



Next Gen



This week's Q&A with

Matt Hansen

***Matt Hansen** is a Partner in Locke Lord's Litigation Department based in the Dallas office. He represents clients spanning various industries in a wide range of litigation matters, including class actions. He is particularly adept at assessing risk, working with clients to identify key objectives and formulating and implementing winning strategies to efficiently achieve those objectives. A pragmatic problem solver, Matt also advises clients regarding the potential legal effects of their business practices.*



More About Matt

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

As an Associate, I had the privilege of working as a member of the trial team that tried a class action to a jury. The class sought hundreds of millions of dollars from our clients. After a two-week trial, the jury returned a total defense verdict (no liability, no damages). The highlight of that experience was observing Locke Lord Dallas attorney Mike Powell at his finest. The State Bar of Texas should award me a lifetime CLE exemption simply for having observed the charm, skill and grace with which he eviscerated the plaintiff's case through cross-examining the named plaintiff and a key industry expert. Working with Mike, I developed skills that continue to benefit my clients today. Among other things, I learned how to distill complex — and often boring — topics into clear, interesting and theme-based narratives that allowed our witnesses to tell an engaging and persuasive story. For this experience, I am grateful to outstanding mentors and courageous clients who were willing to go the distance.

What has helped you to become successful in your field?

Others will need to determine whether I am successful. I do know I am the beneficiary of many wonderful influences, experiences and privileges that are not of my doing. This began in the home where my parents raised me and continues in the home I share with my amazing wife, Jené, and our three daughters. From this, I also have learned the value of hard work, personal accountability and never compromising expectations. I regularly encounter people who are smarter or more talented than I am. I have found hard work, personal accountability and expecting excellence often prevail. The grit (or stupidity) to endure miserable circumstances also is valuable. Much good has come to me in my professional life from enduring longer than others.

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

The accountability I have to my clients drives me. When clients retain Locke Lord, they rightfully expect the best. Irrespective of the circumstances, providing clients with this level of service requires always pressing forward. Whether filing a brief, concluding an argument or passing a witness, I crave the assurance of knowing I have done all I can to present a client's best case. This does not happen without tireless preparation, often in less than ideal circumstances.

What do you do to give back to the community?

I am actively involved in my community of faith. The structure of the church I belong to provides opportunities to volunteer in various capacities. Seeing the sacrifices others make to serve and the power of volunteerism constantly enriches me. Some years ago, a particular service opportunity allowed me to work closely with youth facing significant obstacles because of poverty, familial challenges and immigration policy that squelched hope. These youth taught me much. They continue to inspire me, and I am grateful for them. I also appreciate the opportunities I have had to work with other organizations to serve the broader community.

If you could have dinner with one person, living or dead, who would it be and why?

My maternal grandfather, Edward Carl Henderson. A child of the depression, he joined the Navy at age 17. He served as a submariner in the Pacific during World War II. He became an engineer for the Apollo program. He also was an avid mountaineer, summiting mountains such as Mount Rainier and Mount St. Helens. His love of scouting prodded me along my own scouting path. Unlike my other grandparents, he passed at a relatively young age — before I had thought to ask him many of the questions I would ask him now. I would inquire about his life and bask in his wisdom.

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

I have many interests that might actually translate into a practical career. However, since the question calls for a "fantasy career," I will drop all practicality. I would operate as an outfitter providing city folk with wilderness experiences in the Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness (FCRNRW). The FCRNRW is the largest contiguous wilderness area in the United States outside of Alaska. Stripping away the distractions of modern conveniences and becoming immersed in the rugged grandeur of creation bring our existence into tremendous focus. I rarely have felt more aware than when struggling through strenuous circumstances in the FCRNRW and similar places. Beyond the bounds of time and electronic communication, where natural patterns govern, I would embrace a survival-focused, as opposed to an accumulation-focused, existence. I would find fulfillment in bringing others to experience this. I also would write about what I observed — what I chose to write about, not what I am paid to write about.



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