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IWIRC NEWSLETTER

Connecting Women Worldwide



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**Special Edition:
Mentoring Wisdom & Sign Up For Mentoring**

IWIRC Mentoring Program Launch

Dear IWIRC Members,

The Membership Committee has been hard at work and we are excited to announce a new IWIRC Mentoring Program! We will be starting with a pilot program in 2022 and we are seeking members interested in participating as mentees.

- The program will run through the calendar year, January—December. (There is no requirement to maintain contact beyond that period, though pairs are free to do so!)
- The mentee is expected to reach out to the mentor to set up an initial meeting.
- Pairs should meet (virtually or in person) once a month to touch base. While there is no strict time commitment, we expect meetings will last anywhere from 30 minutes to an hour.
- Participants will receive prompts every or every other month on a variety of topics from IWIRC that they can use as conversation starters and discussion topics.
- As this is a pilot program, we will solicit your feedback and suggestions throughout the year—we greatly appreciate your input!

If you are interested in participating, please complete this short form. Participation is limited, so sign up early to ensure your spot. We look forward to hearing from you!

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A special thanks to IWIRC Member Beatriz Faneca Leite de Souza for spearheading the collection of this information.



MENTORING WISDOM

January is Mentoring Month! To celebrate Mentoring Month and the launch of IWIRC's new mentoring program, we asked IWIRC board members for their mentoring wisdom. Here are some of our favorites.

What is the best piece of professional advice you have ever received?

- Always carry a business card.
- Business development is like dating, you should try to see if you click but if not don't push it and find someone you click with.
- Your best marketing tool is excelling at actual legal skills.
- Be curious.
- Always be helpful and humble - both go a long way in the workplace
- To join IWIRC -- in all seriousness, this was the best advice because it got me involved in the bankruptcy industry at an early age. I developed lifelong friends and colleagues in the industry who have been supporters, mentors and friends for 20+ years.

What would be your advice to your younger self?

- Don't wait too long to get out of someone else's shadow at your own firm or place of employment.
- Take care of yourself. This is a long life, and this profession can be difficult at times.
- Worry less (a lot less)!
- Join IWIRC -- best way to meet people and have immediate supporters, mentors and friends in the industry.
- Be faithful to your own career, not the firm.
- Learn from mistakes, but don't dwell on them.

What challenges have you faced in your career in general, and as a woman specifically?

- As a woman in restructuring there are 2 things that stand out, the old boys club and of course perception issues. Women are aggressive and bitchy or timid and unsure of themselves when men are thought to know what they are doing and get it done. Neither of these things have gone away although over time we have seen a tiny bit of improvement.
- Being mistaken as being inexperienced because I am (was) young or female. Being able to successfully advocate for myself while still being viewed as a "team player."
- Timing of having a baby and being on maternity leave and how that might fit in with promotion prospects.
- I've been laid off from two companies as a result of acquisitions. This has been tough but also enabled me to go to new places and experience new ways of doing things, new colleagues and new opportunities.
- Balancing obligations at work and home and saying no to things that I don't want to do.

What has been your biggest career struggle and how did you overcome it?

- Finding my niche - both in terms of practice area and practice team - took time. But it was well worth it. It took a lot of work to figure out what I wanted to do and who I wanted to work with.
- Confidence – still working on it.
- Getting laid off after an acquisition. I reached out and used my network to help me find a job. It was humbling but also really amazing to see people step up and reach out and support you.
- Creating work/life balance. I haven't.

What skills have been most important to you in your career, and how did you develop them?

- Networking. It's not as easy or fun as it looks but it is very important to keep up and be in front of people. And of course, being very good in the work that you do
- Attention to detail and thinking on my feet. The only way to learn that is through experience and opportunity to handle things independently.
- Discipline. No questions asked. Focusing in the goal, rather than complaining about the steps to achieve it.
- I have always been a good writer, but a nervous speaker. I think practice and preparation helps.
- Understanding what work product makes the clients / partner's life easier.

What opportunities do you recommend younger IWIRC members try to develop their skills?

- Apply for the leadership summit. Meeting a smaller group of people who are actively engaged in the organization and doing activities together makes you feel like a significant part of the global network.
- Attend events, get to know your peers, make some connections with the generations before you and those generations that will follow. You never know how you can help someone and how that favor will come back around.
- IWIRC board positions offer the chance to work in a team, provide input and impact, be organized and efficient, learn to network and even help public speaking skills.
- Being humble to understand that you are in formation. Learning AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE from each situation and dos/dont's from the colleagues/bosses/firms. Take advantage of what you want to replicate and defining what you don't want to do when you are the leader
- Ask to handle a hearing instead of the partner. Judges really appreciate seeing young lawyers take a key role.
- Say "yes" to opportunities--yes, even the nonbillable ones. Experience is collective, so start having some.



What tips do you have for becoming more efficient at work?

- Allocate time to your tasks. Don't check email every time you hear it ping if you are in the middle of something.
- Put down the mobile as it is very distracting, mute the whats app groups as best as possible and focus on one task at a time
- Notes on my phone - I always make notes at a conference of people I've met, things I need to follow up on, opportunities that I heard about, etc.
- Prepare. Organize your routine/cases as much as you can. Do the work in advance. Be one step ahead.

Is this where you thought you would end up?

- I thought I would be a veterinarian.
- I don't recall anyone as a child saying that they wanted to work in restructuring or even knew this type of work existed. But it has cultivated friendships both personal and work related that have been amazing
- No - not when I started practice. But I'm happier than I would have been doing what I initially thought I wanted to do - and that is a very good thing.
- Yes and no! I always wanted to be a lawyer but didn't think of working abroad and in an international context.
- Definitely not. I'm happy things didn't go as planned. ;)

What do you wish you knew about our field before starting in it?

- The boys club and the perception of women within it. The fact that we as women discuss it so much is great, but the men really need to hear it and start to be allies.
- It is male dominated. And there is a lot of after-hour networking, professional activities, etc... that are necessary to stay relevant.
- How exciting and draining and all-consuming it can be. That it is feast and famine - sometimes you are so busy you can barely breathe, and other times you have little to do.
- Networking is almost as important as the work itself

What are you most proud of?

- This amazing community of women.
- Managing to be a mum and work full time.
- My network and my relationship with professionals in the industry. I value my reputation and appreciate that people think of me as a leader.
- Helping those around me to achieve their full potential.

What is the best way to overcome a mistake?

- Own it, apologize, fix it, and move on.
- Acknowledge it, think how to learn from it then let it go. Don't continue to beat yourself up about it.

Do you have a mentor? How have they influenced you?

- I have had many mentors over my career. They have influenced me to have Moxie and speak up.
- I have many mentors -- some in my younger years, some in my older years. Some look up to and some I just appreciate their advice.
- Yes. She was my boss for several years. Although she was not a typical mentor, she showed me (by her own conduct) the type of professional wanted to become and how to.
- Yes. They help me be less hard on myself.



What do you look for in a job applicant?

- Confidence, knowledge, ability and desire to learn
- Eloquent, professional, history of interest in the field, and humble.
- Someone who is committed and a team player
- Someone who is positive and eager to learn about new things (areas of the law, client's businesses, etc.)
- Someone who is genuine--in their interests, in their reasons for applying to my firm, in their presentation and self.

What can IWIRC members do to stay current in the field – things to read, organizations to join, people to talk to?

- Volunteer for speaking opportunities; ask local bars for panel positions; go to CLE events and conferences.
- Join local networks, reach out to colleagues in the industry, build a tribe and be curious about what is happening in the industry
- IWIRC, TMA, ABI, AIRA are all great for specific things. I think they all have great people, great mentors, great leadership. Keep in touch with people you work with and read articles. Reach out to folks who wrote the articles and comment and ask questions. Attend conferences and see what the hot topics are.
- Write one article a year (with someone else or by yourself); attend one conference a year; and have a mentor both inside your place of work and outside of your place of work.

What are some of your favorite things to do/watch/read for inspiration?

- TED talks, Brenne Brown, being around women in any arena that are working hard and excelling (whether at sports, work, family life, etc...).
- How I Built This - Podcast - so good and so inspiring. Also, I loved Bob Iger's book (former CEO of Disney).
- Yoga and meditation.
- Take a run or hike outside to clear my head.

Looking for more? The Membership Committee has gathered some excellent articles and compilations that are of interest to both mentors and mentees. [Be sure to check them out here.](#)

Submit Your Professional News!

Have you recently changed jobs? Been published? Written an article? Received a promotion? We'd love to share and celebrate your professional news!

Send your submissions to news@iwirc.com to be featured in future IWIRC member news communications.



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