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This week's Q&A with

Jason Zanetti

As a Partner at Locke Lord and as Chair of Locke Lord's Federal Public Law and Policy Group based in the Firm's Washington, D.C., office, [Jason Zanetti](#) focuses on favorably impacting federal legislation and regulations. A registered federal lobbyist, he regularly appears before members of the U.S. Congress and senior executive branch officials to address challenges and pursue opportunities on behalf of clients. Contrary to popular belief, Congress and federal agencies are constantly working together to design and implement public policy that is critically important to the global business community.



More About Jason

What has helped you to become successful in your field?

In a word: patience. Washington, D.C., is an extraordinarily complex, volatile and ever-changing environment in which to operate. Clients without significant experience here often feel overwhelmed by the perception of gridlock and partisanship and have strong feelings toward specific politicians and parties. My job is to analyze issues and design a strategy that almost always involves working across party lines, a blend of policy and political work and, most importantly, patience.

What's the biggest challenge you've faced in your career?

I started at Locke Lord predecessor firm Edwards & Angell as a litigation Associate immediately after graduating law school. At the time, that Firm did not have a public law or lobbying group. I was able to build a policy and lobbying practice, leading to the formation of a dedicated practice group of which I was the only original member as a mid-level Associate. My practice would not have developed without the tremendous support I received from many of our current and former Partners at this critical point in my young career.

Who has had the biggest professional influence in your life? // Did you have a mentor? If so, tell us the most important things you learned from them.

Four of our colleagues: Senior Counsel Joe Maher and Partners Jed Hendrick, Alan Levin and Robert Miller. Joe let me work on government and policy matters as a young Associate and taught me the fundamentals of lobbying and how to market my practice internally. He became general counsel of Steward Health Care System LLC and was my first major lobbying client.

Jed hired me as a Summer Associate, taught me outstanding client service and helped me develop into an effective Partner. When I was a young Associate, Alan had the confidence to cross-sell me to long-standing clients and establish a lobbying and policy group. Alan also taught me the importance of learning a client's business, effective client communication and the business side of practicing law. Robert went out of his way to integrate me and my practice into Locke Lord and continues to help me with all aspects of my professional development. I would not be where I am today without their collective guidance and mentoring.

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

I enjoy spending time outdoors with family and friends. We try to spend as much time as possible exploring the Washington, D.C., region.

What is your favorite thing about, or to do in, Washington, D.C.?

My favorite thing about Washington, D.C., is the tremendous diversity of people and causes on display every day. The American system of government is designed to handle strong disagreements and dissenting views amongst citizens, and to protect the rights of the minority. When I move around Capitol Hill, I always try to appreciate and learn about political activism.

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

National Park Service ranger. Protecting our national parks for future generations has always been important to me. On days when working in Washington, D.C., is stressful, I think about how different it would be to work in the quiet solitude of our national park system!



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