



Next Gen



This week's Q&A with

Amy Gremminger White

***Amy Gremminger White** is a Partner in Locke Lord's Real Estate & Real Estate Finance Practice Group based in the Dallas office. Simply put, according to Amy, she's a "dirt lawyer." She practices commercial real estate law in a variety of areas ranging from acquisitions/dispositions to development to leasing to lending. Although her practice is broad, over the years she's developed particular knowledge and experience in financings secured by senior housing facilities across the country, which is a surprisingly small space and one that she thinks will only become more active as our population ages. She's found that often people are taken aback to learn that many of the deals she has handled involve properties outside of Texas — when she does have a matter involving local real estate, it's a bit of a treat to be able to drive by the project or point it out to her kids.*



More About Amy

Tell us about the most interesting or significant matter you've worked on in your career.

Several years ago, I was part of a team representing a toll authority in complex negotiations for construction of a new multilane toll road over one of the nation's busiest railroad switching yards. Our team negotiated construction coordination procedures to permit demolition of existing bridges and construction of new bridges and related improvements in and over the working train yard, as well as the acquisition of more than 40 right-of-way parcels from both the railroad and city. My role also focused on the negotiation of permanent easements for a highway overpass over the rail yard and related retaining walls and drainage structures. Through the efforts of our team and many others, the project was completed successfully and is a key component of what is now a major regional thoroughfare. To this day, I get a little thrill whenever I'm able to drive across those bridges and think about the years of effort and work that went into making them a reality.

What has helped you to become successful in your field?

Post-law school, I can't emphasize enough how important it's been for me to work with colleagues who were willing to mentor and teach, as well as provide me the flexibility needed to be a successful attorney and parent. The ability to work remotely or at odd hours when needed to get the job done (all while being treated as a professional) is a huge part of why I'm here today. I'm also extremely grateful for a supportive spouse who understands the ebbs and flows of a transactional practice and uncomplainingly picks up the slack on the home front during crunch times. Pre-law school, I credit my parents with raising my brother and me with a strong work ethic and deep appreciation of what one can do when given an opportunity to make a difference. Inheriting their wicked sense of humor hasn't hurt, either.

What drives or motivates you on your hardest days/during your most difficult matters?

Unlike litigation, no matter how challenging a negotiation is or how compressed a closing timeline, ultimately, both sides are trying to reach the same finish line — a completed deal. There may be some spirited exchanges between parties along the way, but in almost all instances, there's a solution to be found that works for everyone. My job is to help find that win/win solution, and I love what I do.

What do you do to give back to the community?

Working with children and with those struggling financially is near and dear to me, as are service projects that include the whole family. To that end, I try to volunteer through our church and school as often as I can. I just finished a three-year term on the Executive Board of the Parents' Club at my kids' elementary school (including a year as President), and my oldest daughter and I are in our first year of a six-year commitment to a national mother/daughter community service organization that allows us to work with a variety of area charities. Since 2004, I've been part of a large group from Locke Lord's Dallas office that tutors third-, fourth- and fifth-grade students at a nearby Dallas Independent School District elementary school. When my children are a bit older and more independent, I'd like to work more with area nonprofit organizations, perhaps serving as a board member or similar role.

What do you do to relax and reset after a long week?

Hmm. With three kids, two dogs, a working spouse and the assortment of sports and activities with which each are involved, the rare pocket of "free time" usually means I'm procrastinating something or the sport du jour has been rained out. Given an unscheduled block of time, however, you might find me building Lego creations with my 6-year-old, playing catch with my 10-year-old, or shopping with my 13-year-old.

What would be your fantasy career if you weren't a lawyer?

Growing up, I always wanted to be in the Secret Service. Now that I've officially aged out of that applicant pool (argh!), it looks like culinary school may be my next big adventure if this attorney gig doesn't work out.



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