



Next Gen



This week's Q&A with

Susan Rainey

A Dallas-based Partner in Locke Lord's Environmental Section - Real Estate and Corporate, **Susan Rainey** represents clients in a wide range of environmental matters, focusing on redevelopment and brownfield cleanups. She relies on her background in environmental science and past experience as a regulator to design predictable and manageable solutions to environmental issues.



More About Susan

What has helped you to become successful in your field?

Keeping a focus on our clients' long-range goals. In law school, we're taught to spot issues and identify risks, and those are valuable skills. In practice, I quickly learned to use my tools to not only identify concerns but find paths to solutions that fit the client. Those solutions might not be the quickest or easiest in the short term, but keeping the larger picture in mind is one key to success.

How did you know that you wanted to practice law? // What inspired you to become a lawyer?

I didn't become interested in being a lawyer until I was working at the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ). I really enjoyed my job as a project manager in remediation and the people I worked with there. As a technical reviewer, I occasionally got to work with agency lawyers. There seemed to be this magic in the lawyers' legal opinions and advice. I went to law school to figure out what it was all about. I consider myself extremely lucky to be able to work on the same types of matters as the job that I enjoyed so much at TCEQ. (And I have the privilege of running into the same people sometimes, too!)

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.

Since some of my first jobs in college, I've been blessed with a fantastic series of women supervisors and mentors who taught me so much. But I'll never be able to say enough about Dallas Partner Elizabeth Mack. From her, I've learned the art of being long-range client focused and the skill to explain environmental issues with just the right amount of detail needed for the

audience to fully understand the matter. She sets a great example of being a fierce advocate, both for clients and individuals.

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

I have a 6-year-old, so there's not a whole lot of relaxing going on. However, I'm currently an avid kid sports fan. My son has unlimited enthusiasm and energy, and seeing it directed in the games is pretty fantastic. At this age, we can see his skills improve before our eyes, which is so neat.

Tell us your favorite book, movie or TV show and why you like it.

Comedians in Cars Getting Coffee. In the series, Jerry Seinfeld talks to other comedians, mostly about creating comedy. Among some of my friends, I'm notorious for incorrectly repeating jokes. For example, in one of my knock-knock jokes, the knocker might have to come back three or four times, or I might spill the punch line at the first knock. So, I have become fascinated by these excellent performers discussing their work and how delicate and finicky comedy can be. Oftentimes the performers are creating some of their art right there in the interview.

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

I would be an animator at Pixar. I've been enchanted with its work since the first time the bouncing lamp turned to look at me.



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