hobbs advises on complex, multi-layered financings in connection with headline-grabbing and transformational transactions for some of the world's best known companies and most sophisticated private equity sponsors and financial institutions. Hobbs is currently a member of the firm's Executive Committee and a co-administrative partner of the firm responsible for managing the firm's day-to-day operations. She is a strong supporter of women and lawyers of color and LGBTQ+ lawyers at the firm, and has played an integral role in the firm's Women's and Diversity committees for more than 15 years.

WHAT WAS YOUR ROUTE TO THE TOP? Excellent mentors encouraged me to take on challenging work and develop my own client relationships. As a senior associate, James Cross let me take a lead role advising Silver Lake and other key firm private equity clients in the iconic SunGard Data System buy-out financing. That success led to a deeper relationship with Silver Lake and I became their primary financing counsel. My successful individual practice and client relationship growth led to leadership positions. I have always felt a responsibility to be engaged in the policies and life of the firm and advocated for separate Diversity and Women's committees as a young partner. Over time, I was placed on committees that shaped the firm, eventually being elected to our Executive Committee and named co-administrative partner.

LOOKING BACK, WHAT DO YOU WISH YOU HAD KNOWN WHEN YOU STARTED OUT IN THE LEGAL PROFESSION? Marissa Wesely became one of my mentors at Simpson Thacher and she taught me one of the most important lessons for young



associates: believe you can expand beyond your current reach. It's a lesson that not only applies to learning new skills as a lawyer, but also in regards to your growth beyond the law. Too often, we see lawyers who feel they have become too hyper-specialized to grow beyond their current practice, or even their current job. A law degree helps to develop critical analytical skills that are useful in any field. You can be really talented as a lawyer, but that doesn't mean it's the only thing you can be good at; you can find success in multiple avenues in life.

WHAT IS THE BEST LEADERSHIP ADVICE YOU'VE GIVEN OR RECEIVED, AND WHY DO YOU THINK IT WAS EFFECTIVE? My mentors taught me two other important lessons. One was that it's not enough to work hard — you need to advocate for yourself. I was able to do this early in my career, which opened doors for assignments, client relationships and, eventually, partnership. Since then, I have used the privilege I have gained to continue advocating for issues and opportunities for change within the firm and beyond. The second lesson is to act like a kickass lawyer and remember that you're the expert. In most cases, your client has never experienced the situation they are in now, but you likely have. You know far more than you think you do, so be confident in your knowledge. ■