



# Next Gen



This week's Q&A with

**Tamer Tullgren**

***Tamer Tullgren** is a Partner based in Locke Lord's Chicago office and Chair of the Firm's Small Business Investment Companies (SBICs) Section. His practice focuses on private equity and finance law, advising private equity funds, banks and companies in a range of industries on corporate and finance transactions, including leveraged buyouts and debt and equity financings. Many of Tamer's private equity clients are licensed SBICs, whom he advises on mezzanine debt and private equity investment transactions, fund-related matters and Small Business Administration regulations applicable to SBICs.*



## More About Tamer

### What has helped you to become successful in your field?

The most important thing has been having a genuine interest in the type of work I do. In many of my client engagements, the client is taking a calculated risk in doing a significant transaction for the purpose of earning an investment return, for strategic reasons, or both. It is exciting to be an integral part of this process by helping the client make the best deal possible. The hard work often required to help a client complete a major transaction is made easier by being fully engaged with the client's business and objectives.

### How did you know that you wanted to practice law in your chosen field?

Growing up, I wanted to become a lawyer, and in college I discovered I had a fascination with business subjects and majored in finance. Corporate law turned out to be ideal for me because it combines these two areas of business and law. In addition, I enjoy the role a transactional attorney serves to coordinate and manage work performed by different subject matter attorneys on a deal. This was an aspect of transactions I enjoyed from early on in my career because it allowed me to learn areas of law outside corporate law from accomplished attorneys within the Firm. And, as someone who enjoys fitting all the pieces together and looking at the big picture, it confirmed my desire to pursue the transactional field.

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

The people with whom I work, including clients and Locke Lord team members, motivate me on the hardest days. The daily personal interaction with clients and colleagues as we collaborate to complete important work is what I enjoy most about my job, and I feel lucky to have developed some great relationships and friendships over the years. I am also always impressed by the intelligence and diligence of our Associates and Staff and find that they continually push me to be at my best. The team approach and personal connections with great colleagues make things much easier during difficult times.

### What do you do to give back to the community?

I serve as a volunteer hospital magician with Open Heart Magic (OHM), where I perform bedside magic for children at University of Chicago Comer Children's Hospital every two weeks. I feel fortunate to be part of this wonderful organization which brings much-needed joy to hospitalized children and their parents as they are going through difficult times. This also allows me to give back to the community surrounding the University of Chicago's campus, where I went to law school. Apart from OHM, my wife and I have been active in various capacities with the Art Institute of Chicago and the Shedd Aquarium.

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

Given that my wife, who works in banking, and I have fairly "corporate" jobs, we try to pursue our creative interests. For me, seeing live music and taking guitar classes at the Old Town School of Folk Music are perfect in this regard. My wife, who has actual artistic talent, paints, draws and has a cartoon strip — which I sometimes feature in. Walking to Wrigley Field during the summer to watch the Cubs is hard to beat (living a 15-minute walk away makes this quite easy). Some Saturday mornings, you'll find me at the Chicago Liverpool FC Supporter's Club a couple blocks from our home watching English Premier League games, which are always too early in the morning but very fun nonetheless.

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

No. 1 would definitely be lead guitarist for a rock band. It wouldn't have to be a hugely famous band (let's not get carried away), but we'd have a couple hits and play some medium-sized venues. Also, I'm told when I was little I went around telling people I was going to be a magician when I grew up. Since I've been volunteering with OHM, I've done some performing at gatherings with family and friends. So I feel like I've partially fulfilled this lifelong career fantasy. Granted, I don't get paid for this so I won't be quitting my day job...



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