

# **Portraits of Allyship**

**University of Pennsylvania Carey Law School Seminar on:**

**Women, Law, and Leadership**

**and**

**Thomson Reuters Transforming Women's Leadership Project on Allyship**

**Fall 2020**

**Women, Law and Leadership**

**Course taught by:**

**Professor Rangita de Silva de Alwis**

**In the Fall of 2020, students in the Seminar on Women, Law, and Leadership at the University of Pennsylvania Carey Law School interviewed nearly 70 male ally peers at the law school. The Students were given a survey instrument but asked to contextualize and modify the questions as necessary. The seminar was taught by Dr. Rangita de Silva de Alwis, Senior Adjunct Professor of Law and Global Leadership. In partnership with Thomson Reuters Transforming Women's Leadership Initiative, this project was the first of its kind to be conducted in a law school classroom.**

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# From “Becoming Gentlemen” to Becoming Norm Entrepreneurs:

Transforming Women’s Leadership and the  
Role of Male Allyship.



**Advancing Inclusive Leadership and Allyship**

University of Pennsylvania Carey Law School  
Seminar on: Women, Law, and Leadership

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## **Interview #1**

### **Q: How do you define allyship? Ally?**

**A:** Acting as an ally means being present in the room. Whether someone is being judged or mistreated, or that there remains significant systemic inequalities in the workplace, it is important for an ally to lend support and show presence by calling out inappropriate behavior, and acting a resource to underrepresented groups.

### **Q: Do you consider yourself to be an ally for women? How so?**

**A:** Yes I do. As a gay male who has benefited greatly from the support of allies, being an ally for women comes as second nature. Through my participation in diversity academies and my conversations with women professionals, I have been able to gain a greater understanding of some of the obstacles that women often face in the workplace.

### **Q: How do you speak up for women when they are overlooked?**

**A:** I do think it's important to not point out the fact that women are overlooked when that happens. Inviting women into the discussion can be done subtly without drawing too much attention, which would in turn put women more at ease at participating.

### **Q: How do you help amplify women's voices, not competing with them for influence or for the sake of showcasing what an admirable feminist you are?**

**A:** Definitely by being respectful and engaging in active listening I would be able to amplify women's voices. Men tend to assume that they know everything about women and they place their assumptions thinking they are the truth when in fact not having lived through women's experiences would not allow any men to fully appreciate the extent of women's perspectives. Therefore, men should listen more and talk less, as well as ask targeted questions to learn more about what women have to say.

### **Q: How do you bolster and draw attention to women's voices, and the voices of women of color?**

**A:** One way to draw more attention to women's voices is by point out the strength of such voices and how much that can influence men. Stacey Abrams is a good example. She effectively showcased to the men that the voices of women of color can never be ignore, and they can as powerful, if not more, than those of men. Therefore, promoting stories like Abrams' would lead more attention to women because they effectively affect what men care about.

### **Q: What is proactive allyship? How do you behave when women or other members of minority groups are not in the room?**

**A:** Proactive allyship means taking an active role in shaping the culture of the environment. It is critical to point out insensitive comments whenever they come up in order to foster a culture of inclusion.

**Q: Do you notice exclusion every day? Do you notice who are not there? Are you proactive?**

**A:** Exclusions do happen, especially in certain industries. It is hard to be proactive when you are at a junior level to effect change. But I can always make a subtle point about the lack of diversity to companies' HR or higher-ups by taking what diversity can bring to the organization and how that's beneficial to the workplace.

**Q: To be an ally is to bring intersectionality to the forefront. Gender is only one axis of difference. How do you or will you open the doors to more participation from women and women of color?**

**A:** This has to come from the fundamental level, which is education. In order to achieve diversity, there needs to be more training for women and women of color through scholarships, specific programming and mentorship. Also, there needs to be resources set in place in organizations for women to succeed in the workplace. This can include fostering an inclusive culture and providing incentives for women to participate.

**Q: How do you make sure women, especially women of color literally take seats at the table, rather than standing on the sidelines?**

**A:** You have to be very cognizant of the diversity of your team at all times. Team formation cannot only come from familiarity or prior relationships. It has to be a lot more deliberate by setting diversity guidelines and tying compensation to the diversity of teams. Sometimes, exclusion can be inadvertent; these incentives however will serve as a nice, constant reminder for men to invite women take seats at the table.

**Q: Data has shown that when women do speak out, they can be ignored, or have their ideas taken. As an ally, how will you address this?**

**A:** I think it's easier to speak up and be taken seriously if you are not the only woman in a room full of men. Therefore, I would encourage my company to hire more women and achieve an equal balance so that when women do speak out, their ideas would certainly be taken seriously.

**Q: Do you attribute an idea to a woman who offered it, and you endorse worthy ideas and ensure the appropriate person is remembered for them?**

**A:** Yes, definitely. It's important to give credit where credit is due as it is only respectful and a good way to build a collaborative environment. People will be more motivated and eager to work with you when you show appreciation for their idea. One way to enforce this is to make sure in every email I send, I add the names of people who contributed to the development of a certain work product. For ideas, it's also

important to name the specific individuals who came up with the ideas so that they'd be more encouraged in the future to continue sharing their thoughts.

**Q: Are there times when you have or will privilege some women over others?**

**A:** Yes unfortunately. I sometimes do give more opportunities to women who speak up. I try to involve as many women as possible in conversations but sometimes I do assume that they have nothing to add if they remain reticent. However, I do recognize some women are not comfortable raising their voices for various reasons, especially in a gender imbalanced environment. Therefore going forward, I should try to limit my assumptions and make the team environment as inclusive as possible.

**Q: If no formal format exists, how do you (or will) offer peer to peer mentoring? Schedule phone appointments? find a coffee shop or office with other people around? How do you keep it professional?**

**A:** In terms of format, I do think it's important to provide women with the flexibility and power to choose whatever communication method they prefer best. Differences in culture norms would mean that different women have different opinions as to what constitutes as appropriate and comfortable. Therefore, I think men should indicate that they are here as a resource and invite openly. And women mentees can have the option of choosing which format they prefer based on their comfort level.

**Q: The literature and practice on debiasing the workplace is shaped by insights from behavioral economics: focus on de-biasing systems and workplaces (e.g., how we evaluate performance, hire, promote, structure tests, form groups, committees etc.) What are your ideas on the world of work/ law firm? Would you help set up or engage in the following? Would you challenge give assumptions about gender, race and sexual identity? Ask these questions? How would you help the company start a program to attract a diverse talent pool?**

**A:** Scholarship programs, launch women affinity groups taking into account intersectionality, promote more women to senior leadership positions, provide enough resources for women to achieve work/life balance (childcare centres, domestic support programs, etc), promote education of women leaders from the ground level (think Tech programs/bootcamps for high school girls)

**Q: What are your ideas on hiring practices that are clear and transparent? blind résumé evaluation. evaluate résumés without names attached in order to reduce potential gender bias.**

**A:** Structured interviews, more objective criteria, more transparent and standardized decision-making process, clear feedback post-interview, more women and diverse interviewers, diversify hiring committee.

**Q: How would you structure the design and layout of the workplace to advance diversity (portraits, art, architecture, iconography etc.). What rules and criteria will you create for promotions?**

**A:** Aside from clear and quantifiable metrics to evaluate candidates, feedback must be sought from not only a candidate's supervisors but also they are peers and even folks who are more junior. This ensures we have people who not only do well job wise but who are true teamplayers and who cultivate a culture of inclusion with all stakeholders within an organization.

**Q: How is the MeToo movement shaping norms of masculinity?**

**A:** The MeToo movement has definitely uncovered forms of toxic masculinity that is prevalent in certain industries. For example, Weinstein would not only harass women but also men by using homophobic slur and gender-based insults to degrade and scold men and to attack their masculinity. Also, the definition masculinity can be troubling, which is based on the premise that excludes women and rank ordering of men.

**Q: What are your views on work-family policies, such as parent leave, flex time, and part-time work?**

**On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not likely at all, 5-very likely), how likely would it be for you to request & participate in work-family policies (i.e. Parental Leave or Flexible Work Arrangement) if your family situation made that need applicable?**

4.

**On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not likely at all, 5-very likely), how likely do you think your male peers would request & participate in one of the company's work-family policies (i.e. Parental Leave or Flexible Work Arrangement) if their family situation made that need applicable?**

3.

**On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not influenced, 5-very likely to influence), how much of your decision to participate in the work-family policies influenced by your perception of what is accepted and expected by leadership/management and your male peers?**

4.

**Q: When you see men and women paired together on television, in movies, or other media platforms, what tends to be their relationship?**

**A:** More men are at work while more women spend time attending to their families.

**Q: How often do you see women in leadership roles on television? Women of color?**

**A:** Very rare, and women of color even more rare.



**Q: Does the way you see women in positions of power influence your view of women leaders?**

**A:** Yes, women who are in positions of power are often portrayed as superheroes who can juggle perfectly work, life, family, self-care, etc. It seems like they have all the time in the world to achieve everything. However, this sets troubling expectations and any real-life behavior that deviates for this kind of notion of women in power will inevitably cause disappointment, and a misalignment of imagination and reality.

## **Interview #2**

### **Q: How do you define allyship? Ally?**

A: I guess I would just call it speaking up when you see something wrong. In the south there are obviously a lot of questionable norms, and many don't stem from any malice or nothing [sic]. When asked about enabling women, not just speaking up when things go wrong, he mentioned that he doesn't think there is a culture that does not enable women.

### **Q: How do you speak up for women when they are overlooked?**

A: I focus on the work, and I whoever can do that best is who will not get overlooked. I don't think I care about what sex they are.

### **Q: A nuanced understanding of allyship and Intersectionality: How do you or will you open doors for more participation from women and women of color?**

A: Well, we have diversity programs for all people of color – not just women. When it comes to just women we try to hire evenly. Most law school do a good job of having an equal class (in terms of sex breakdown, I believe he means) so there are plenty of good men and women applicants.

### **Q: Following up – How do you ensure women are advanced the same as men?**

A: Again, we really focus on the work. It doesn't matter what someone looks like when we promote. If you can deliver, you can expect to stay around – especially these days with COVID.

### **Q: The role of allyship in debiasing the workplace: how would you help the company start a program to attract a diverse talent pool?**

A: Again, we have diversity hiring setup. We hire diverse candidates after 1L instead of after 2L to help build their resume. This especially helps communities where resume building isn't all they're worried about their entire life because of other struggles.

### **Q: Following up – Do the diversity hires feel included/what do you do to welcome them to the firm?**

A: We treat them just like any other candidates. There really is just an emphasis on the work around here. We will all go out for food or drinks with all the attorneys.

### **Interview #3**

#### **Q: How do you define allyship?**

**A:** Well, from what you've told me I imagine it's being there for women and POC that need assistance. I try to just hire people based on who I get along with the best, because it isn't all about skill or knowledge here. I was hired by my first boss because I did poorly in school. He said, "you did poorly in school. Good. It means you don't think you know everything, and you'll let me teach you." I have really followed that mantra. I think people I get along with are more important than the smartest people.

#### **Q: How do you or will you open the doors to more participation from women and women of color?**

**A:** Well, as you know I only have women employed at my law firm. Whether or not that is because not many men want to be paralegals or secretaries or assistants (he is the only lawyer) is beyond me. I've been running my own practice for 33 years now and I have grown to be the most successful in the area for my sized firms. I have done this entirely from the support of hard-working, intelligent women.

#### **Q: Following up – And what about women of color?**

**A:** Well, sometimes it feels weird when I tell my friends I am actively looking for a new secretary or assistant and I want her to not be white. I've definitely gotten some jokes about it or even called racist. I don't think that's the case. There is an imagine I want to project at this firm when you walk in, and that is that all are welcome. I intentionally sought out an African American woman for working the front of my law firm because I think that is a step in making members of that community feel safer. I don't think white men and women really need as much a help to feel safe in a nearly all white town in a law office.

#### **Q: How would you help the company start a program to attract a diverse talent pool?**

**A:** Well, I like to think we are as diverse as possible, but I think a good focus is focusing on the people and who you think you can get along well with and train. If you only look for the absolute most qualified, in this area, you're likely to find predominantly white men rich in opportunity. I grew up as a white man, but I definitely did not have much opportunity. As you know, I ran away at 16 to avoid working in the mill. Still, I do know I had it easier than if I were a black woman running away at 16. Anyway, I guess my answer is it isn't all about talent. It's about people, and diversity helps that. As the only lawyer, many people can do the job my support staff does. But not many can do it and get along with me as well as they do. That's why I hire them.

#### **Interview #4**

**Q: How do you speak up for women when they are overlooked?**

**A:** I try to speak up for women as much as I can. I make a concerted effort to do this especially to my male friends. I also try to highlight the injustice that is perpetrated against women in social as well as the private sphere by using the golden rule and directly asking them if they would like to be spoken about or treated in such a manner?

**Q: Do you consider yourself to be an ally for women? How so?**

**A:** I do consider myself to be an ally for women. I try to listen to the women figures in my life and learn from the women of leadership that's around. I think this is part of my overall allyship. This extends to challenging male figures on how they speak about women, try to control women's bodies and movements, and stifle women success and achievement in life.

**Q: Data has shown that when women do speak out, they can be ignored, or have their ideas taken. As an ally, how will you address this?**

**A:** I think it's an ally's job to make sure that when a woman speaks that they cannot be ignored. To me this is done when you acknowledge, affirm, and ask follow-up questions after a woman has offered up a contribution. Additionally, when other members attempt to steal women's ideas make sure to call the theft of knowledge out for what it is and return that credit back to its originator.

**Q: How would you help the company start a program to attract a diverse talent pool?**

**A:** Diverse talent wants to go where there is already diverse talent and where they will made to feel like a respected member of the team and not a token. So in order to start this natural attraction, a company must first place diverse people at the top and middle management. Recruiting programs specifically tailored to diverse people will begin the process.

**Q: How would you boost gender diversity within their own operations improving retention, and lowering the considerable cost of staff turnover?**

**A:** People stay with their employer when they feel valued, supported, and respected. We need a formal dual/parallel formal mentoring program structures that give women employees access to mid-level and senior-level employees to provide them with a space to ask questions and generate feedback. Also, creating anti-discrimination/anti-harassment policies and training seminars which all employees are required to attend would help.

**Q: What are the sexual harassment policies and interactive training you will put in place in the workplace? How will you deal with arbitration clauses in sexual harassment policies? New York and California have done away with this).**

**A:** Arbitration clauses for sexual harassment are insanely problematic and encourage a culture that victimizes women with little accountability. We have to get rid of them. Interactive training that simulates examples of sexual harassment both minor and egregious will be mandatory. Training will include a section on how to report and who to report to within the company.

**Q: Do you notice exclusion every day? Do you notice who are not there? Are you proactive?**  
**Marc Benioff, ED of Salesforce noticed exclusion and corrected it.**

**A:** I wish that I could say that I was totally engaged and aware of exclusion in everyday practices, but that is not the case. I often get caught up in my day to day and just focusing on my tasks. This can lead me to not even consider or acknowledge who is in the room. As a black man, I may be more aware of a lack of black men being present, however I need to be more considerate of other groups as well.

**Q: How do you or will you open the doors to more participation from women and women of color?**

**A:** I am a pretty open and inviting person. I believe I naturally conjure inclusion. I try to invite people and also don't have a fear or problem engaging those around me and starting the dialogue. Furthermore, once women have become engaged, I try to keep them in the loop and make sure they have a network of support so they can thrive and bring others in as well.

## **Interview #5**

### **Q: How do you define allyship? Ally?**

**A:** I think being aware of the issues that people face generally. Acting on that awareness by being supportive and making sure you do not contribute to the existing problems. An ally is a person who acts on their belief of equality.

### **Q: Do you consider yourself to be an ally for women? How so?**

**A:** Yes. I think I meet the definition. I am pretty aware of feminist issues and I try to make sure I don't contribute to them and treat women with respect.

### **Q: What is proactive allyship? How do you behave when women or other members of minority groups are not in the room?**

**A:** I think proactive allyship is not being silent about present injustices. I don't personally think it requires a story on Instagram or anything, that's more just virtue signaling. I don't think I behave any differently when minorities are not in the room. I try not to. I try to be consistent regardless of who is around.

### **Q: Data has shown that when women do speak out, they can be ignored, or have their ideas taken. As an ally, how will you address this?**

**A:** I actually do think this is a difficult issue as a white man, and I can use my privilege as a white man. But at the same time, I'm scared to overstep my boundaries and try to take the lead on these things and place myself as an authority to advocate for women of color. I think it's a delicate balance between being an advocate and placing myself as an authority that has the ability to dictate who is listened to.

### **Q: How would you create a policy on equal wages for equal work?**

**A:** I would make sure that we pay equally, like a lockstep program. Make it tenure based. Another issue is advancement once in the firm, especially for moms. So, making sure that women are given advancement opportunities, robust maternity/paternity leave in order to destigmatize pregnancy is important.

### **Q: How will you structure the diversity committee and its reporting structure?**

**A:** I would put members of each affinity group within the firm to serve on the committee to ensure representation. This would be voluntary of course. We would also have to provide workload management as to not overburden the committee members. I would also have partners at the firm on the committee to ensure the people of power hear these thoughts and act upon them.

**Q: How is the MeToo movement shaping norms of masculinity?**

**A:** I think the MeToo movement is making men more aware of their stupid behavior. It is making misogyny less acceptable as part of masculinity.

**Q: Men mentoring women can make a large impact. Do you fear a backlash?**

**A:** No, I don't. I would really hope not. I think it is a little ridiculous for men to be afraid of the MeToo Movement. Men have the ability to interact with women without harassing them. If they cannot, they should not be there in the first place.

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not comfortable, 5-very comfortable) how comfortable do you feel in your ability to fully be yourself at work?**

**A:** 3

**Q: The “man box” refers to a set of beliefs, communicated by parents, families, the media, peers, and other members of society, that place pressure on men to act a certain way. These pressures tell men to be self-sufficient, to act tough, to be physically attractive in a certain way, to stick to rigid gender roles, to be heterosexual, to not cry or show emotion, and to use aggression to resolve conflicts. How much do these descriptions relate to something that you have experienced?**

**A:** I personally feel some pressure, but I feel like other men feel it much more fully than I do.

**Q: What role does cultural differences (regional, ethnic, religious, class) if any, play in your attitudes to masculinity and allyship?**

**A:** I think I was personally raised to be an ally. But the culture I come from doesn't really care about these issues. I believe I am an ally despite my culture and not because of it.

## **Interview #6**

**Q: How do you or will you open the doors to more participation from women and women of color?**

**A:** As a 3L law student, I am limited in the number of doors that I have control over. However, on the Journal of Constitutional Law, I have some control over the makeup and composition of our next board, as well as the tenor of our current (virtual) social gatherings. I will not allow the Journal to foster a “Boy’s Club” atmosphere and avoid social gatherings that have a tendency to create those environs.

**Q: Do you attribute an idea to a woman who offered it, and you endorse worthy ideas and ensure the appropriate person is remembered for them?**

**A:** In my view, this is one of the most crucial elements of ensuring equity and fairness in the classroom environment. All too frequently, the views and opinions of women in the classroom (and in the semi-professional environments that we occupy as law students) are silenced by combative or otherwise overbearing men, who either ignore the contributions of women or speak over them. Crediting people is an important element of this, certainly, but I believe there is more than just this to ensure that credit goes where it is due. This includes keeping my hand down until a woman is finished speaking, and continuing to call back to ideas’ sources even after they are stated in class, for the rest of the semester.

**Q: If no formal format exists, how do you (or will) offer peer to peer mentoring? Schedule phone appointments? find a coffee shop or office with other people around? How do you keep it professional?**

**A:** Given the virtual environment of this year, this is difficult. Through various affinity groups, I mentor some women in the law who seek similar job outcomes to my own. I have been meeting them outdoors in the Law School courtyard to ensure that I can still provide mentorship and paths to the profession despite our online environment. I also understand that it is incumbent on me to create an environment that feels safe and comfortable for the people I am meeting with. Until I know that I have built trust and rapport with someone, I do not want to bring them into a physical situation where they may be uncomfortable. Similarly, when video calling people, I ensure that my background is appropriate and lacks even the semblance of unprofessionalism.



## **Interview #7**

### **Q: How do you define allyship?**

**A:** A commitment to advance the groups' interests, but more than just the belief that it's important to do so – it requires taking affirmative steps towards that goal. “Allyship” is more than just talk or a bumper sticker.

### **Q: Have you taken concrete steps to serve as an ally to women and/or other marginalized groups? If yes, what do those steps tend to look like?**

**A:** I make a good faith effort (I think it presumptuous to just say “yes”, mainly because 1) one can always be better and 2) I answer from my point of view, which is obviously biased).

I’m a white male (and a physically large one at that). I’m particularly sensitive to what that means in a group or team scenario – I try to ensure that I don’t take up too much “space”, for lack of a better term. More importantly, though, I do my best to have all perspectives be heard and, if necessary, promote voices that I perceive to be falling through the cracks.

### **Q: Data has shown that when women do speak out, they can be ignored, or have their ideas taken. As an ally, how will you address this?**

**A:** See above. I don’t need data to prove it – I’ve seen this happen countless times. In a team, it's vitally important—regardless of whether one is in leadership or not—to *affirmatively* support colleagues. I think it's far too easy to be passive (and I’ve certainly been guilty of that).

If an idea is appropriated, or someone gets steamrolled, etc., I think it incumbent on me—and anyone else who considers themselves “allies”—to mitigate that by, at the very least, saying something. I make no pretense here about being a white knight: but doing something as simple as recognizing the source of an idea, or redirecting a conversation to something that a colleague flagged, can make a difference. In my view, the best form of allyship comes through support in day-to-day interactions.

I also think it's important for people to know that you have their back, and that they can rely on you. It's a sad reality, but I know for a fact that my female colleagues often face significant challenges that I don’t know about – either because they’re hidden from me, or because I’m impervious to them. Again, no pretense about being a white knight—but if someone thinks I can help them, I want them to know that I’m ready and willing. And that includes putting some skin in the game if need be.

### **Q: Are you on the board of any student groups? If yes, have you taken any concrete action to promote inclusivity and equality within those groups?**

**A:** Not in law school (yet). In undergrad, however, I ran a decent-sized student group and made a significant effort to promote diversity within our executive leadership ranks, which I’m proud

to say was successful. Our organization became better for it, and we expanded our programming to better reach a larger and more diverse population than we had before.

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not comfortable, 5-very comfortable) how comfortable do you feel in your ability to fully be yourself at work?**

**A:** 4. I will say, though, that I don't feel that this in any way hinders my ability to work or be successful. So if this question is purely ends-based, I'd say 5.

**Q: The "man box" refers to a set of beliefs, communicated by parents, families, the media, peers, and other members of society, that place pressure on men to act a certain way. These pressures tell men to be self-sufficient, to act tough, to be physically attractive in a certain way, to stick to rigid gender roles, to be heterosexual, to not cry or show emotion, and to use aggression to resolve conflicts. How much do these descriptions relate to something that you have experienced?**

**A:** Insofar as these things reflect conscious actions on my part, I'm pretty dismissive of external or social pressures. I have no doubt that social conditioning has played a significant role in how I was raised and how I act, but I honestly can't think of a specific scenario.

**Q: What role does cultural differences (regional, ethnic, religious, class) if any, play in your attitudes to masculinity and allyship?**

**A:** As with the above question – while there are probably subliminal factors I haven't interrogated; I can't think of anything explicit.

**Q: How is the MeToo movement shaping norms of masculinity?**

**A:** I think it's forced society, institutions, and individuals to question to question practices that were once seen as "normal" or "expected". More importantly, I think it's heightened men's awareness of issues that they were previously impervious to, and I'd like to think that it's encouraged affirmative action on their behalf to remedy some of the problems that MeToo has highlighted.

**Q: How often do you see women in leadership roles on television? Women of color?**

**A:** I don't watch much television, and when I do, it's not with a critical lens. Regardless, I recognize that there's a significant deficit of women in primary leadership roles (and women of color are few and far between. I'm trying to think of one at the moment and I can't).

**Q: Does the way you see women in positions of power influence your view of women leaders?**

**A:** In television and film? Again, there's probably a subconscious effect, but not really. My view of female leaders has been shaped by some of the incredible women I've had the privilege to

work for and with. Some of the best bosses I've ever had—whom I've learned from and have been incredible mentors—have been female.

## **Interview #8**

**Q: How do you make sure women, especially women of color literally take seats at the table, rather than standing on the sidelines?**

**A:** We need to hire more women, especially women of color, to begin with. Further, we also need to stop relegating WOC to typical ‘Chief Diversity Officer’ or ‘Head of Diversity & Inclusion’ positions only.

**Q: Data has shown that when women do speak out, they can be ignored, or have their ideas taken. As an ally, how will you address this?**

**A:** If in a public setting (ex: meeting) and this happens in which a male colleague happens to steal, overspeak, or ignore a female colleague, I will make sure to step in and direct the attention to her and provide her the proper platform to ensure her ideas are heard. If her idea is taken by someone else in a blatant manner, I will conduct my due diligence and take the necessary steps to address it to human resources and subsequently the upper management to ensure the best resolution possible.

**Q: Will you put in place a program on male allies and sponsors?**

**A:** Yes - I think programs particularly geared towards male allies and sponsors would be needed, to further reinforce the need for allies in the workplace.

**Q: How would you help the company start a program to attract a diverse talent pool?**

**A:** Have diverse attorneys (BIPOC, WOC, LGBTQ, etc) take the lead in these discussions and programs, and have more educational resources for the entire company. Conduct more diversity programs and recruiting sessions for diverse students and talents.

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not comfortable, 5-very comfortable) how comfortable do you feel in your ability to fully be yourself at work?**

**A:** 4.

**Q: What role does cultural differences (regional/ethnic/religious/class) if any, play in your attitudes to masculinity and allyship?**

**A:** In traditional East Asian culture, women have historically been viewed as subservient to men leading to obvious gender inequality in sociocultural norms as well as in the workplace. Women in ancient Korea weren’t allowed to pursue an education, and this translated into a lack of sufficient opportunities in the modern setting as well. This affects my attitudes as I struggle to sometimes current and mediate between those who still maintain this traditional, outdated notion and my support for allyship.

**Q: Has the way you have seen women in positions of power on television influenced your actions or decisions to be an ally for women in your professional life?**

**A:** Yes. Back in college I watched the TV show Suits, which portrayed the character of Jessica Pearson, a Black-American named partner at a NYC corporate law firm. The show's portrayal of fantastic female lawyers further influenced me view that the profession should be filled with a diversity of talented people, especially women.

**Q: If no formal format exists, how do you (or will) offer peer to peer mentoring? Schedule phone appointments? find a coffee shop or office with other people around? How do you keep it professional?**

**A:** I think the first step would be to learn and understand what sort of mentoring opportunities women are comfortable with and interested in. I would base any mentoring on this input.

**Q: What do you think of options for telecommuting?**

**A:** I think telecommuting will play an important role in the workplace going forward, particularly in the aftermath of the pandemic. This should help allow both men and women with family obligations to better balance those demands with work obligations.

**Q: How would you create provisions for annual bonuses, as a way to incentivize focus on and improve diversity?**

**A:** It is very important to have benchmarks to make diversity an emphasis of any company. A company should set these benchmarks after thorough research and consultation with a diverse collection of employees, and bonuses should be structured in a way that rewards the meeting of those benchmarks.

## **Interview #9**

**Q: What does allyship mean to you? What is an ally and how would you define that?**

**A:** I would define allyship as a mental status to develop mutual understanding and embrace differences. I believe an ally means someone who can understand the needs of the other party and offer appropriate help and support, regardless of the gender, race, and social economic status of the other party.

**Q: Do you consider yourself to be an ally for women?**

**A:** Definitely, I am always willing to help my women colleagues. When they encountered discrimination or unfair treatment in workplace, I believe I will be glad to lend a hand.

**Q: Why is allyship important during a time of a public health crisis?**

**A:** Firstly, the pandemic makes everybody more worried about their well-beings, as well as how to hold down a job and how to maintain the quality of life. During such a difficult period, allyship can provide people with sense of security. Secondly, objectively speaking, women are more likely to face a dilemma during a public health crisis, because they have to do more housework when staying at home. Thus, allyship is even more important during a time of a public health crisis.

**Q: Why is allyship at the forefront of addressing systemic and structural bias?**

**A:** Because systematic and structural bias are always more underlying and unnoticeable. People sometimes bias against a specific group of people without even noticing that they are doing so. Under such circumstances, allyship is at the forefront because it can raise people's awareness of anti-discrimination. In addition, combating structural bias demands joint efforts, which makes allyship at the forefront.

**Q: How do you speak up for women when they are overlooked?**

**A:** I will adjust the way I speak up for women according to the circumstances. If it is in workplace, I will try not to be abrasive and do so implicitly, because relationships still matter for my women colleagues. If it is in the Internet or other situations, I will argue against the bias directly.

**Q: How do you amplify women's voices, not competing with them for influence or for the sake of showcasing what an admirable feminist you are?**

**A:** I think the key issue lies in consistently standing with them in daily life. If I have good relationships with my female colleagues and always speak up for them, they will not feel uncomfortable when I amplify their voices.

**Q: How do you bolster and draw attention to women's voices, and the voices of women of color?**

**A:** If their voices are ignored, I will remind the person who ignores them to pay attention to women colleague. I am also willing to reiterate their perspectives if they want me to do so. As for women of color, most of my colleagues are women of color, I will try to avoid any offensive comments or behaviors.

**Q: How do you help them to gain as large of an audience as possible?**

**A:** I will encourage them to speak publicly. I also try to create the platforms for them to speak out, for example, I will listen to them carefully and reiterate their comments to others when necessary.

**Q: What is proactive allyship? How do you behave when women or other members of minority groups are not in the room?**

**A:** Being proactive means controlling a situation by making things happen rather than waiting for things to happen and then reacting to them. Thus, proactive allyship means protecting women's interests before their interest being offended. I behave just the same as if women are present in the room.

**Q: Do you notice exclusion every day? Do you notice who are not there? Are you proactive?**

**A:** Yes. I will suggest that we include everybody in the room before someone is excluded. I think this is what being proactive means.

**Q: To be an ally is to bring intersectionality to the forefront. Gender is only one axis of difference. How do you or will you open the doors to more participation from women and women of color?**

**A:** I will try not to place all my emphasis on the overall number of women and women of color that participate in certain activities. Instead, I will focus more on individual woman of color. Every woman of color should be given equal opportunities.

**Q: How do you make sure women, especially women of color literally take seats at the table, rather than standing on the sidelines?**

**A:** If I am in the position to make a decision, I will give them equal chance to take seats at the table. If I am not, I will try to persuade the person who can make the decision.

**Q: Data has shown that when women do speak out, they can be ignored, or have their ideas taken. As an ally, how will you address this?**

**A:** When they are ignored, I will repeat their ideas on behalf of them. I will also try to be proactive, preventing such circumstances from happening.

**Q: Do you attribute an idea to a woman who offered it, and you endorse worthy ideas and ensure the appropriate person is remembered for them?**

**A:** Yes, of course. There seems no reason for me not to do so.

**Q: How have you put a women/ women on center stage? How would you do it?**

**A:** Yes. When I was in college, I encouraged my female team members to take the leader's role and express their opinions openly. I would support their decisions and follow their instructions.

**Q: Are there times when you have or will privilege some women over others?**

**A:** Yes, but I will do so only because that woman is more capable in handling certain tasks than other women. I do this merely based on their performances in work and personal capabilities, instead of any other considerations, such as appearance or race.

**Q: If no formal format exists, how do you (or will) offer peer to peer mentoring? Schedule phone appointments? find a coffee shop or office with other people around? How do you keep it professional?**

**A:** I think both phone appointment and a cup of coffee are suitable. In order to keep it professional, I would listen to her carefully and try to keep a polite social distance.

**Q: How would you help the company start a program to attract a diverse talent pool?**

**A:** Since diverse talents will be attracted by firms that treasure their capacities, I will try to formulate policies that attach importance to people's professional capabilities regardless of their gender or other personal traits.

**Q: What are your ideas on hiring practices that are clear and transparent?**

**A:** I think firms should not require the applicants to submit resumes with photos. Also, firms should allow applicants to submit resumes without indication of gender or marital status.

**Q: How would you structure the design and layout of the workplace to advance diversity?**

**A:** Firstly, there should be ladies room for female employees. Secondly, there should be rooms for women during or after pregnancy to breed their babies. Thirdly, more privacy should be provided for the women employees.

**Q: How would you create a policy on equal wages for equal work?**

**A:** Equal pay for equal work. Any discrimination regarding compensation should be prohibited.



**Q: How would you boost gender diversity within their own operations improving retention, and lowering the considerable cost of staff turnover?**

**A:** Women employees will be more likely to stay with the employers if they are consistently valued by the employers. In order to lower the cost of staff turnover, senior women employers should be given the equal opportunities of promotion and retention.

**Q: What rules and criteria will you create for promotions?**

**A:** Who achieves the best performance will be promoted, regardless of gender.

**Q: What are the sexual harassment policies and interactive training you will put in the workplace?**

**A:** To ensure people who commits sexual harassment will be punished, I will put arbitration clauses in the policy of the workplace. Moreover, I would like to provide specific training for the employees, enabling them to know when they are sexually harassed. For people who commits sexual harassment, the punishment shall be tough enough to prevent others from doing so.

**Q: How will you deal with arbitration clauses in sexual harassment policies?**

**A:** I will support the formulation and implementation of such policies.

**Q: How will you ensure no penalty for flexibility?**

**A:** The presumption for flexibility lies in that the person who needs flexibility shall ensure that he or she has finished the tasks, not causing trouble for others who collaborate with him or her. Efficiency is the prerequisite of flexibility.

**Q: What do you think of options for telecommuting?**

**A:** I believe face-to-face communication cannot be substituted by telecommuting, as work efficiency will be significantly improved with people talking with each other in person. Also, in-person communication can promote the sense of participation.

**Q: What clear and transparent rules will you put in place for appointment to committees, leadership opportunities?**

**A:** Every employee will have equal opportunities to submit their applications. And the evaluation will be fully based on their career performance.

**What are the networking and mentorship/sponsorship?**

Networking, mentorship, and sponsorship are useful tools for disadvantaged groups to struggle for equal treatment and equal opportunities.

**Q: What is the corporate culture that elevates both male and female employees through appropriate symbols and non- stereotypical leadership roles?**

**A:** The corporate culture should treat both genders equally and eliminate the stereotypes existing among employees.

**Q: Will you put in place a program on male allies and sponsors?**

**A:** Of course, I am more than willing to do so.

**Q: What about a program to counter stereotypes?**

**A:** If I am in charge of making the decision, I will definitely carry out such programs.

**Q: How would you collaborate with organizations across industries on research and data backed initiatives that could help generate new ideas and strategies?**

**A:** I will be willing to offer them data and any information I have as long as it is not classified.

**Q: How would the Firm/company promote work outside of their organizations to advance gender justice and diversity?**

**A:** Corporations shall provide possible flexibility in encouraging employees to advance justice and diversity. For example, employees may have a one-day paid leave for relevant movements every year.

**Q: How would you create provisions for annual bonuses, as a way to incentivize focus on and improve diversity?**

**A:** People who actively participate in such movements can submit their proof materials and be rewarded the bonus in exchange of their endeavor.

**Q: How will you create external pressures from clients to improve together?**

**A:** I think Microsoft offers a good reference, as it uses its price incentives to create external pressures for their clients and suppliers to promote diversity.

**Q: How is the MeToo movement shaping norms of masculinity?**

**A:** I think the biggest progress made by MeToo lies in it encourage women to take part in a feminist movement that starts from the bottom of the society and reshape the superstructure. MeToo movement shaped norms of masculinity through giving rise to public awareness that sexual harassment should be punished and women should speak up for themselves.

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not likely at all, 5-very likely), how likely would it be for you to request & participate in work-family policies (i.e. Parental Leave or Flexible Work Arrangement) if your family situation made that need applicable?**

**A: 5**

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not likely at all, 5-very likely), how likely do you think your male peers would request & participate in one of the company's work-family policies (i.e. Parental Leave or Flexible Work Arrangement) if their family situation made that need applicable?**

**A: 4**

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not influenced, 5-very likely to influence), how much of your decision to participate in the work-family policies influenced by your perception of what is accepted and expected by leadership/management and your male peers?**

**A: 5**

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not comfortable, 5-very comfortable) how comfortable do you feel in your ability to fully be yourself at work?**

**A: 3**

**Q: The “man box” refers to a set of beliefs, communicated by parents, families, the media, peers, and other members of society, that place pressure on men to act a certain way. These pressures tell men to be self-sufficient, to act tough, to be physically attractive in a certain way, to stick to rigid gender roles, to be heterosexual, to not cry or show emotion, and to use aggression to resolve conflicts. How much do these descriptions relate to something that you have experienced?**

**A:** These descriptions perfectly suit my situation. The man box does place undue burden on men's behaviors, making it difficult for both men and women to realize their career goals.

**Q: What role does cultural differences (regional, ethnic, religious, class) if any, play in your attitudes to masculinity and allyship?**

**A:** In China, the effect of man box may be even more serious. In Chinese culture, men are deemed to be masculine and must demonstrate responding characteristics, as there are many ethical rules governing how men and women should behave. Although I am a Chinese, I still believe man and women should be entitled to choose whether they want to be leaders or masculine freely.

**Q: When you see men and women paired together on television, in movies, or other media platforms, what tends to be their relationship?**

**A:** They can be whatever relationships, including couples, co-workers, friends and so on. As for me, there is no difference seeing men and women paired together or men and men, women and women paired together.

**Q: How often do you see women in leadership roles on television? Women of color?**

**A:** It is not as often as men, but the frequency has witnessed a steep increase in recent years. Perhaps one in five or six TV series.

**Q: Does the way you see women in positions of power influence your view of women leaders?**

**A:** Yes, women in positions of power have demonstrated their strength, persistence, and excellent leadership in all walks of life. Their images on television do positively influence my view of women leaders.

**Q: Has the way you have seen women in positions of power on television influenced your actions or decisions to be an ally for women in your professional life?**

**A:** Yes, thanks to those positive images on television, I become more than willing to be ally for women in my professional life.

**Q: Do you fear ally-ship or resulting backlash based on how the media portrayal of women?**

**A:** No. Although media sometimes exaggerated the negative aspect of female leadership in order to attract public attention, I stick firmly to my standpoint that men should be allies for women.

## **Interview #10**

**Q: What does allyship mean to you? What is an ally and how would you define that?**

A: I think of an ally as someone who not only shares similar values and perceptions with a minority group, but is also willing to offer support and help when members of the minority group needs.

**Q: Do you consider yourself to be an ally for women?**

A: Of course, I try to support my female colleagues in the law firm. If they want to strive for the leader position, I will do what I can to promote or defend their rights and benefits.

**Q: Why is allyship important during a time of a public health crisis?**

A: During a time of a public health crisis, women will be exposed to more family-related contexts. As they have to spend more time doing the housework and taking care of their kids, they will have less time for their career. Therefore, allyship is important since men should undertake their responsibilities to share the burden with women.

**Q: Why is allyship at the forefront of addressing systemic and structural bias?**

A: Without doubt, it is difficult for a minority group who is structurally biased against to fight against systematic bias themselves. Male allyship is important because it can offer external resources for combating structural or systematic bias.

**Q: How do you speak up for women when they are overlooked?**

A: Instead of reiterating what that woman said, I prefer to direct the conversation back to the woman. For example, by referring the question back to what the woman just mentioned or asking a new question related to the previous topic and inquiring her opinions. I believe this approach is less brutal and more efficient.

**Q: How do you bolster and draw attention to women's voices, and the voices of women of color?**

A: Compared with actively bolstering and attracting attention to women's voices, my favorite approach is to listen carefully and respectfully. Actually, when women, especially women of color are feeling ignored, they major contributor lies in lack of listener. Thus, I would rather be an active listener.

**Q: What is proactive allyship? How do you behave when women or other members of minority groups are not in the room?**

A: I think proactive allyship means acting before bad things happen, that is, actively promote male allyship for women and support women before bias or discrimination takes place.

**Q: Do you notice exclusion every day? Do you notice who are not there? Are you proactive?**

**A:** Social media sometimes portray women, especially women leaders, in a vilifying way. I think this is a way of exclusion and I would be proactive to advocate against such social media.

**Q: To be an ally is to bring intersectionality to the forefront. Gender is only one axis of difference. How do you or will you open the doors to more participation from women and women of color?**

**A:** Women and women of color should be offered equal opportunities as white males. I will try to ensure that female share the same representation with male in our firm. Also, women of color should enjoy internal priority.

**Q: How do you make sure women, especially women of color literally take seats at the table, rather than standing on the sidelines?**

**A:** I would educate women of color the essence of taking seats at the table, because before anyone helps them, they should firstly try to facilitate themselves with knowledge and determination to take the seats. Moreover, I will argue for them before our firm to ensure that they are not standing on the sidelines. Women should not be occupied with trivial, administrative affairs, they should be entitled to decide on things related to leadership.

**Q: Do you attribute an idea to a woman who offered it, and you endorse worthy ideas and ensure the appropriate person is remembered for them?**

**A:** I always do this. Since idea hijacking is pretty prevalent in workplace, I strongly dislike such conducts. Not only will I attribute the idea to the woman, I will also ask others to do so.

**Q: How have you put a women/ women on center stage? How would you do it?**

**A:** A major problem with women leadership lies in their unconsciousness of their potential and capabilities. To put a woman on center stage, I think it is imperative to cultivate confidence and the sense of self-consciousness within women.

**Q: Are there times when you have or will privilege some women over others?**

**A:** Of course. I think it is common for people to privilege some women over others if those women are more willing to dedicate themselves to work and add more value to the team.

**Q: If no formal format exists, how do you (or will) offer peer to peer mentoring? Schedule phone appointments? Find a coffee shop or office with other people around? How do you keep it professional?**

**A:** Both phone appointments and meeting in a coffee shop are feasible. To make things professional, I will avoid night matters, such as meeting in a bar or having a dinner together.

**Q: How would you help the company start a program to attract a diverse talent pool?**

**A:** I think firms can start scholarship programs aiming at promoting diversity among students. Before students entering the job market, it is the perfect time for firms to launch programs cultivating diverse talent pools for future recruitment.

**Q: How would you structure the design and layout of the workplace to advance diversity?**

**A:** There exist a persistent conflict between group and individual in the workplace. To advance diversity, I think it is necessary to avoid placing a group higher than individuals in the group. The layout of the workplace should show respect for individual needs.

**Q: How would you create a policy on equal wages for equal work?**

**A:** I would evaluate people on their performance instead of other characteristics.

**Q: How would you boost gender diversity within their own operations improving retention, and lowering the considerable cost of staff turnover?**

**A:** It is important to provide the employees with an expectancy, which is neither too high neither too easy. Once there are challenges, there are motivations.

**Q: What rules and criteria will you create for promotions?**

**A:** Apart from performances in the workplace, efforts to promote diversity and inclusion shall also be rewarded.

**Q: What are the sexual harassment policies and interactive training you will put in the workplace?**

**A:** I will try to eliminate both blindness and denial of sexual harassment.

**Q: How will you ensure no penalty for flexibility?**

**A:** I will give paid leave, especially paid parental leave for my employees.

**Q: What do you think of options for telecommuting?**

**A:** On the one hand, telecommuting will give people more flexibility to decide where to work. On the other hand, unfortunately, people can also be deprived as they may be required to work everywhere and every moment with the options for telecommuting.

**Q: What clear and transparent rules will you put in place for appointment to committees, leadership opportunities?**

**A:** There should be mandatory requirement on the men to women ratio of the committees. Also, I think there should be rules encouraging women to compete for the leader's role.

**Q: What are the networking and mentorship/sponsorship?**

**A:** These are important concepts to facilitate women employees competing for leadership positions. I will try to offer opportunities for networking as well as mentorship and sponsorship for the women employees.

**Q: How will you structure a company's core mission on diversity?**

**A:** I will try to implement policies encouraging inclusion and diversity from recruitment to retention and promotion.

**Q: How will you structure the diversity committee and its reporting structure?**

**A:** I think I will structure the committee as 50% male members and 50% female members. Also I will balance the proportion of members of different colors. As for reporting structure, I will ensure women have the equal chance as men to serve as the first speaker.

**Q: What are the programs and plans for structured career planning, mentorship, role models and networking that you would recommend?**

**A:** I will organize activities such as diversity fellowship sessions, to enable new employees to communicate with senior employees and provide chances for networking.

**Q: What work/life balance policies through flexible work policies, support systems are available?**

**A:** Both male and female employees will enjoy parental leave and will not suffer from penalty for the leave.

**Q: Does the CEO and company take on the role of advocate of female employment within the wider community through raising awareness, launching initiatives and, in general, acting as ambassadors of gender empowerment?**

**A:** Of course, CEO and company will do so.

**Q: Does the company create partnerships with external partners and the broader community on gender empowerment?**

**A:** It is an brilliant idea to do so. External partners will increase the diversity of the partnerships and bring in new ideas regarding complex problems.



**Q: Is the diversity strategy focused on a relatively well-defined groups such as first generation college graduates, female owners of small businesses, or mothers returning to work?**

**A:** No. I believe the diversity strategy shall focus on a wider range of people, especially those disadvantaged people from lower income families.

**Q: What are the partnerships with women-led businesses? Are there ventures to ensure they have access to capital?**

**A:** I think there will be such ventures to support business of women.

**Q: Is women's empowerment part of the empowerment of women and part of corporate social responsibility efforts?**

**A:** Yes.

**Q: What gender equality programs or conferences is the firm engaged in?**

**A:** Programs promoting inclusion and diversity will be carried out from recruitment to retention and promotion.

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not likely at all, 5-very likely), how likely would it be for you to request & participate in work-family policies (i.e. Parental Leave or Flexible Work Arrangement) if your family situation made that need applicable?**

**A:** 5

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not likely at all, 5-very likely), how likely do you think your male peers would request & participate in one of the company's work-family policies (i.e. Parental Leave or Flexible Work Arrangement) if their family situation made that need applicable?**

**A:** 5

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not influenced, 5-very likely to influence), how much of your decision to participate in the work-family policies influenced by your perception of what is accepted and expected by leadership/management and your male peers?**

**A:** 5

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not comfortable, 5-very comfortable) how comfortable do you feel in your ability to fully be yourself at work?**

**A:** 5

## **Interview #11**

**Q: How do you define allyship? Ally?**

**A:** Allyship is a lifelong commitment to impeding upon the progress of social, economic, and racial injustice that hinders the progress of marginalized and oppressed groups in society. An ally is someone who is dedicated to breaking down these barriers, but the ally must understand that their personal advocacy for change should not overshadow the voices of those within these groups.

**Q: How do you help amplify women's voices, not competing with them for influence or for the sake of showcasing what an admirable feminist you are?**

**A:** At no point should your personal stake in this issue overshadow the voices of women. Your voice should never be at the forefront as men in particular are regularly at the forefront of conversation and tend to dominate discussions without even realizing that they are. If the goal is to showcase how admirable of a feminist you are, it only contributes to the challenges women must overcome to have their voices not only be heard but for action to take place regarding breaking down these barriers of injustice they are faced with. It's not about you.

**Q: How do you bolster and draw attention to women's voices, and the voices of women of color?**

**A:** Social media is an important tool for me to amplify the voices of women and women of color and shed light on their accomplishments. As a former basketball player and a huge fan of women's basketball/women's sports, I understand that women's sports are a hotbed of negative chatter surrounding the game and the athletic abilities of women. There are plenty of stereotypes that have hindered the progress of female athletes, so I have found myself making it a point to share highlight videos and retweet them when they do happen. For my Senior Project, I focused on the effects of institutional control on female athletes by interviewing several athletes from my alma mater about their experiences with sports and gender. I gave a brief history on the lack of progress that female athletes have made in their respective sports due to barriers created by men, women, and institutions like the NCAA and the media who have failed to represent the women who compete in their respective sports. My work is not finished with this project as I plan to represent women's basketball players from a marketing perspective in the future to help grow the game I love so much and amplify the voices of women's basketball players who have regularly contributed to a lot of social justice initiatives.

**Q: How do you or will you open the doors to more participation from women and women of color?**

**A:** Living in a single-parent household where my mother and grandmother (both black) were my primary caregivers, I have gotten a first-hand look at the barriers they have faced or are facing currently. Then again, there is not one time I've seen my mom come home and bring whatever issues in her life into the home. Obviously, this gives me a greater perspective on things, but I believe it is my duty to open doors to more participation from women and women of color. I

have seen with my own eyes two women of color make the most out of their situation despite the barriers placed in front of them. Now it is my turn to pay that forward so that women and women of color can take pathways to success without having their voices go unheard or their opportunities are limited because of social/gender/racial/economic inequalities.

**Q: How would you help the company start a program to attract a diverse talent pool?**

**A:** First and foremost, you can't start a program to attract a diverse talent pool if your company does not have representatives from diverse groups. It is difficult to understand the stories and backgrounds of a diverse talent pool if there is no one within the company who can speak to the challenges of working within an organization or going through society without the proper representation. The leaders of the program mustn't be of the majority – these voices should be at the forefront of discussion.

**Q: Men mentoring women can make a large impact. Do you fear a backlash?**

**A:** If I am in a position to serve as a mentor for women, I am not doing it to seek validation from people outside of the situation nor is it for those who feel that I should not be in this position. My job is to fulfill the duties of a mentor that solely benefits the mentee. If she has instilled confidence in me to carry out these duties (this dynamic cannot be forced, and her trust must be earned) I must assist to the absolute best of my abilities because of her future impacts the future of those that come after her. It is my job to help her carve out whatever pathway serves her best interest, and in turn, she can take this mentorship and apply it down the road to someone who was in her position. I understand that there could be backlash that comes with this, but I believe that the mentorship has a trickle-down effect, and I would not be doing my job if I let backlash prevent me from carrying out my duties in easing the pathway for women to accomplish what they are set out to accomplish.

## **Interview #12**

### **Q: How do you define an ally?**

**A:** I define it as I guess like just the conscious choice to involve oneself in the well-being of people who you don't share a sociopolitical identity with.

### **A: Do you consider yourself to be an ally for women and how so?**

**A:** Yes, I consider myself to be an ally for women. I think it's weird for me because for the most of my life, all my friends were girls. So, I mean, I don't know how I actively am an ally, besides what I stand for politically. It's weird because until I learned what it was I never separated me surrounding myself with women and supporting them politically and economically, whatever. I never really thought about it.

### **Q: In general, how do you speak up for women when they're overlooked?**

**A:** I see this a lot in my in my conversations I have – especially when I was in college and it would be a mixed conversation gender wise. I had a couple friends – and I mean, I did this, too – who acted like “the interrupting man.” But I think in situations like that, I would always try to kind of like steer the conversation back towards whatever my girlfriends were saying, if they got interrupted – or even consciously calling out my guy friends when they interrupted girls. On the other hand – it's sometimes speaking out in another context. My relationship with my mom is funny like that because she'll say things that don't seem feminist at all and I end up like arguing a more feminist perspective to her. That's also speaking out for women, I think.

### **Q: How do you help amplify women's voices not competing with them for influence or for the sake of showcasing what an admirable activist you are?**

**A:** Well, like I said before, I think it's just trying to get everyone's opinion in the room. I do this kind of comically, but I truly do care what women have to say more often than I care what men have to say just because a lot of men—especially in college—all kind of say very similar things, especially my writing classes and those setting. And I've always just like been like “Oh, I don't want to listen to another boy talk. He's just... boring.” So I think it just comes down to me begging for a perspective that is different from my own and also different from a straight white man. And so in the process, I'm also begging for like a woman's perspective. Just because it's more interesting that way.

### **Q: What is proactive allyship? How do you behave when women or other members of minority groups are in the room?**

**A:** Oh, wow. Proactive allyship. I've never heard that term before, but I would guess it has something to do with, you know, making sure that you try to acknowledge the fact that you're missing a perspective, I'm not sure. But when other minority groups aren't in the room, if something is said about a minority group I like to ask people where they got their information from. I was like a soft way of being like “are you sure you're not being biased right now?” I push

for them to cite their source, which usually ends up opening a conversation that leads to some more accuracy, even just by Googling.

**Q: Do you notice exclusion every day? Do you notice who isn't there and are you proactive about it?**

**A:** In France it's funny because I notice that it's really just very white. It's easier to see that in France, I think, just and also because I'm an outsider, technically, even though I am white, but it's easier to be kind of objective about that kind of stuff. I do notice exclusion a lot, especially racial exclusion. When it's gender exclusion, I'm usually just kind of sad because like I said, I'm mostly friendly with women, so I'm just kind of lonely. I think I'm proactive in that I always actively try to include all my girlfriends and encourage them to be a part of the conversation. I usually end up teaming up with women – I usually take the girls team when it's girls versus boys. I think that's helpful. Sometimes I wonder why I do that. But at the end of the day, I think it's kind of nice because I'm not afraid. I have a certain amount of power in the room as a man. Sometimes I feel like it might help to distribute it by just like siding with the girls – but who knows?

**Q: How do you or will you open the doors to more participation from women and women of color?**

**A:** My goal has always been to be a television writer. When you're a TV writer, you have to build your writers' room. So my goal is going to always be to include as many different voices as can be. I don't think the room is balanced when it's 50 percent women, 50 percent men. I think it's balanced with somewhere around 30 percent men because the men make themselves bigger than they actually are. And then you also have room for people who aren't traditionally identifying cis men or women in that percent division too. So I think, yeah, just like making sure that there are always women in the room, queer people in the room, and such.

**Q: I guess this is kind of a follow up, but especially because data has shown that when women do speak out, they can be ignored or have their ideas taken as an ally. How will you address this? I think it's interesting to talk about in the writing context.**

**A:** Oh, my goodness, the writing is really interesting because like, you know, this is what teachers talk about in our classes would be like if you're in a television writer's room, like, you know, only one person gets credit for writing the episode, but obviously everyone contributes jokes and stuff. I think what's interesting. So before the point where the episode gets rewritten by that one person or whatever, and it gets kind of like unified. And in my classes, I think it's important to just call people out. I've had so many friends steal a joke or story ideas, and I try to be gentle about it, but I'll say "Oh, yeah. Sophie said something like that ten minutes ago." You just have to be kind of like blunt, but nice about it in situations like that when it's intellectual stuff. Because people steal ideas all the time and it's really frustrating and it's also not hard to say you were inspired by something somebody said ten minutes ago – why try and take their credit?

**Q: Yeah, this happens in my classes, too. It's even been directly called out this semester in my employment discrimination class. We'll cover a topic like sex discrimination and a girl**

**makes a point and then a guy will five minutes later make the same point. And you're like, OK, why did you do that?**

**A:** Yeah, and it's crazy because I feel like the guy waits long enough that he doesn't have to have a conversation with the with the woman who said the thing originally or engage with her directly. I don't know if it's conscious or subconscious, but it's really annoying.

**Q: How is the media movement shaping norms of masculinity?**

**A:** Well, maybe it's finally encouraging men to be gentle. You know what I think it's doing? I think what it's doing actually is it's making it more acceptable for “nice guys” – like the guys who are just nice people, the guys who have rumors surrounding them on whether or not they're gay – but they're really just more “sensitive” boys. I think it's helping us elevate those kind of guys. We don't celebrate guys like that all the time. And I think now it's making it more acceptable to be a man who isn't sexually interested in women, who doesn't like sports, who appreciates the arts. We're kind of shifting away from the hypermasculinity that defines or that tries to define masculinity in general in the United States.

**Q: On a scale of one to five, one being not comfortable, five being very comfortable: How comfortable do you feel in your ability to fully be yourself at work?**

**A:** OK, so I thought this way about teaching before. I'm like, OK, I already know that I don't want to be a teacher, but I do think like a school environment is where I've been the least I've felt the least comfortable being myself at work, mainly because, like, I don't I'm scared to, like, paint my nails and stuff before going into work because I just don't know how it how it works here and in America, too. I feel like there's a lot of stereotypes still about like men in schools and men like quote unquote caretaking positions that like you almost need to. Over masculinized yourself to make up for the fact that you're in a traditionally feminine role, not to mention I feel like there's still like some social stigma about being a like a man around children because people assume that you're a pedophile. But other than that, I think in my like internships and my job experiences, I've definitely felt like. You know, for four to five.

**Q: The man box refers to a set of beliefs communicated by parents, family, the media, peers and other members of society that placed pressure on men to act a certain way. These pressures are meant to be self-sufficient to be physically attractive in a certain way. Stick to rigid gender roles to be heterosexual, to cry or not show emotion and to use aggression to resolve conflicts. How much do these descriptions relate to something you've experienced?**

**A:** Oh my goodness. I could write essays about this. I think it's kind of crazy. I mean, it's 100 percent related to everything I experience. I think the “physically attractive in a certain way” point is definitely something I've experienced. I think you see it a lot in gay men who try to be really muscular as a way to bulk themselves up and make sure that they're masculine looking enough, regardless of how they actually act. I think there's a lot of body image issues in the gay community because of this desire to be muscular or like overly muscular. Oh, to not cry or show emotion is also something I can speak to. When I was a kid, I cried and screamed and stuff all the time and slowly but surely it was kind of beaten out of me. And I actually needed to spend

like a very long time in therapy learning that I'm allowed to feel and pain and experience emotions. Denying yourself emotions is so bad for your mental health. And I think denying emotion also then ends up impacting everybody you interact with. It's really interesting being gay. Obviously, that's definitely something that was tough growing up. I remember my high school freshman year I was so scared to be in high school and be a freshman. Ninth grade was probably when I had the least friends. So I remember being like in the hallway, thinking "no one will give you shit if you just look as pissed off as possible in the hallway." So that's what I did. I probably walked around looking like I wanted to kill everyone. Being self-sufficient is also a big deal for masculine norms. When I face a big problem, I seek guidance immediately. My heterosexual guy friends will face an issue and I'll ask, "Well have you talked someone, maybe your mom?" And they'll respond that they would never talk to her. Why would you not talk to your mother about this? It's crazy how it eats into people's behaviors because you lean into this "I'm an adult, I can figure it out" mentality -- and you're not an adult, you're 21. It's okay to ask for help. The man box affects everything.

**Q: When you see men and women paired together on television and movies or other media platforms, what tends to be their relationship?**

**A:** I mean, you know, typically it's like a will they, won't they for the entire show – and then usually they will. I think recently you've seen things that ebb away from that, but, I can understand it's just good entertainment, the will they won't they thing. But I do think it can be toxic to make people expect that energy in their lives all the time because you're not going to have a will they, won't they with every person of the opposite gender you're hanging out with. But I think there's a way to work with this structure. Have you seen the show *Community*? They do a really funny thing where it's it starts out with a will they, won't they between the two characters, the main character, Jeff, and the character Britta. They have a will they, won't they for seven, eight episodes. And then they give Jeff a totally different love interest. It's really interesting what they do, like the fall in romantic expectations between those two characters, Britta and Jeff, because it's something I haven't seen a lot. Their relationship becomes these two people that pick on each other in a funny way. And it's really interesting to see them kind of deconstruct what you think is going to build up to them dating and instead turn into a friendship.

**Q: How often do you see women in leadership roles on television, women of color?**

**A:** I feel like if they're in a leadership role on TV, for the most part, they're not in a corporate leadership role. They tend to be the mother of the family type thing, which is a character trope called "Madrone," it's like it's interesting. I think you see it more as like a vindictive 50-year-old woman who is worried for her family's money or well-being or something - she's still a stereotypical mother. It's just she's at the top of her family, like a matriarch. I think it's interesting. I don't think you often see women who start in leadership roles. I think the arc of the show is often you watch them struggle to get there. I'm thinking of *Ugly Betty*.

**Q: Does the way you see women in positions of power influence your view of women leaders?**

**A:** I think this is kind of problematic, but I always prefer to have a woman boss just because I've always found it easier to talk to women in general. And but I think it's a double-edged sword to say that you want that because you would prefer a woman boss, because it comes with a cultural expectation for them to be like gentler and nurturing. Even though that's still a start and negative, that can be like turned into a negative stereotype very quickly. My first boss was a woman. It's interesting because, like, teachers are women. And so growing up I didn't know what sexism was until I was like at least 10 or 11 because all my teachers were always women. Like my mom said I always looked up to women because they were who I spent most of my time with. And then I remember one of the first people explaining to me that it's not easy to be a woman. I was, naively, kind of like "What do you mean?"

**Q: I wanted to take a few minutes to talk about your career – you want to be a television writer. I think law and entertainment are very similar industries in terms of like the gender dynamic and a lot of the larger systemic issues. What would you like to see change as you progress in your career? By the time you're someone at a management or executive level, what are some of the ideal changes you would like to see?**

**A:** I dream that gender balance won't be part of diversity initiatives anymore, like I dream that it just happens and I think that could happen for gender. I'm reluctant to say that about race just because it's harder to accomplish that. I would also like to see more women producers. And women owned production companies. I don't have a statistic on this, but my gut reaction is to say that there there's a higher number of women who get trapped in assistant positions and don't move up the ladder as easily as men do. For assistant positions, I think if you make it easier to climb the ladder in general and have more clear rules about it that would help. For example, in writers' rooms, like in the Writers Guild, you have like strict systems for wage increases and stuff like that. And I wonder if they could input something along the lines of "oh, you can only be an assistant for two years and then you automate. You have to be moved up." I wonder if just putting in more strictly organized "apprentice rules" and programs would just help. Women and people of color would kind of move up the ladder at a more humane pace, that doesn't leave you trapped in a bad job for years hoping that somebody will give you a break.

**Q: Do you think that compensation plays a role in it, too? I know from my friends who work at these agencies, like the people who *can* work these jobs, are oftentimes affluent white kids who went to elite universities.**

**A:** Yeah, exactly. It's really messed up because it's like you have these kids who are basically getting paid as if they were interns, but if their full-time job. What's also scary is I have a friend from our writing program who has been out of the program for two years, and she wants to be a writer, but she's a Project Assistant still. And you kind of get trapped by being a in that lower level position sometimes. If you're too interested in being in Hollywood as opposed to being a writer, you can get trapped being an assistant on like a prestigious show that becomes your job. There are like people who are who have been paid for nine or ten years who still do it. And I think it's kind of because it's not explicitly stated – to those who are less connected and have less resources – that being an assistant can be a steppingstone career. The industry doesn't make it clear enough that there is a path of progression. I think a lot of the problems would be fixed if



people who are less affluent knew for a fact that after a year or two of kind of suffering with the horrible wages, they could move on to what they actually want to do.

**Q: I feel like this is a good stopping point. Do you have any other thoughts to add?**

**A:** I just really think the power dynamic and the allies should dynamic between gay men and women is really interesting as a thing to study. There's such like a strong bond between gay men and women and it looks like they're friends, you know, for gay teenagers that's a lot of the closest friend bonds. But technically gay men are still men and these women are (for the most part) heterosexual, so it's interesting to see the give and take between the two. It's really interesting to me because it's been a highlight of a lot of my friendships over the years. There have been times where I've wanted to be, you know, like in like the girls' club and you hear the girls always being like, I want to be in the boys' club, like career wise speaking. And it's like a lot of my friends at home wouldn't let me in there like group chats or invite me to some things because it was "for the girls." And I'd say "but I'm your friend." I don't have guy friends, I'm not in the guys' chat. So it's interesting. When you're 15, it hurts and it's hard because you want them to have a safe space for women, but you also want to be with them. Kind of like you're like stuck in the middle then without an outlet on either end. And that's it was really hard to deal with when you were learning who you are. Everything hurts a lot more.

### **Interview #13**

**Q: Have you taken concrete steps to serve as an ally to women and/or other marginalized groups?**

A: Yes.

**Q: What do those steps tend to look like?**

A: Often through student affinity groups. I'm also the founder and CEO of a tech startup, we're strong proponents of having diverse hiring practices.

**Q: Are you on the board for any student groups? Have you taken any concrete action to promote inclusivity and equality within those groups?**

A: I'm currently not a student, I graduated in 2018. In undergrad, was treasurer of the Asian American Student Association. Organized all financial aspects relating to group operations and student events, regularly participated in diversity events.

**Q: How do you define allyship? Ally?**

A: Someone who supports and advocates for a group distinct from one's own, for the purpose of fostering diversity, inclusion, and equality. Understanding and empathizing with their unique challenges and helping them find practical ways to bring about change.

**Q: Do you consider yourself to be an ally for women? How so?**

A: Yes, I make a deliberate effort to hire qualified women and minorities, because diversity adds value to the company, its operations, and the community. I am interested in reading articles on the subject and attending conferences and panels, to share experiences and brainstorm action steps.

**Q: Do you notice exclusion every day? Do you notice who are not there? Are you proactive?**

A: During company meetings, I do notice those who speak less freely and are more reserved. I also notice those who are not there, who would add significant value if seated at the table as well. Thus, when making corporate personnel or contracting decisions, I aim to be proactive in adhering to the values of diversity.

**Q: Do you attribute an idea to a woman who offered it, and you endorse worthy ideas and ensure the appropriate person is remembered for them?**

A: Yes definitely, especially in the workplace environment where contributions and ideas are crucial to innovating and creating value. The right person should always be recognized for their work.

**Q: Are there times when you have or will privilege some women over others?**

**A:** In the small business / startup world, I have experienced some privilege over others, most noticeable during networking or fundraising. That said, as a minority, I go through some situations that are not favorable also.

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not comfortable, 5-very comfortable) how comfortable do you feel in your ability to fully be yourself at work/school?**

**A:** 5

**Q: The “man box” refers to a set of beliefs, communicated by parents, families, the media, peers, and other members of society, that place pressure on men to act a certain way. These pressures tell men to be self-sufficient, to act tough, to be physically attractive in a certain way, to stick to rigid gender roles, to be heterosexual, to not cry or show emotion, and to use aggression to resolve conflicts. How much do these descriptions relate to something that you have experienced?**

**A:** Yes, I do notice this in the business world, as well as in everyday situations. My friends and I frequent the gym, where many of these beliefs are deeply held within the culture of gym-goers. However, I find that many of these beliefs are often times counterproductive to personal and business success.

**Q: Has the way you have seen women in positions of power on television influenced your actions or decisions to be an ally for women in your professional life?**

**A:** I try not to let it influence my allyship. I find that television portrays women and minorities in a certain light, which may or may not be realistic. Therefore, I really make an effort to understand the person individually rather than generalize.

## **Interview #14**

**Q: Do you consider yourself to be an ally for women? How so?**

**A:** Yes. I try to be very cognizant of issues that women are facing in society. For example, male privilege, patriarchal standards, and I actively try to do what I can to educate other men as well as speak up for women's rights and issues.

**Q: How do you speak up for women when they are overlooked?**

**A:** Often, I think women's voices are not heard properly or they are spoken over and not given credit for their ideas. So usually in a work or group project I always try to make an emphasis, when I hear a woman's idea is not being acknowledged or taken seriously in the group, I try to do my best to, one, amplify the idea and also give credit to the person who said it initially because often times men's voices are just heard more and men sometimes just take the idea, so I try to amplify the idea and also give credit to the person that was speaking.

**Q: Do you notice exclusion every day? Do you notice who are not there? Are you proactive?**

**A:** Every single day. I speak up against it when an opportunity presents itself.

**Q: Do you attribute an idea to a woman who offered it, and you endorse worthy ideas and ensure the appropriate person is remembered for them?**

**A:** Yes. Every single time

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not comfortable, 5-very comfortable) how comfortable do you feel in your ability to fully be yourself at work/school?**

**A:** 2 out of 5.

**Q: The "man box" refers to a set of beliefs, communicated by parents, families, the media, peers, and other members of society, that place pressure on men to act a certain way. These pressures tell men to be self-sufficient, to act tough, to be physically attractive in a certain way, to stick to rigid gender roles, to be heterosexual, to not cry or show emotion, and to use aggression to resolve conflicts. How much do these descriptions relate to something that you have experienced?**

**A:** Yes, I feel as if the "man box" has affected many aspects of my life. I think having to be self-sufficient, being afraid of being vulnerable. If things affect me in an emotional way I kind of suppress it. Feeling the need to womanize. Not being expressive.

**Q: What role does cultural differences (regional, ethnic, religious, class) if any, play in your attitudes to masculinity and allyship?**

**A:** I come from a very hyper masculine background and culture. One being a black man as well as Jamaican, I think we are a hypermasculine culture, where the idea of being caring towards

women may be seen as soft. So, I think a lot of those ideas were taught to me, and I have had to do a lot of work personally to unlearn a lot of the things that were culturally intuitive to me.

**Q: Does the way you see women in positions of power influence your view of women leaders?**

**A:** Yes. I have worked under a lot of women leaders before and just seeing how they excelled and their passion for their jobs was what has positively influenced me. I personally think its ridiculous that we don't have more women leaders because all the ones I have worked under have all been fantastic and well qualified and to me it is ridiculous that a boundary still exists.

**Q: Has the way you have seen women in positions of power on television influenced your actions or decisions to be an ally for women in your professional life?**

**A:** No. It has not had a major effect on me.

## **Interview #15**

**Q: How do you define allyship and being a male ally?**

A: A male ally is someone who listens to the setback's women face and who takes actions to ameliorate such situations.

**Q: How do you speak up for women when they are overlooked?**

A: I try to include my female peers in conversations. In group projects, I make sure that the work done by women does not go unnoticed and attribute credit when it is due.

**Q: Do you notice exclusion everyday?**

A: Yes.

**Q: How do you or will you open the doors to more participation from women and women of color?**

A: Yes, I will. I will actively try to listen and take actions to make sure women and women of color are given equal opportunities.

**Q: Do you attribute an idea to a woman who offered it, and you endorse worthy ideas and ensure the appropriate person is remembered for them?**

A: Absolutely. Credit should be given where it is due, regardless of gender. And when it is not, I will try to make sure that I change that.

**Q: If no formal format exists, how do you (or will) offer peer to peer mentoring?**

A: Often the best mentoring occurs outside of formal formats anyways. Accordingly, I will make sure to try and speak to women about the struggles they are facing and take action when it is within my power.

**Q: When you see men and women paired together on television, in movies, or other media platforms, what tends to be their relationship?**

A: Often, women play a side role to the man. The man is the one with power and the woman is simply there to compliment him. And it should not be like this.

**Q: Do you fear ally-ship or resulting backlash based on how the media portrayal of women?**

A: No, I do not.

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not comfortable, 5-very comfortable) how comfortable do you feel in your ability to fully be yourself at work?**

A: 3. As a person of color, a part of me will always feel a bit guarded in the workplace.

**Q: What motivates you to serve as a male ally?**

A: My mother, who is my biggest motivation.

**Q: How are you making sure other men are becoming allies?**

A: I try to make sure that my male peers are not acting in a way that is antithetical to achieving equality. And when they do, I will be sure to speak up and educate them on why that is wrong.

## **Interview #16**

### **Q: How do you define allyship and being a male ally?**

A: A male ally means someone who does not just fight for themselves but fights for their women colleagues as well. Men are often given the opportunities that women are not. So, allyship is making sure that these opportunities are more equally spread out. Being a male ally also comprises of understanding the hardships that women counterparts face. It means that one is not simply reinforcing traditional roles but actively seeking to break those barriers and create new norms, one of equal worth.

### **Q: How do you speak up for women when they are overlooked?**

A: When classmates are shut down simply because they are women, I try to bring up the point for them and then tell the other side that it was actually her idea and that they should have listened to her because it was a great point. This way the point gets across and the other person realizes that they should have acted otherwise.

### **Q: Do you notice exclusion everyday?**

A: Absolutely. Even in nonprofessional ways.

### **Q: How do you or will you open the doors to more participation from women and women of color?**

A: In my mentorship program, I actively try to make sure that women receive proper mentors. Not just other women in the medical profession, but other men as well who will serve as male allies to them.

### **Q: If no formal format exists, how do you (or will) offer peer to peer mentoring?**

A: I have taken on younger medical students often. I specifically take on people of color and women because I understand that they do not have as many mentorship opportunities.

### **Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not comfortable, 5-very comfortable) how comfortable do you feel in your ability to fully be yourself at work?**

A: Four.

### **Q: What motivates you to serve as a male ally?**

A: Although I will never understand the hardship women face, I have faced my own struggles. Through them I've realized the importance of equality and the impact an ally and mentor can have. Accordingly, I try to always keep my ears and heart open to those who may be able to use me as an ally.



**Q: Have you seen other peers NOT serve as male allies?**

A: Yes, I often see men putting women down and particularly in subtle ways. For example, men will often cut women off when they are speaking and start telling their own views. In other ways, men will often try to take credit for lab results when women have played critical roles.

**Q: Why do you think there are not enough male allies like yourself in the medical profession?**

A: I think most who are not explicit allies simply don't see the problem. They are cognizant of extremely heinous actions and will speak up then. However, they are blind to the daily events that occur. I think this is partially because people are too focused on their own success that they shield themselves from sensing these other events.

**Q: Do men and women get equal residency opportunities?**

A: Yes, however the problem is not getting the residency. Rather, it is how you are treated during the residency. To my knowledge, everyone, including people of color and women, are placing on equal levels. However, there are varying accounts of how people are treated once they've obtained the residency.

**Q: Do you think this is unique to the medical profession?**

A: Absolutely not. We often engage with other professional programs, such as the School of Dentistry, and they have shared similar problems.

**Q: What are your thoughts on on-ramping (flexible hours at full pay) and guardrails (predictable hours) to help those returning?**

A: I support it.

**Q: What are your perceptions on non-linear leadership tracks that take into consideration women with families?**

A: That should absolutely be happening. Generally, women have so many more responsibilities than men, and they are discredited for it. That's the world we are living in. Women do so much more and are still undervalued. And that's a problem. It's almost like a double-edged sword. Women are expected to do all of these duties. And when women do them, it is used against them in the professional world.

**Q: You seem like a great male ally. What role do you think you have in educating immigrant family members, who might have a more traditional mindset?**

A: It is absolutely my responsibility. If I won't teach them, who will? And immigrant families are unique. I think they come from countries where this sort of treatment is so engrained, that it just seems like the norm. And because that's been engrained for decades, it is hard to reverse that.

And so, I don't think there is any ill intent. Rather, they just need to be educated because they don't know any better. And that should absolutely be my responsibility and I proudly bear it.

**Q: What has personally motivated you to take on women mentees? Especially in an era where many men are afraid to do so because of a fear of backlash?**

A: I don't believe there should be a fear of backlash. If you are doing the right thing and just mentoring, there won't be any allegations or backlash or anything like that. And as to what motivated me personally, I have a younger sister. And as an older brother, I always wish the best for her. And a part of that is that I hope people from whatever career route she chooses to take will help her along the way because I might not be able to. And I would hope that men are not afraid to help her simply because they are afraid of backlash. And every time I think of her, I remind myself that I need to set that example. How can I wish for the best for my sister, but not pay it forward to those who seek mentorship from me?

## **Interview #17**

**Q: Are you familiar with the concept of allyship?**

A: No.

**Q: I think of allyship as members of the in-group using their privilege to support people who have been historically excluded, like women and minorities. Knowing that definition, do you consider yourself to be an ally to women?**

A: Yes. I try to be inclusive in everything that I do.

**Q: Can you give an example of that?**

A: In meetings at work, I try to make sure everyone's voices are heard equally around the table, you're not just letting one person speak the whole time or interrupting another person when they are speaking.

**Q: How do you speak up for women when they are being overlooked. For example, if at a meeting a woman is trying to say something but she keeps getting talked over and interrupted.**

A: Thankfully, that doesn't seem to be prevalent in many of the meetings that I have been in. I try to encourage people to listen to other people's point of views. If someone is being quiet, I make a point to ask if they have anything they want to add to the conversation and ask their thoughts. I try to make sure everyone has at least a chance. If they don't want to speak, I might go up to them after the meeting and get their thoughts.

**Q: Yeah, speaking from experience, I think sometimes women are conditioned to speak up less in the business setting unless they are specifically asked for their thoughts and it can be hard to speak up, especially in you're not 100% confident in what you are saying. What do you think a proactive ally is? What are things that a proactive ally does?**

A: You can set up initiatives and make an effort to participate in initiatives, attend or speak at events. If you are assigning work, you should make sure that you have a fair system in place. You should take the initiative to speak up and promote the allyship agenda.

**Q: Data has shown that when women do speak out, they can be ignored or have their ideas taken. As an ally, how will you address this?**

A: When you go to senior management, for example, if you have a project and you have a good result, it is important that the correct people get the right recognition. If it was a woman's idea and someone else is trying to take the credit, you need to speak up and say who came up with the strategy or approach. You want to make sure that is reflected in that person's end-of-year performance review.

**Q: Do you write the performance reviews?**

**A:** I don't personally, but people will come to me when they are writing them. Especially at my old job, because we were a very integrated team. They would come to me to corroborate what people on the team did. I had the opportunity to make sure that women, and everyone else, were getting credit for their ideas.

**Q: How do you or will you offer peer-to-peer mentoring, specifically for women? How do you keep it professional?**

**A:** I don't think it has to be that formal. To make sure no one feels uncomfortable, I would propose having a one-to-one meeting in the work cafeteria. Since it is not a formal office setting, it takes some of the pressure off and you can speak more freely.

**Q: You work in the defense industry, which I imagine is a male-dominated industry. How would you help the company start a program to attract a diverse talent pool? What would you recommend they do to attract more women?**

**A:** There are a few approaches. I think in England, they are quite generous with maternity leave. They have to make sure that the packages are inclusive to men and women. For example, allowing flexible working so a parent with child-care responsibilities can drop the kids off at school and still come to work and start a little later and finish early and make up the time somewhere else.

There are other things where you have to start at the bottom. For example, when recruiting graduates, where quite a lot of people in the business come from, they have to make sure there is a good balance of male and female entrants into the business. I'd address it in that way and make sure in general it is a good place to work and has the right packages that would attract diverse applicants. For example, a very short maternity leave or low pay when you're on it might discourage female applicants.

**Q: How do you feel about blind hiring practices, for example, evaluating resumes without a name so you don't know the applicant's gender and you can't guess their race?**

**A:** We do that at my old job for the Ministry of Defense and at my current job. You submit your CV and they are sorted by an external company. They make sure the applicants meet the basic requirements. When the CVs get given back, they are blackmarked so you can't see the name or any personal details. You can only see their experience—what they've done and achieved.

**Q: Some people think that because of the history of discrimination, blind applications are not enough—they should be prioritizing women and minorities. Do you think that should be done?**

**A:** I worry that it would become a tick-box exercise, where you say you need to hire X number of women this year. That could lead to not getting the right fit for the job. I think the blind method is the best.

**Q: How do you think gender bias can be eliminated in performance reviews? Sometimes the same quality is seen as a negative in a woman but a positive in a man. How can this implicit bias be eliminated?**

**A:** We do manager training every year for unconscious biases.

**Q: Do you think that makes a difference?**

**A:** Yes and no. At the end of the day, everyone can just tick a box and get through an online training, but I think it raises the issue. At least it tries to address it as opposed to not addressing it at all. Hopefully the manager and the policies that the company put in place don't discriminate on gender and look at everyone on a level playing field. Ultimately, you have to make sure that if there is a sexist manager, they are not running the performance reviews. There needs to be a check on the people doing performance reviews. I think you can tell a lot from working with people and getting to know people.

**Q: What clear and transparent rules would you put in place for appointments to committees and leadership opportunities?**

**A:** Like we talked about, you can have blind hiring and blind resumes. When it comes to interviews, you have to have a diverse hiring panel to make sure different perspectives are represented. For promotions, there is always an "open and fair process." This means everyone is put through the same rigor. This means everyone has to do an online test, sit the same interview with the same questions—there is a script for the start of the interviews so everyone is fully aware of what is expected and is evaluated the same way.

**Q: It sounds like that is an attempt to minimize the role of subjectivity in the hiring and promoting process. You talked about maternity leave before, but how do you make sure there is no penalty for flexibility? How do you make sure that women who take maternity leave are not penalized in some way?**

**A:** I think it might be different in a law setting, because it is important to stay current with the clients—the clients can't just not have a lawyer. But there should be assurances put in place to make sure that person, even if they don't come back to the same client, comes back at the same statute or level. People have to be considerate—if someone on the team has kids and has to drop them off at school, they shouldn't schedule a meeting at 7:00 AM.

**Q: How would you structure and design the workplace to advance diversity?**

**A:** I actually haven't been in the office at my current job. But at my old job, the office was all open-plan. There were no fixed desk, so you could go in and sit in any desk on the floor. It encouraged the mixing of people, and the senior managers were encouraged to sit in different places. It gave everyone a chance to chat with them and get a feel for what they do in terms of career advancement. We used to have a traditional office where all the senior people sat together

in one corner and no one else really went over there. This made it more inclusive and less hierarchical.

**Q: You mention that your company has workshops, conferences, and speakers focusing on diversity. What gender equality programs or conferences is the company engaged in?**

A: They sometimes have “market stalls” on different topics set up one of the buildings, and you can walk through them and stop and talk to people one-on-one, for example, the chair of one of the groups might be there. They are a chance to talk about what is going on. They have market stalls about LGBT rights, minorities in the work-place, and gender equality.

**Q: How can a company promote work outside of the organization to advance gender justice and diversity?**

A: Where I work, there is an emphasis on corporate social responsibility. The company likes to get behind good causes. They are very much in the community helping a range of different causes. At the Ministry of Defense, they have an LGBTQ week. It’s important because the military has not historically been supportive of being gay. The company has awareness weeks and workshops you can go to.

**Q: Some clients will tell law firms that the team working on their matter has to be diverse—it must include women and minorities. Does your company do anything like that to promote diversity?**

A: That’s interesting. Our main client doesn’t specify that, but they know we are quite a diverse workplace to begin with. It’s also very international.

**Q: How does your company promote mentorship of women?**

A: We have blind mentorship pairings. I can say I want to mentor, and I will get paired up with someone who wants a mentor. I don’t get to choose who it is. When you join, you get given a buddy, and my buddy is a woman who has worked at the company for one year longer than I have.

**Q: Sometimes a company will have a formal mentorship program, but the real mentoring is all based on informal connections. How can a company make sure women aren’t excluded from this kind of informal network?**

A: I think it is hard to disrupt that. Maybe the head of each section can meet with 4-5 people every month to discuss the opportunities and have a more open forum. It reduces that kind of “inside track” mentality. It spreads the opportunities and allows things to fall into other people’s laps that might not have been in that “old boy network.”

**Q: At the firm I am going to work at, there is a centralized assigning system so the partners are not the ones who are assigning their own work to associates. This is an attempt to make sure work is assigned more equitably and not based on these informal “old boy’s network.”**

**Obviously, it still happens, but this is this backstop to make sure everyone has an opportunity to get work.**

**A:** I think that's the same as where I am now, in a sense. If someone wants to change teams, they can go to that team's project leader and ask to get moved to that team. But ultimately, that is decided by an employment hub that makes sure the job is going to the person with the right experience. There is an open, fair competition for every position.

**Q: How do you think the MeToo movement is shaping norms of masculinity and norms in the workplace? Do you think there has been a shift in workplace culture?**

**A:** I think so. Hearing stories about what happened ten to fifteen years ago—that just doesn't happen anymore, which is obviously good. The MeToo movement has highlighted it, and whenever you highlight something, people become more aware of what they are doing. Even in big Skype meetings now, people will use gender-inclusive language. I hope females feel safer and more comfortable at work now, and that they can go to HR if anything happens and HR will deal with it. Where I've worked, that would be dealt with. For example, one of my friends was getting hit on at work by a member of her team. It was unwarranted, he was Skyping her all the time, and it made her uncomfortable. She went to HR and they dealt with it in a few days. He got moved to another team. He also got put on disciplinary action, which means if anything like this comes up on his record in the next three years, he will be fired.

**Q: Was there any retaliation against her for complaining?**

**A:** No, not at all. She was praised for going forward with it. Her senior managers told her that if she wanted to speak with them, they were always there, and reassured her that it was nothing for her to be embarrassed or ashamed about.

Another woman I work with was in a male-dominated group and she was being given a hard time by some of the men on her team. She raised that with her manager. The manager backed her up and told the team that she knew what she was talking about and constantly disagreeing with her about things that weren't within their area was just hindering the project. They moved her to a different area on the project—not off the project. No one talked about why she moved or criticized her or blamed her for speaking up. It shows that she was comfortable enough to say something, and our manager was a good ally for supporting her move. And it was handled discreetly and done without making her feel anymore uncomfortable.

**Q: Since they were causing the problem, don't you think they should have kept her where she was and moved them?**

**A:** That was out of the question here, because they were specialized engineers and they were needed on that part of the project. The only option was to keep it as-is, which would have been uncomfortable for her. But if anything, they increased her responsibility and seniority.

**Q: In the male-dominated work environment that you're in, do you feel like there is a "locker room" mentality?**

**A:** I don't think so. It is hard to judge because since I started my new job, we have all been working remotely. At my old job, it was a really diverse work place. The coffee culture was that if you went and made coffee, you would chat to anyone who was there, not all the guys hanging out together and getting coffee. Compared to how things were twenty years ago, I think people are a lot more professional in the way that they act. There are still laughs and jokes, but they are not derogatory toward a certain group.

**Q: I'm not sure how it is in England, but here family-leave policies are just starting to become common. However, research shows that some men are reluctant to take advantage of these policies because of how it is perceived by their peers. How do you think men could be encouraged to feel comfortable taking their leave in England?**

**A:** I don't think it's like that in England. Say if you get four weeks of paternity leave, they will either take the four weeks, because it is very well encouraged, or other people will work a half-day Monday and a half-day Friday and have the rest of the week off, just so they can keep in touch and say up-to-date on what is going on. That isn't encouraged, but it's an option if people want to do it. You are encouraged to just take off and look after your family. In that sense, the perception is different than what you are saying it is like in the U.S.

**Q: Do you think the caregiving policies encourage egalitarian outcomes?**

**A:** I think it should be close to equal in terms of the time that can be taken. Especially for the male, maybe the time should be split. For example, they can take two weeks immediately and then when the female goes back to work, they can take more time then. This might help with that balance and returning to work.

**Q: How will you address challenges that caregivers, both male and female, face upon returning to the office?**

**A:** There has to be a certain level of flexibility. Like I said before, they shouldn't be scheduling meetings at 6 PM knowing someone has to go home and care for their kids. Both at this job and at my old job, people could have a plan to work at home some days and in the office other days. It helped people balance their personal and professional responsibilities. There should be an open dialogue with managers about what people's personal needs are.

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not likely at all, 5-very likely), how likely would it be for you to request & participate in work-family policies (i.e. Parental Leave or Flexible Work Arrangement) if your family situation made that need applicable?**

**A:** I definitely would.

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not likely at all, 5-very likely), how likely do you think your male peers would request & participate in one of the company's work-family policies (i.e. Parental Leave or Flexible Work Arrangement) if their family situation made that need applicable?**



**A:** Again, at least here in England, very likely, because everyone does.

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not influenced, 5-very likely to influence), how much of your decision to participate in the work-family policies influenced by your perception of what is accepted and expected by leadership/management and your male peers?**

**A:** I'd say I wouldn't be influenced at all. If my manager would look down on me for taking time for my family, I would still do it, but when I returned to work, I would look into switching to a different department or manager. It's something that is very important to me. Especially if it was something that they advertised it as part of the package of coming to work there, like offering flexible work time, you have every right to take it.

**Q: Definitely, but even if it is there, some people don't feel comfortable taking it or feel that taking it would cost you opportunities or put you at a disadvantage.**

**A:** If you're doing your job and you're doing it well, and you're doing everything early, you should be more judged on the work that you do than on your circumstances. If you're a top class female lawyer and you need to take time because you had a kid, it would not make sense replace her with a male who has half as much talent. In the long run, it is a better investment for the company to stick with the female who is better.

**Q: The "man box" refers to a set of beliefs, communicated by parents, families, the media, peers, and other members of society, that place pressure on me to act in a certain way. These pressures tell men to be self-sufficient, to act tough, to be physically attractive in a certain way, to stick to rigid gender roles, to be heterosexual, to not cry or show emotion, and to use aggression to resolve conflict. How much do these descriptions relate to something that you have experienced?**

**A:** There have been times when I was in the bathroom and I've heard people coming in very stressed. They've come out of a meeting where they were "macho" and now they're showing their stress. There is sometimes a face put on. Prince Harry has been a big advocate for men's mental health for the past ten years, and that is making it more normal for men not to have to act in a certain way.

**Q: Do you think the men's mental health movement has made a difference?**

**A:** Yeah, I would say so. It wasn't just Prince Harry, but a lot of other people too.

**Q: I know you play on a work soccer team. Do you think people are excluded from informal work networks if they are not athletic or interested in sports?**

**A:** No, that is an example of inclusivity. We started the soccer after work, and every single person on the graduate scheme, male and female, was invited. It is up to them if they want to come play. We have had a lot of people at different abilities all turned up, and we mixed the teams up so it was as fair as can be. Then we would all go for a drink together afterwards. Not being good at soccer might have been a problem when you were twelve, but now it's not about

your ability, it's just about letting off steam and have a little bit of fun. Even if people are not very good, they are still part of the group.

**Q: You have worked in the U.S. and in England, although in very different jobs and work environments. Did you notice any different in the work culture or gender equality at work?**

**A:** The only thing that I personally experienced was the gender differentiation. In the U.S., I noticed that the jobs that related to athletics tended to be more male-dominated, whereas the caregiving roles were more female-dominated. It felt like they were just going with the norm in terms of thinking “we have to teach baseball and soccer, so we’ll hire a male.” I wasn’t privy to the selection process or what roles people would choose. It didn’t seem like there was any bad will there, though.

**Q: How often do you see leadership roles on television? Women of color?**

**A:** I would say quite a lot in the last year or two. For example, when they do question time on TV, where they ask the equivalents of the US senators questions, they always make sure it is a diverse panel. There would never be five white males. Even when showing boxing, they showed two females and two males, all from different backgrounds.

**Q: Does the way you see women in positions of power influence your views of women leaders?**

**A:** I don’t think so. For example, New Zealand has a female prime minister, and they eradicated coronavirus in months, which was amazing compared to the rest of the world. She did a great job. But then people would argue that Nicola Sturgeon, the leader of the Scottish national party, has gone back and forth on her policies and how they are dealing with COVID. But I wouldn’t say that because Sturgeon has messed up that all women are shouldn’t lead, because clearly, they can and the will. You Vice President has done amazing to get there, and it’s great to have that kind of diverse leadership. I like to think that I judge them on how they do, and not on their gender.

**Q: When you see men and women paired together on television and in movies or other media platforms, what tends to be their relationship?**

**A:** I guess in most cases, it is a couple or love interest. That tends to be the norm.

**Q: Do you see a power disparity in their relationships generally?**

**A:** I think there are a lot of powerful female role models in the media now. Look at *The Hunger Games*—she’s the one fighting, while he is the one who almost dies most of the time. This year, they had the first lesbian kissing scene on one of the British soap operas, and it was a big deal.

**Q: Thank you so much for talking about this with me. It is interesting to hear about the difference between corporate culture in the U.S. and the U.K., especially when it comes to family leave policies.**



## **Interview #18**

**Q: Thank you so much for speaking with me about this. I'm in Women, Law, and Leadership this semester and we are interviewing male law students about allyship. Are you familiar with what allyship means?**

**A:** Unfortunately, I can't say I'm familiar with allyship.

**Q: I think of allyship as members of the in-group using their privilege to help people minorities and people who have been excluded. Knowing that definition, do you consider yourself to be an ally for women?**

**A:** Yes. Definitely.

**Q: Have you ever witnessed—either in school, at a job, or in a social setting—a time when a woman or a minority was excluded from a conversation, or someone talked over them. If so, what did you do in that situation?**

**A:** I have a sister who I am really close with, and my mom, who I am also really close with, and they have been huge parts of my life. I'm having a hard time on the spot thinking of something, which I guess is a good thing. I can't say I have seen someone say something really disparaging to a female friend of mine or colleague. If I did see that, I would like to think I would jump in or provide the right support to that person.

My mom is a lawyer, and she is someone I have always looked up to. I have heard from her that when she was getting her career started, the challenges she experienced as a woman in a male dominated profession. It sounded terrible and makes me very upset that women were treated so unfairly. It's honestly hard to process.

When my mom tells me about what it was like growing up I really feel for her. It makes me want to do what I can to help the current and future generations. My mother was the first in her family to attend law school. Her parents were from a different culture.

My mother tells me that growing up, she was expected to get married young, and not necessarily have a professional career. Her brothers on the other hand did not experience such pressure and were encouraged to become doctors. It is so tough to imagine this flying in my current household...

My grandparents did not support my mom's decision to go to law school. They thought it was unwise and constantly tried to set her up with potential male suitors who my mom had zero interest in. My mother was a trailblazer and committed to pursuing her dream of becoming a lawyer no matter what. Nothing stopped her. She is and continues to be my role model, hero, and best friend. My mom supported herself financially throughout school, and eventually fulfilled her dream of becoming an attorney.

My mother tells me all the time that she knew so many bright women, who would have made great lawyers. Unfortunately, though her culture did not encourage such ambition from women. My mother was truly exceptional and taught me to never stop fighting for what I believe in.

**Q: In your past work experience and as we go to law firms, how do you think these companies can attract women and retain more diverse applicants?**

**A:** I think the way it's done is a problem. The fact that you only have a number of schools that have the Big Law statistics, like Penn, is a problem. Law firms are very selective with the schools they go to. They take from Penn, Columbia, the T14, and I think within the T14 it's getting better, but still needs to improve in becoming a more diverse body of students. I think what recruiters should be doing is looking to other schools. At a lot of these t14 schools if you look around, it's a lot of similar types of people. There are people whose parents and grandparents all went to the same school.

I think, to answer your question, the law firms have to be looking outside of the T14. There are people who got into Penn law and they couldn't afford to go to Penn law, they didn't get financial aid, they didn't get a scholarship, and they're at another school. They grew up in a low-income neighborhood. And they go to a school that law firms aren't even looking at. Maybe it was close to home and that was what they needed to do. I think law firms need to be looking at other schools, particularly schools that have diverse populations and diverse law students. I think the T14 still has room to improve.

**Q: Yeah, the discrimination is self-perpetuating because the legacies of the people who were admitted generations ago are still getting preferential treatment, and so the people who were historically excluded continue to be at a disadvantage. Then there are also connection and informal networks that women and minorities tend to be excluded from—these intangible things that can help people get ahead.**

**A lot of companies are now enacting family leave policies that are more flexible and are giving fathers taking time off. Sometimes fathers are uncomfortable taking time off because of how it is viewed by their peers. What do you think companies could do to have more flexible family leave policies and encourage males to take it or not penalize females for taking it?**

**A:** I believe there needs to be a greater emphasis on this within the profession. A lot of it is about breaking the stigma within the culture—accepting the fact that people have lives outside of work and families are important. A lot of it comes down to breaking down stigmatization. Marriage has changed, families have changed. People have children and they don't necessarily get married and at one point there was a stigma associated with that and I think it's improving.

I think it would help if those stigmas are removed more, and law firms become more progressive in their views. A lot of these law firm partners—you look at them in recruiting—it's the same type of person.

Breaking traditional notions, having more progressive views of family, and accepting how marriage has changed—I think that would all help.

**Q: Agreed, even within the traditional family, gender roles have evolved. Are you involved in any student groups on campus?**

**A:** Unfortunately, I wasn't the best at that in law school.

**Q: I wasn't either—it's hard because we were so busy. Thank you so much for taking the time to speak with me.**

## **Interview #19**

### **Q: How do you define allyship? Ally?**

**A:** Allyship is when people who are deemed “different” come together to form a professional or personal partnership. Allies try to understand how these differences may affect their relationship and make implicit or explicit commitments to counteract any potential biases that may exist.

An ally is a person who seeks to bridge differences and learn about how they can best support people professionally or personally gaps that come from a different religion, gender, sexuality, race, nationality or other identifying factor.

### **Q: Do you consider yourself to be an ally for women? How so?**

**A:** I try to be, but I am sure that I am not perfect. I try to be an ally by resisting the urge to interrupt women (which I just recently learned happens a lot in professional settings), and occasionally asking female counterparts about any barriers that they have had to race in the classroom or workplace because of their gender. Implicitly, I always replay the events of the previous day in my head before I go to bed, and I ask myself if I would have treated a male counterpart similarly if they were a woman, and vice versa if I would have treated a female counterpart similarly if they were a man. Personally, this helped me to realize any implicit biases that I may have.

### **Q: Have you ever noticed a woman be overlooked in the classroom or workplace in comparison to a similarly situated male? Did you speak up?**

**A:** Yes. One of the most prominent examples that I can think of is when a woman is being silly or joking, and their voice is deemed not “professional for the moment.” Men often roll their eyes or remark that the woman is not qualified or lacking in intelligence. When a man often uses an unprofessional voice or says something silly, other men (and sometimes women) often laugh and praise this individual for not being too “serious” and for “having a great sense of humor to relieve the tension of the moment.”

I speak up if I know the woman, and try to point out a time when they made an insightful comment or contribution to a discussion, or when I know of their personal intelligence. Retroactively, I also bring up to a male counterpart “See, and person X thought she was acting dumb or unprofessional.” However, I am sure that I have chuckled along occasionally due to the existence of an uncomfortable moment.

### **Q: How do you help support women?**

**A:** I try to support women by treating them as equally as possible as my male counterparts. This includes talking to them with the same tone that I address my male colleagues and being deferential when talking to a woman so as not to be too interrupting and trying to dominate the conversation.

**Q: How important do you think it is to help women advance professionally? What kind of an impact would it have?**

**A:** It is extremely important for women to advance professionally. The more women who occupy positions of power will inspire younger girls that they work in any job that they want to when they grow up. Women in places of power also implicitly and explicitly remind men that women are just as capable as a man to occupy any job, which hopefully decreases negative stereotypes that continue to plague our society.

**Q: How important do you think the role of allyship is to eliminating gender gaps in the workplace?**

**A:** Allyship is a great tool to drastically decrease the substantial gender gap that exists in the workplace. If men and women just take a few moments out of their day to ponder if they treat members of opposite sex or gender identities differently, they will uncover most of the ways they perpetuate negative stereotypes in a way that continues to foster gender gaps. Moreover, if men were more willing to ask women if there is any way they can become a better ally, they would also learn other ways they can better support women. If such conversations became commonplace, women would be more likely to confront men in person when men act in a manner that belittles them or continues to lead to the existing gender gap.

**Q: What kind of steps can you and other male allies take to proactively—as opposed to reactively—support women?**

**A:** Initiate more conversation with women that I am good friends with to see if there is any way that I can become a better ally. I can also ask them if there is any way that they have noticed that I treat men better than women. Finally, I can proactively count to five in my head before I interrupt a woman who is speaking to ask myself if I would interrupt if one of my male friends or colleagues was speaking.

**Q: Do you think that social norms play a role in preventing women from obtaining leadership positions and advancing in the careers at the same rate as men? In what way?**

**A:** Social norms create the notions of gender difference that has led to the present gender gap. From a young age, boys are encouraged to play certain sports and wear less flashy clothing than girls. Furthermore, childhood books and learning materials often portray men in more prominent jobs, such as flashcards that show men as doctors and women as nurses. Moreover, teachers and parents more often tell boys to physically or verbally lead certain activities or keep bullies in their place when they pick on other students. Thus, boys and girls, who eventually grow up to become men and women, have a rudimentary association with men as powerful leaders and women as less prominent subordinates.

**Q: What do you think are some ways in which women can counteract the negative professional consequences that their traditional “caregiver” role can have on their career? How can businesses play a role in this?**



**A:** Women can counteract the traditional notion of them as a “caregiver” by explicitly stating their goals of grabbing prominent positions of power in any organization they seek to join to let men know that they are just as serious as being a power player as their male co-parts in the minds of (mostly male) superiors. Businesses can play a role in this by offering family leave to both men and women when a child is born, and not inquiring about the relationship status, age or number of child that women have when they interview women, to limit conversations about whether a company will hire a woman for fear that they will be distracted by having children, getting married, and fulfilling the “caregiver” role.

**Q: What is your opinion about flexible schedules and telecommuting to permit women to have careers while also taking on the caregiver role?**

**A:** Flexible hours and telecommunicating is a great idea for women to advance their careers. Telecommunicating would allow women, who are parents or caregivers for older relatives, to stay engaged in their jobs for traditional 9-5 jobs.

Flexible schedules would allow women, who might need to leave work early or come to work late, to make up hours by working weekends or earlier/later times in a given day so they can work the same hours as their non-caregiver counterparts.

**Q: How important do you consider male allyship with respect to the professional advancement of women to positions of leadership?**

**A:** It is the most important way to affect change in professional fields. Forms for evaluations should be perused to see if they could implicitly lead to better evaluations for men rather than women. Men who are on hiring/promotion committees should explicitly hire/provide glowing reviews for the same number of men as women. Men should also not shy away from taking on women as their mentees, in order that women can get a chance to hear the thought processes of men who have achieved positions of power within a given professional company. These male allies/mentors should be more willing, in theory, to recommend/look out for their female mentees.

**Q: Do you fear backlash from overtly supporting women? Do you think that is a legitimate fear that some males have?**

**A:** I have no fears for overtly supporting women, especially if they are my colleagues and friends. This is a legitimate fear for some men, however, because they may fear reprisal from male peers or bosses who prioritize looking out for the “good ole boys” club. I also know male workers who refuse to look for younger female workers for fear of looking like a “creepy old man.”

**Q: Have you ever felt uncomfortable to speak up when a female colleague or classmate was not being treated well? If so, why?**

**A:** Yes, if a male teacher or figure of authority has unnecessarily embarrassed a woman, even if I feel like they would not have verbally harassed a similarly situated male. I did not speak up for

fear of being the target of that verbal spat or a future spat. I also questioned if it would have been better for the girl if no one spoke up and the harassment naturally died out on its own. In addition, if another girl/woman is treating a woman badly, I often do not assert myself into these situations, as I often consider such situations none of my business.

**Q: What are some ways women, especially women of color, can achieve equality and proportional representation, particularly with respect to obtaining leadership positions?**

**A:** One of the best ways for women of color to achieve equality and proportional representation in the workplace is for men and women of all races and nationalities to press corporations and businesses to have proportional representation in their general workforce and in positions of power. The commitments do not have to be immediate. Simple commitments such as proportional gender and proportional racial representation in twenty-five years will allow women, particularly those of color, to know that they are systematically working to counteract centuries of discrimination that still live in our society. The existence of an extended time period should allow for the hiring of men and women from various racial groups that are, hopefully, committed to a company with proportional gender and racial diversity.

**Q: In class, we've talked a lot about the idea of 1,000 papercuts, or the notion that women must often endure several slights at work, none of which alone arise to a claim of harassment or discrimination, but together, can and do cause real and significant harm to their careers. A couple examples of these papercuts include a lack of recognition at work where men are recognized and women being interrupted far more frequently than men. Have you noticed any of these or similar "papercuts" in the classroom or any of your prior jobs? Do you think there is a way we can eliminate or reduce such papercuts? How so?**

**A:** Yes, I have noticed several instances where women were frequently interrupted and dismissed by their male peers. Each incident seemed minor at the time. However, cumulatively, they were quite belittling. When a woman would try to correct or snap at a male colleague for interrupting them for the nth time or being consistently dismissive of them, they are met with a generally negative reaction from both men and women for "losing their cool" for one small but rude gesture.

I do not know if we will ever be able to eliminate such papercuts. However, you can reduce these papercuts by mandating gender/racial sensitivity training. Allies from groups of power also need to remind men and/or white people to try to notice and identify their poor behavior and try to correct it. Finally, everyone needs to critically look at the way they conduct themselves to see if they implicitly or explicitly treat members of some groups worse than other groups.

**Q: In your opinion, are women as capable of holding positions of leadership as men are? What factors contribute to your analysis?**

**A:** Women are as capable of holding positions of leadership as men. In every school and workplace, a majority of the most intelligent students and diligent workers were women. It all stands to reason that any differences in intelligence or capabilities are based off of one's individual traits and attributes, not the traits and attributes of a gender or race as a whole.

**Q: What can you do personally to increase male allyship?**

**A:** I can increase male allyship by pointing out to male colleagues' instances where women are being called out for actions that similarly situated males would never be called out upon. I can also encourage men to have open conversations about their implicit biases with their female colleagues, and explicitly stating when I am correcting a previous flaw in my disposition. The most important way I can increase allyship is through actions, not just my words.

**Q: What is your perception of male allyship in your personal experiences? At Penn Law?**

**A:** In my personal experiences, my male friends typically try to be great allies for their female counterparts. While there may be breakdowns in the event of a relationship or personal falling out, their words and actions are adequate. However, in scenarios where men are by themselves, it is important that conversations about women are just as respectful as their male counterparts. Conversations that are not as respectful create implicit biases about women that could make some men view women as "less insert admirable characteristic trait here."

At Penn Law, male allyship is above par for most education institutions. Men often try to explicitly acknowledge the existing patriarchal barriers that exist in our society and vocalize a plan to tear down those barriers. However, there are noticeable examples where people's explicit words do not match their silent actions such as who they study with or recommend at important career/education opportunities. Thus, the words are people at Penn Law are substantially better than other places of education that I have been a part of, but there are more examples of people interacting and promoting the causes of men that look like themselves over women.

Many companies are now making a conscious effort to hire more women, but a glaring gap remains in positions of power. For instance, roughly only 5% of Fortune 500 companies have female CEOs. How can companies make strides in not only hiring more female employees, but also in mitigating the gender gap with respect to positions of leadership?

Companies should immediately try to hire slightly more women than men for each round of hires (within a small but acceptable margin of error) for the next ten years. Some of the new female hires should be put in female leadership training programs that will gradually lead to an equal number of male and females in positions of power. Most companies should strive for equal Board, Director, and Manager positions within the next twenty five years. Thus, by hiring more men than women, you increase the bench of female applicants for future positions of power. Promotion and evaluation forms should also be more formalized so that evaluations and promotions are based off of explicit traits and achievements, not whether the often male and white evaluator "likes" the applicant or finds other men more "relatable" and a "better fit." Such ambiguous characterizations continue to lead to similar compositions in most places of power within a company.

**Q: Do you think it is possible to achieve true gender equality? If so, what are some important steps you think need or should be taken to get there?**

**A:** I think it is possible to achieve true gender equality, but I doubt whether it can be accomplished in my lifetime. While I believe most young people can remember a small gender gap between boys and girls when they were in elementary school, this gap grows as boys and girls become men and women. True gender equality will be achieved when society acknowledges how the gender gap formed in the first place, and companies and schools try to remedy events that lead to the gender gap. Another important factor will be giving women equal, if not slightly more, of the positions in power in places such as education and companies. Once women are granted equal representation in places of power, it will take at least two generations of the positive ramifications to reach society. Children will also (hopefully) learn of trends such as the pay gap and gross hiring disparities as things of the past, as they will be surrounded by men and women jointly leading society. This equality in experience will lead to less implicit assumptions that men and women are inherently different, which will create true gender equality.

## **Interview #20**

**Q: We are both taking Women, Law, and Leadership class with Professor Rangita. The class focuses on eliminating the struggles women face in the workplace. Why did you choose to take the class, and in your opinion, what does it mean to be an ally?**

**A:** That is really why I took the whole – the male allyship aspect. I think I always understood that it was an issue that women face, especially in the legal profession. Where I wasn't so clear on is what I can do to help, and that's really why I wanted to take this course – because I knew I would get to hear from other people, especially as I enter into the Big Law life. I don't know what I can do as a first-year associate; I don't have too much power as far as the structural change that we talk about, in terms of hiring partner decisions. I wanted to see it on a day-to-day as a mere first year, bottom of the wheel, and just in everyday life—what can I do to help promote this mission, that's not just a cliché. When this decision comes up, everyone talks about, "There's not that many women partners", which is true and is obviously an issue, but I don't know what to do about that, especially since I'm not at that level yet, where I have the power to change that. I want to focus on what I can do. All forms of this problem is still prevalent, but for me, I want to see how I can start making change asap. Not when it's time for me to make hiring decisions – what can I do right now, in law school and when I start at my firm to help.

**Q: What's your opinion of what it means to be an ally?**

**A:** First and foremost, I think at the very least, an ally needs to understand that there is an issue. I feel like there is still people out there who are completely blind to the fact that there is a problem. I think it starts with being aware it's a problem. Next, I think it's at least, internally wanting to do something. I don't think everyone is going to be a pioneer – I don't think everyone needs to be a pioneer per say – but I think if everyone understands that it's an issue, and everyone works towards it, I think that's the number one thing for an ally. We're kind of privy to the legal profession, but this is an issue everywhere. Understanding what the problem is in your own niche and how you can do something to fix that and actually taking active steps. Again, it doesn't have to be going from 0 to 100, but every day, you should be doing something. I think taking a course like this is a good step for people. So far, it has opened my eyes to things I've never even thought about. For example, we discussed a lot about the parental leave policies – that was nothing I ever thought about in the context of being aware that was actually an issue. I think being an ally on the first level is just actually going out, doing your research, becoming educated on these issues. So that you can then, take it to the next level and do whatever is in your capability to help fix this issue.

**Q: That's nice. You also mentioned about immediate change – the face that you want to figure how you make change, immediately. As a first-year associate, would you be hesitant to make change because of backlash. I know in class we talked about the fear of backlash in speaking out and calling out discrimination. How would you as a first-year associate want to make change, and in any way would you have that fear of backlash?**

**A:** I think I would. I think it's two-folds. For example, one of the things that I have never really thought about, but I think is very effective that when Maga came and spoke is that she

experienced her colleagues speak out against people who were saying things that shouldn't have been said. For example, if I'm at my firm, and I see First-year, Second Year associates – people who are in my level – say things they shouldn't be saying, I now understand the importance of not staying quiet and not pretending that it didn't happen. You need to say something. Now, maybe this is because I don't know how to handle it, but if it was a partner, I don't know what I would do. I don't know if I'd be comfortable enough to say the partner shouldn't be saying that – not because I don't think it's an important issue. I just feel like the culture of a law is, 'who is a first-year associate to say something to an equity partner'. As someone who is trying to go up those ranks, I definitely would be scared and is something that's on the top of my mind. But at least, at the level of your colleagues, you should be at least courageous enough to say something there. and even then, I'm sure there might be a little bit of backlash, but I think at that level, you can't be worried about someone talking about you. I would love to hear more about that in our class of how you would handle that under such a power dynamic-ship because truly I am scared. If I heard a partner say something in front of me, I don't know what I would do. I'd like to believe that I would still fight for her, but the truth of the matter is I would probably be completely scared – I probably wouldn't say anything. I think truly a partner could say anything to me, and I probably wouldn't say anything.

**Q: I definitely agree with you. I think there is that level of comfortability and that has to be addressed because at every level you should feel comfortable enough to speak out. Or there should be a protocol in place where you're able to.**

**A:** I agree, and I would think in an ideal world, when a partner says something, the partners should be the ones to check their own class. If you are all equity partners, I think you should have the clout enough to say something to another partner. It becomes difficult when that all gets pushed on a first-year associate because I feel like all that makes the first-year associate not want to say anything. Then here we are, back at square one, where nothing is getting changed.

**Q: Yes, I agree. Was diversity a factor in deciding where you wanted to work?**

**A:** Yes, absolutely. Even in law school that was a big thing for me. I can do my best to learn about the discrimination women face, but no matter how much I learn, I'll never know it firsthand. But I know the firsthand experience of what a person of color feels like. While there's some overlap, there's obviously some distinctions, but from being in at least one under-represented group, I know that's important. I want to be somewhere that fosters that. At the end of the day, if you are not someplace that supports you as a person, what are you doing there? At least, that is how I thought about it. So absolutely diversity was a huge thing that pushed me in the direction I ended up doing.

**Q: Have you ever been in a position where you did speak out about discrimination, and can you talk about that experience if you have?**

**A:** Absolutely. The first thing that comes in mind to me is my friends from back home. we've known each other so long that there's people that joke around or say things in certain ways – I don't think it's ill-intended per say, I think it's just kind of a function of how they are. Growing up, I probably would not have said anything – I might have laughed it off. Now, I've gone at a

stage where after joining law school, I kind of understand the importance of what a joke might be one day, next day could be a further joke, until you have people that don't see wrong in anything. Something I would do, even until this day, if I hear my friends joking about something, I don't think is an appropriate joke, I'll speak out. I think It's my responsibility. If we are really friends, that would be my job to say, "Listen man, you shouldn't be saying that". Because if at that level, I can't say anything, then who is going to say something? It's not even a first year versus partner-thing – this is someone you consider your friend. If you can't check on your friend, your colleagues, or your peers – even in law school, I hear someone say something, I'd step in and say something. For example, growing up, you hear a lot of people say "Aw, you're so girly", and again, I don't think the people saying that are actively trying to promote discrimination of women, but it starts there. now you are starting off stereotypes, and where does that end? That's the same stereotype that goes into women should be paid less or women shouldn't be partner and all these other gender norms. So, if I hear something like that, regardless of whether the person meant harm, I will say something.

**Q: I definitely agree with that – I think it starts with calling out your friends and family, even before the workplace. Kind of pivoting, I want to talk about traditional roles of women in your family. Has your family had those traditional female roles. If so, do you view those traditions as problematic and want to change that dynamic?**

**A:** 100%. My family still has those traditional roles – it's just so engrained in their culture. Halfway through college and into law school, I see how problematic that is. I definitely want to change that. I don't view a 'wife' as someone who will stay at home, cook, and take care of the kids. I want my wife to do what she wants to do, as a joint venture. That's just not how it was in my family and South Asian culture – the women stay at home and do those duties, while the men go out and is the breadwinner. I think it's intertwined because of the gender norms and also the culture norms is a huge thing in South Asian culture. But I see it all the time. I grew up with it, and I think it's very problematic. It's something I've even talked to my family about, and they think it's problematic too. It's hard to change that – not that I've given up – but there is just so much I can do since cultural values have been engrained in them for 40-50 years. Now, I see the importance of it and can have that talk. I see that issue, and I will fix that for my generation.

**Q: Do you have any female role models in your family that you look up to and have shaped your perspective of being an ally?**

**A:** My mother. My family came from India. When they were there, it was a typical, gender norm culture – women stay home, men get an education. My mother barely went to high school, high was the furthest degree she received. Then when they came here, things changed a bit – part of necessity and financial struggles – but she ran a store by herself. It was pretty impressive. I was young so I couldn't appreciate it at much, but she was impressive. This was in a not-so great state that I grew up in, but it's something that women wouldn't typically do in our culture – you wouldn't leave a woman alone in that kind of store, that kind of environment for late nights, early mornings, but she did it. and not once was she scared – she'd be there until 10PM and that was impressive to me. In her way, she broke a lot of the norms that were expected of it. They were the only ones who had come to America, the rest of my family lived in India and were shocked that she ran a store until 10PM. In that way, she shaped how I view allyship because in

her own way she broke some norms that should be pushed even further, especially because I see how people are still in those norms in India. It makes me more passionate about it.

**Q: How about any male role models or mentors that have shaped your perspective of being an ally for women?**

**A:** Sure. One that come in mind was during my 1L summer, at a firm and one of the partners took me under his wing and helped me in my career trajectory. At the same time, it was the first time I saw a typical white-male law firm partner and I never would have thought he would have cared so much about the Women's Initiative. This was before I even considered what the firm was going to do for Women's Initiative. He opened my eyes about that – he goes around to different firms and does CLE Credit to talk about how you should mentor women. For me to see the typical old, white-male partner spend so much of his day-to-day on women initiatives – I didn't know if he had a personal reason for why he was so passionate about it – it was great. I never thought a partner would go that deeply into caring – it was a pleasant thing to see. Though I'm not going to that firm, he's someone I still keep in touch with. He still gives me advice about my career and how to be a good lawyer and good person in general.

**Q: That's awesome. Mentorship is an important part about being a leader, so that's great.**

**A:** Especially in a law firm where you get your mentor and automatically you think I want to be that person. So, you start emulating everything they do, including everything they're passionate about – you start to become passionate about. If you see a mentor into certain social justices or women's initiatives, you start to automatically be privy to those events and those things, which is awesome.

**Q: Have you ever witnessed or experienced women being sidelined? It doesn't have to be specifically in the workplace, but I know we talked about sidelining a lot in class.**

**A:** Definitely. I felt it. They picked 3 Summer associates – me and two women. I was definitely preferred, and I could see it. assignments came to me first. Now, I want to hope that at least a bit of it was because of my work product, hopefully, but it couldn't have been. It just seemed crazy. I would already have 5 assignments and a partner would come to me saying "Oh, I need you to do this." and I was thinking, there are two next door, who did not have anything to do at the time. In my head, I was thinking why couldn't you give it to them? They are obviously more than competent and probably have better credentials than I do. I'm still close to the two women, but I definitely felt it during my 1L summer. I'd like to think it wasn't intentional because I loved the firm and the people, but I think those unintentional allocations make it worse. When people talk about "helping the cause", they automatically jump to the severe cases – the ones that are blatantly obvious – but how often is that? That's not everyday discrimination? It's those everyday little things that add up – that's the stuff that needs to get fixed. For example, I don't know how I would go about talking to someone about that allocation problem because easily someone could say, "What do you mean? I just like your work product". Then what would I say back? Or it could look like I didn't want to do it. That was one of the things I faced. I just shut up and did the work.



**Q: Do you think as a result of that situation, those two women had to over-compensate their work product?**

A: Yes. Those two had to knock on doors to get assignments. There were times when they were free, and I was working really long in my office. They would come in, and I had to give them my assignments. They were scared when it came to reviews because they were not receiving assignments. For me, I was like I know what they will review me on – I did these 6 assignments. It made me feel bad because I was not trying to take assignments. Every day I would see them knock on doors asking if there was anything they could work on or a deposition, but I never asked to sit on a deposition, the firm asked me. I definitely think there were issues with that, and the two women did overcompensate to feel like “Oh no, I’m not doing worse than the other Summer.”

**Q: I tend to think I need to overcompensate anything I do because I know I’m a woman, especially since I’m a Black woman. I think that needs to be addressed because it is extremely problematic.**

A: I agree. I think the problem is people are talking about how. Obviously, that’s not an easy answer – I don’t know the answer either, but those are the discussions that need to be had in law school. 90% of Penn goes to some Summer firm, there should be some class or one session a year discussing when you face certain issues, what you should do and who you should go to. I truly do not know the answer – am I supposed to go to the hiring partner? Then I’ll be scared that I’m not going to get an offer. Should I go to the partner who’s giving me the work? In that case, I’m scared I’ll look like I’m just being lazy and don’t want to take the assignment. I don’t know who I should have went to or what I am supposed to say. As a result of that, I just stayed shut.

**Q: I agree. Did those two women realize that they were being sidelined? It’s just so normalized that we become immune to it.**

A: Right, and I think that’s the issue. At the moment, I didn’t realize they were being sidelined either. Those two, I don’t think thought so. I think they turned that into, thinking they weren’t good enough. It wasn’t that they thought they were sidelined; it was more so like Bhavin is the star summer and we suck. I am close to them and wasn’t trying to take their work or anything, but I think they turned it into thinking they weren’t good enough, as opposed to being sidelined.

**Q: And I feel like this class opens your eyes to that perspective – women being sidelined.**

A: Absolutely, I haven’t thought about more than half of these issues before this class. not that I didn’t know it wasn’t a problem, but there’s so many different nuances that I didn’t know it was an issue. There’s so many avenues that women get discriminated from that I wouldn’t have comprehended all of it before taking this class. Now when I see it in real life, I know exactly what is happening.

**Q: How will you open doors for more engagement of women/women of color?**

**A:** At my firm, that's a pretty strong women's group that I plan on taking part in. In the same way the class has opened my eyes, I think hearing from women practitioners will as well. That way I can know the specific things the women at my firm are facing. Hopefully, as I up the ranks, it is something I can continuously keep in mind because I have heard their experiences, as opposed to aligned myself with a star male partner. I think I will also take active steps against sidelining now that I can recognize it. I never would have questioned an assignment before, but now I know that every firm staffs and assigns people things for a reason – it's very rare that someone will randomly get assigned. I think questioning that reasoning is helpful because it doesn't come off as rude – it comes off as curious. I plan to respond, "Great. I'd love to work on Case X. Just curious, why'd you pick me". I think that shifts the burden back on the people of power to answer that because if they can't they get put into a position where they have to start questioning their decisions. That may or may not help, but it will at least start the conversation, which is better than me just agreeing to work on the assignment. Maybe this is just in hindsight, but I feel like if I asked that question my 1L Summer, many people wouldn't have the answers.

**Q: Do you think they knew how many assignments you had at the time?**

**A:** Certainly. There were times I'd explicitly say and make them aware of how many assignments I was already working on. Everyone that gave me anything were more than fully aware of everything I had on my plate.

**Q: Okay. And now you want to focus on "Why are you giving me those assignments?"**

**A:** Yes – in the moment I never really thought about it. But at some point, I wondered why the two Summers weren't receiving as many assignments as I was. In hindsight, this was clearly an issue. I'm glad I had that experience because now I know what it feels like, and after taking this class, I now have some sort of a plan of how to attack it.

**Q: Great. Well, in closing, could you give your last remarks and advice you would give to either a male ally or a male who is not an ally?**

**A:** I think I would tailor my advice to non-allies because I think that's the issue here – there are not enough allies. If you look at our class, how many men sign up every year? So, my advice, if you're an ally awesome. At the same time, that is still the bare minimum. I would hope that everyone wants to be an ally because it's the right thing to do. For anyone who is not an ally, you should really go out and get informed. At the very least, if you don't want to go out and take your own steps, do things like take this course that will open your eyes. Being completely realistic, not everyone is going to a law firm and make sure everyone's equal – that's just the fact of the matter. But at the very least, acknowledge that there's an issue, and if you don't believe there's an issue, take things like this course – it can open your eyes. I think that's the first step in getting more allies. I wouldn't have even thought about the things I'm saying now if I hadn't taken this course because it's things that I've brushed off unintentionally. Things like taking this course is the bare minimum – not like you will be burdened by anything. It's opened my eyes so much to something that I wasn't passionate about before – I now want to do something about it. I think that starts with acknowledging it and being informed about what's happening.

## **Interview #21**

**Q: We are both taking Women, Law, and Leadership course with Professor Rangita, and we've talked a lot about the struggles women face and how important male allyship is in helping us overcome our struggles in the workplace. My question to you is why did you choose to take this course, and the second question is, in your opinion, what does it mean to be a male ally?**

**A:** I took the course for a variety of reasons – I think it is an important topic and something that I feel a lot of social movements are getting attention now—the issue of women's advancement, especially in the MeToo, post-MeToo Era. I definitely thought it was important to be engaged in the conversations, and as a man, to listen and to be better understand. Growing up, always being man, I like to challenge my viewpoints and understandings so that was one of the reasons. What was the second part of your question?

**Q: What does it mean, to you, to be a male ally?**

**A:** I think it's being present. The more you know, the more you can see what can be problematic and what's not. So, learn the ways in which women are undervalued in the workplace or when things happen that I may not have been acutely aware of before, but now, I have a different perspective. So being able to speak up when I see issues and things that are problematic.

**Q: Have you ever had to speak up on issues that you saw that were problematic?**

**A:** I don't think I've had to – what context are we talking about? In the work context?

**Q: Both.**

**A:** In a work context, I don't think I've had to. I worked on Wall Street for a bit, and I worked in China. In those two environments, maybe I wasn't looking for it or I didn't have the tools that I have now, but I didn't see anything that was latent or even to be spoken about. In my personal life, nothing comes to mind as well.

**Q: My next question is would you be more inclined to speak out now that you're in this class. I know we've talked about sidelining in class a lot. As you partake in your leadership journey, and where you end up, would you be more inclined to speak up or would you fear backlash?**

**A:** I think I would be more inclined to speak up. What makes a difficult is that things are so hidden and latent, that it's tough. Obviously if it was something that was overt, I would have no hesitation. I even ask myself now – not sure if we talked about this in class, but sometimes how someone needs to take notes, the woman would be the one who volunteers to take the notes. In a situation like that, I don't know if I would speak up. What if I say, "You don't have to feel this pressure" and she says, "No, I just like note-taking". You don't want to make assumptions that aren't true, right? Also, there's a risk-fit analysis. So maybe in that moment, depending on my relationship with the person, depending on a host of factors, I may not say, "No you can't write

because you feel this way”, but in general, I would speak out – it would have to be context-specific.

**Q: When you are job hunting, do you keep in account of how many women, women of color, and Black men that are working or going to be working in the same environment as you?**

**A:** Women – no. Black men and women – definitely because I think it speaks to – obviously the numbers across law firms are low. If your third or fourth year has 1 or 2 Black people, then I think there’s an issue there, especially depending on how big the firm is. Given the specifics of the firm, if your incoming class was 60 people and 20 were Black, and year three, there’s only two of them, that would be a red flag for me. That is something I look for. Women, generally, no I wouldn’t say it’s something that I have or did consider.

**Q: So, you said that you consider Black men and Black women, but not women generally? Why is that?**

**A:** It’s because it’s not something I’ve been conditioned. In the incoming classes and moving up in the ranks, I guess when you get to the partnership level, then it begins to fade a bit. There are some women who opt out, some pressured to leave because of familial issues, but I think early stages from what I’ve seen, it’s pretty even for the first 6-7 years between men and women. It’s not something that’s been salient in me deciding where to work.

**Q: In class, we’ve also talked about mentorships and how important they are in building who we are and in our life journeys. My question is, have you had a female mentor and how has that shaped your perspective of being an ally?**

**A:** My job on Wall Street at Moody’s, I would say my supervisors. Then this past summer, there was an attorney that I worked with who was a female attorney – she was kind of like a mentor. To be honest, I wouldn’t say, it’s shaped it in any way because it was always in a professional context. I saw the good work they did, and the praise that people gave, specifically about this attorney I worked with this past summer Associate internship. Seeing her work ethic and how she was respected and well-regarded across the firm was inspiring. Now, how that translates to me being a better ally, I can’t really see a connection now, but it was an inspiration to see that in at least, the firm that I’ll be going to, a woman who’s working hard is well-regarded.

**Q: What about male mentors – have they made you a better ally?**

**A:** I can’t say they have. It’s nothing that’s come up in conversation or would translate to how I’ve shaped my allyship.

**Q: Since no mentors have shaped your allyship, have you had any role models growing up that impacted how you viewed equality and inclusion?**

**A:** Yes – definitely. Starting from home – my grandma. My grand mom was one of the first female bankers in Ghana. I grew up in Ghana, and she had to fight for a lot to rise up the ranks in

the banks. Ghana is an African country, still with the outdated notion about women and their role at home. She had to fight through all of that to move up, so that was a big inspiration hearing stories from her. Also, my mom – she’s been the rock of the family. My mother is the one who gets stuff done. Her struggles as well, helped inform my desire to get to understand. It’s tough. I grew up in a Ghanaian household that even though my grandmother was a banker, she lived with us in the U.S. afterwards. I left Ghana when I was ten, and at that time she left Ghana to live with us for a while. Even then, I saw how my little sister was treated versus how I was treated – she had to learn how to cook and clean, while we just got to chill as the men. Even with my grandma’s progressive actions, there was still this notion that the women’s role was at home. Even for me, it took a lot to break out of that. Obviously, growing up in America is very different. It took up until college for me to see it as a real issue, and even then, I had to go through situations to see how systemic and how it weighs on women. I’ve always been around strong women, so I didn’t always see what the issue was about until I got to hear different perspectives, read more, and talk to more people see how it functions.

**Q: Since you were brought up in that tradition of the women’s role, do you think you still follow that. And would you want to build a family based upon those tradition principles?**

**A:** If you want my honest answer, I obviously want a woman who wants to pursue her passions – I want a partner, a wife, who works and does all she needs to feel fulfilled. I also think it would be a plus, in my opinion, if she liked to take the lead in homemaking. Not necessarily, she has to as a woman – as a mandate. But for me, even at my age, that is what I’ve seen and what I’ve been accustomed to. I can cook, clean, and manage a household, but for me, it would be something I would find attractive – not an expectation. Let me just make that clear in this recording, it is not an expectation. If I marry somebody, there are something many other things that are more important than that, I would just accept it.

**Q: You would want your significant other, to pursue her own dreams and do what is ever fulfilling for her, so what if that comes at the cost of raising children to the point that You have to be at home. Would you be willing to do that?**

**A:** 100%. If she wanted to be the breadwinner, I would not mind that at all.

**Q: Moving on a bit, do you notice exclusion in your everyday life? I know growing up, for me, if I go in a room, I would spot the people of color and gravitate towards them to feel more comfortable. Do you notice the exclusion as well, and do you not feel as comfortable being that “Only” person in the room?**

**A:** I definitely do notice the exclusion. In terms of me personally, I think I’ve been in so many environments where I’ve been the “Only one” – whether it be the only African, the only Black person, etc. So, I’ve developed a mentality and mindset that regardless of who’s in the room, you can always find common ground. Obviously, there are times where it’s nice to feel comfortable. I do feel like it can be a burden at times finding a common ground with others because the burden is always on you, as the “Other” to form the connection which is exhausting a lot of the time. I think I do notice, but most of the time, I’m able to build that common ground.

**Q: As you travel through your leadership journey, will you be more inclined to bring people of color with you and have them apart of your journey?**

**A:** Yes. I plan to be a resource for whoever wants to reach out, and I think if I do get to a position of power – whether in a law firm or an organization – I would definitely be looking out for people of color within the organization. I have been on both ends of the spectrum, where I’ve had older, Black attorneys, who have really looked out for me, and then others didn’t. For example, there was a partner in this group of four white men and a woman, and I was walking, and he was my mentor, but did not say anything—so I’ve seen both sides of the spectrum. One side feels a lot nicer, especially when you are starting out, trying to navigate. I will definitely be somebody who brings people in and encourages where I can.

**Q: That’s good. Going back to whether you would speak up in a situation where you see someone being discriminated against or you, yourself are, do you think if there was a situation where you have a great job – as far as pay and benefits – but you don’t want to jeopardize your job over what you are witnessing, would you be more inclined to speak up?**

**A:** I think I would speak up – I would hope I would. There have been times where I haven’t. I would like to think as I get older and as I mature, I understand myself better.

**Q: Why do you think you haven’t spoken up?**

**A:** First off, I don’t think those circumstances happen too often. And if it has, maybe I didn’t have the tools to see it happen because in the work context, it is never going to be overt. If it’s not overt, then you really run the risk of creating a situation where there’s no situation. The main reasons I haven’t is because I don’t think I’ve seen it happen, at least in the professional context.

**Q: Looking forward, how important do you think having leadership and diversity at all levels is?**

**A:** Leadership is paramount, as we see in our nation now. Leaders don’t necessarily have to have all the answers, but they should be able to listen to those who might have the answers and make the best decisions. That’s where it ties into having diversity across all levels because if your business is all the same types of people, you can form groupthink and your array of possibilities to assess are limited – because of a lot of people share the same experiences. Not that sharing the same experiences will give you the same way of thinking, but why not have different backgrounds – you will have a greater chance of having different ideas and opinions, and better yet, if it’s permeating throughout the organization. I think leadership is important and diverse leadership is even more important, and diversity throughout an organization on all levels is crucial.

**Q: Are you involved in any organizations right now that emphasize the importance of diversity and leadership?**

**A:** Now, I am not currently in any. I would like to join one in the future, but I would have to do my research on which ones are doing the work I’m interested in. It is on the list.

**Q: Do you have any advice for male allies or women/ women of color to close it off?**

**A:** My advice is to listen – always try to question your thinking; question your opinions. It takes time to see and fully understand someone else’s perspective, someone else’s reality. Don’t be too quick to impose or throw in what you know or what you think is the reality because then you’re not truly listening. Listen. Engage. Ask questions.

## **Interview #22**

**Q: Hi, it is truly wonderful to have the opportunity to interview you. You know I am now taking a course called Woman, Law and Leadership, and we've discussed a lot in depth about the importance of male allyship to enhance the balance of power in the workplace. You are one of the male leaders of student union during the bachelor's degree with great experience working with female counterpart, I am looking forward to hear about your opinion regarding male allyship. To begin with, How do you define allyship? Do you consider yourself to be an ally for woman? How so?**

**A:** Hi. I'm glad to discuss this with you. For me, the definition of allyship is to share empathy with and support to certain group. I do think I am an ally for woman and I hate to see women being mistreated in either work or social occasion.

**Q: Great to hear that. I also know that you have experience working in foreign law firm China representative office, how often do you see women in leadership in these workplaces? Did you witness gender discrimination?**

**A:** Well I often see women serving as leadership positions such as partners, senior associates, and faculty attorneys, etc. As for gender discrimination, well it doesn't necessarily count. I've heard that a female senior attorney at a law firm made a private inquiry about the life and possible post-marital career goals of a junior female attorney (in relationship, about to be married), and then the junior attorney resigned. Rumor has it (unconfirmed) that the senior attorney was worried that the junior counterpart's life focus would not be on her career after marriage.

**Q: Sounds so miserable. When I was being interviewed for an internship, I also be asked questions regarding how to balance work and family, I assume that if I were a male candidate, I would not be asked that question.**

**A:** Most likely not, there is still a long way to go.

**Q: So, on a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not comfortable, 5-very comfortable), how likely would it be for you to request & participate in work-family policies (ie. Parental Leave or Flexible Work Arrangement) if your family situation made that need applicable?**

**A:** I suppose 5.

**Q: Full? Awesome. A step forward question, how can you play an integral role in constructing these equalizing policies and constructing care as a policy issue?**

**A:** I always take family as top priority and will support such decisions by my male and female colleagues, and if anyone questions them, point out that this is normal and that both spouses should take responsibility for the family.



**Q: There is a concept named “man box”, which refers to a set of beliefs, communicated by parents, families, the media, peers, and other members of society, that place pressure on men to act a certain way. These pressures tell men to be self-sufficient, to act tough, to be physically attractive in a certain way, to stick to rigid gender roles, to not cry or show emotion, and to use aggression to resolve conflicts. How much do these descriptions relate to something that you have experienced?**

**A:** I once met with a partner who fit the stereotype perfectly: serious, slicked-back, and always dressed in a suit, but most of the others are pretty normal. I think guys pretending to be manly and tough is probably more common in the US (toxic masculinity), not that common in China.

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not comfortable, 5-very comfortable) how comfortable do you feel in your ability to fully be yourself at work?**

**A:** 5 out of 5. I don't care what other people think, as long as I am comfortable.

**Q: Cool! When you see men and women paired together on television, in movies, or other media platforms, what tends to be their relationship?**

**A:** Partners and friends.

**Q: Has the way you have seen women in positions of power on social media influenced your actions or decisions to be an ally for women in your professional life?**

**A:** To be frank, not necessarily. It's good to have women leaders on social media, but I appreciate them not because they are women, but they are good people with unique charm, such as PBG, Elizabeth Warren, Evelyn Yang, etc. I'm more moved by stories of women fighting for women's rights and by the voices, stories, and stories from ordinary women on social media than by women leaders with political identity.

And here is a probably controversial point that I don't like identity politics in certain areas of the US, and I strongly disagree that someone should be favoured and chosen because of her/his gender. If someone is chosen, it should be based on the fact that she/he is a good candidate, behaves respectable, has a lot to offer and can inspire the public, not just because she is a woman. For example, a political candidate should promote her/his policy, the reasons behind it, and how it would benefit the public, rather than 'I will be the first female ... and the little girls in front of the television will be so proud and so inspired.' It's detrimental, taking advantage of what others have fought for women.

**Q: Your last point is quite thought-provoking. This is the end of the interview and thank you so much for your participation.**

**A :** Thank you so much. This is all wonderful information.

## **Interview #23**

**Q: Good afternoon! A very warm greeting from Shanghai.**

**A: Good afternoon!**

**Q: As I have informed you earlier on Friday, I'm currently undertaking a course called 'Women, Law, and Leadership', and I would like to ask you some questions about the allyship between men and women in the workplaces. Shall I start with this question of definition? How do you define allyship?**

**A:** Well, the allyship, from my point of view, within the context of the gender equality, may refer to the close relationship between two individuals, with overlaps in perceptions of social issues, construction of their essences, and at the very least similar logical approach to the resolution of the dispute that might from time to time confront these two, which in turn defines and gives rise to the allyship.

**Q: Thank you, Ju. And then, do you consider yourself to be an ally for woman? And how so?**

**A:** I would say: more likely than not. Generally speaking, I would leave this judgment to the rest, whilst when pressed for the answer, I would cast this conclusion that I am more likely to be an ally for women than not.

Individually, I possess not preliminary bias against the existence of women as humans, and the fundamental calibre when compared with their male counterparts. An equal atmosphere has been developed at home, as my parents shared the housework jointly and no one may have taken the other's share of burden for granted. The salary is another indication as no obvious distance has been detected between the salaries of parents. In a nutshell, this type of largely equal atmosphere produced by the family life and salary earned by parents has contributed to my preliminary perception of women being equal whatsoever to men.

Institutionally, I fully appreciate that there have been systematic inequalities embedded within the construction of the social fabric within, perhaps, each society. There have been very few women justices in the UK Supreme Court, as most justices there are white old Oxbridge graduates. It is hard to explain this phenomenon by alleging that women are less interested in the law discipline as there are considerable lady students in law schools. Due to the restricting space, no more instances could be presented here, but I fully acknowledge that there are institutional designs that might lean forward the men, rather than their counterparts. Some reforms might be undertaken to address this institutional inequality, but with patience and cautious. The progressive reform such as fixed quote for the women in the workplace might be counterproductive and deserves more detailed analysis. More practicable approaches, such as providing free education until high school, if possible, colleges, subsidising those who have to go parental leave which serves as compensation for the women who might find themselves left behind after the parental leave, sharing the burdens of feeding the children by covering the expenditure by all taxpayers, and assisting those girls from the most desperate areas, financially,

technically, and perhaps mentally until they have established the financial stability to live on their own. The government, Quango and NGOs may play their respective parts, as the authorities may hold the principal responsibility whilst the Quangos and NGOs might share the burden when the public authorities might not reach so easily. These economic and fiscal policies, from my point of view, might operate better than the mere propaganda, fixed quote for the women or other measures. The economy always touches the bottom of issues.

**Q: By the way, sorry for butting in, what is Quango?**

**A:** Oh, Quango refers to Quasi-NGO in the British Commonwealth. It is an institution that receives the financial support appropriated from the government, whilst in the meantime runs its own business independently.

**Q: Oh, I see. Please pray continue.**

**A:** Thank you, you are so kind. Where am I...? Oh, then it is the social sector.

Socially, I might cast some doubts over the effectiveness, soundness, and accuracy over the social movements, such as MeToo in the west these years, which might lead to conclusion by some that I may not be regarded as an ally for the women. As a law student, the accusation of any sexual misconduct is serious. In effect, the more serious the crime itself might be, the more serious the accusation, and perhaps the mis-accusation might be in the meantime. During the Senate hearing of Justice-appointed Cavanaugh, he has been accused by a lady of sexual misconduct whereas the lady concerned could not point out the time, space, and the details which could positively lead to the Justice-appointed. Nonetheless, during the coverage by BBC, this perception without concrete basis that he has indeed committed some sexual misconduct has been rooted in the public. No man should be held guilty until proven so, and this has been the principle in the Common Law since the Magna Carter 1217. The strong sentiments against Cavanaugh have sent him to the storms which perhaps should not have trapped him so in the first place. I myself possess no bias against the punishment imposed upon the criminals, but the process of verdict should only take place in the court rooms, after due process and cross-examination, with all evidence assessed by the court, but not in the media broadcast studios, nor even the Senate chamber.

**Q: Thank you. Now, I would like to turn to the actions. Data has shown that when women do speak out, they can be ignored, or have their ideas taken. As an ally, how do you help amplify women's voices, not competing with them for influence or for the sake of showcasing what an admirable feminist you are?**

**A:** How to express one's views and then ensure them being heard is not only an issue for the women, but also plays as the very essence of the modern democracies. Individually, as an ally, one might help the women concerned, in my area, to resort the judicial system more efficiently. Sometimes, the resort to the judicial system has been placed behind the resort to the internet, which might do little help, or even none, to the resolution of the disputes. Thereupon, as in the legal sector, I would be much willing to help these women concerned to turn to the judicial system, and perhaps legislature when necessary to amplify their voices and ensure their ideas

being heard, not necessarily taken since this has to be assessed case-by-case in accordance with common sense and the stipulation of legislation.

Within a democracy, the best approach to ensuring the women being heard is to run for Parliament. Margaret Thatcher is a very good example, especially in 1970s and 1980s when lady politicians were few, for the followers to build up their identity, voice out their ideas in Parliament, and promote the movements of gender equality in a more efficient platform. Considerable achievements have been made in the course of the last four decades when more and more female MPs, Secretary of States and even the second female Prime Minister have occurred in the UK. To devote oneself to the Parliament or Government would be the preferable approach to influencing the policy-making and drawing the attention of the public.

**Q: Since you would like to be a future scholar, if no formal format exists, how do you (or will) offer peer to peer mentoring? Schedule phone appointments? Find a coffee shop or office with other people around? How do you keep it professional?**

**A:** I am much willing to offer personal mentoring to my students. I have received very warm and helpful mentoring at the University of Leeds. The preferable manner would be office-hour time, since I suppose the exchanges via mobile phones could be not that effective. The coffee-out could be appealing with PhD candidates, whereas more formal office-hour support should be more efficient for undergraduates and post-graduates excluding PhD students. I may ask my students to send me an email first before holding the office-hour support, explaining what questions they bear in mind, and what preliminary support I could offer via the email. I might direct them to read some articles or materials first before reaching out to me in the office.

**Q: Thank you, and now the comparison: as an LLM student from LSE with plenty of study experience abroad, do you see differences in male allyship cross cultures?**

**A:** Admittedly, I have not yet sensed much difference between London and Shanghai in protecting the females' interests or constructing the male allyship. One reason could be Shanghai has become a pioneer in doing so, and my personal friends back in Shanghai have quite good understanding in the gender equality and perhaps male allyship. They felt angry themselves when reading the news like rapes or sexual harassment. Time might tell what other differences might exist here in London, as I found ladies in Shanghai are confident, competent, and largely mentally strong enough. The same could be said here in London.

**Q: An, I see. Shanghai is really pioneering in that field, isn't it? When it turns to your internships, in Yinjiang Law Firm (Anqing, China) and District Court of Yingjiang (Anqing, China), how often do you see women in leadership in these workplaces? Did you witness gender discrimination?**

**A:** In the court, the females might take much more leads than their male counterparts, due to the factor that the salary for a judge is more appealing to women than their male counterparts. This type of appearance of more women in the court rooms have created a sense naturally that women could lead, and indeed in most cases were leading the jobs in the workplaces.

In the law firm, there was more balanced male-female ratio, whilst I could hardly tell any discrimination caused by this ratio. The team leaders and partners of the firm merely make their assessments by how you handle your work, and the quality of your reports, not by your gender. This capital-driven culture might, unexpectedly, serve the objective of developing the gender equality and men's construction that they share the equal status with their female counterparts.

**Q: Great, it is interesting. Now then, as an ally, how can you transform the social value attached to childcare including the role of both parents in caregiving equally?**

**A:** Well, one perhaps could do little to help, as this really relies upon the transformed perception by the decision makers. One thing is certain, that it would be counterproductive to impose heavy burden of parental leave with full salary in the meantime upon the shoulders of the enterprises. This would merely lead to the reluctance of these companies to employ any new female workers. More desirably, it should be the government that seeks to compensate those who would do parental leave by subsidy, and even force their male partner to undergo parental leaves compulsorily in the meantime. Hence, the culture of undertaking parental leave for the males would not become bizarre to the male workers, and the companies would not hesitate to hire women workers if the cost of the parental leave could be covered by the government. This compulsory parental leave for both parents is certainly desirable socially speaking, and individually speaking.

What individuals could do at this stage is to urge the government to at the very least consider implementing this scheme, in some developed areas such as Shanghai. After the course of, say, one decade, this scheme could then apply in other areas in China. As I have demonstrated above, it would be of little avail to encourage the employees to undertake this scheme without necessary financial support from the government, but at the very least, one may still share one's views with their employees in this respect. As for how much weight one could take to urge the government to consider this scheme, it would be very difficult to cast any concrete conclusion. Better still, for someone who conceives the equal burden of housework as self-evident, I would definitely undertake the parental leave myself to help with the easement of the baby-caring more equally.

**Q: Finally, does the way you see women in positions of power influence your view of women leaders? Has the way you have seen women in positions of power influenced your actions or decisions to be an ally for women in your professional life?**

**A:** Definitely yes, the Iron Lady Margaret Thatcher has not only formed my perception of Neo-Liberalism, the Monetary Policies developed in 1980s, the justified ending of the Consensus Politics from the post-war era in the UK, the self-reliance for individuals and businesses rather than state-aids, and the rule of law prevailing over the protests via Labour movements, but also my personal understanding of the women's position at the world stage. Women leaders could do not only as well as their male counterparts, but also perhaps better in many respects. Women politicians are more willing to consult their colleagues, better to reach out the electorate, and it is often the case that when women politicians have formed their political stance, it would be more difficult to shake their standings than to shake male politicians'. In other words, it is rather easy for male politicians to divert to other political thinking for the personal political interests merely.

**Q: Good, and what about the legal sector?**

**A:** Yes, of course, this type of woman model does not merely exist in the political world. Lade Hale of Richmond, the first woman President of the Supreme Court of the UK, has more personally shaped my viewpoints on my female colleagues in the legal sector. Her remarkable resilience, marvellous intelligence, and easily-construed reasoning have all helped me know her better, and in the meantime encourage me to work with more female colleagues in the colleges, court rooms or law firms.

Lady Hale's example has helped me appreciate that there are indeed distinct differences lying between men and women, but still, there are perhaps more in common. It is exactly the shining points of humanities, which is commonly shared by men and women, that should unite us all when galloping towards a better, more prosperous, more decent, and more equal society, which is definitely conducive to our children, and our children's children.

**Q: Thank you! This is the end of the interview, and thank you so much for your participation. I shall then work and act upon your feedback. Have a nice day!**

**A:** Thank you! Take care! Bye!

## **Interview #24**

**Q: Hi. How are you today?**

A: Doing great. How about you?

**Q: Yep yeah I'm doing well. First off thank you so much for agreeing to do this. I think that you are a really interesting interviewee for the topic of women's leadership and male allyship because you have had a pretty interesting life and career path. I was hoping you could kind of talk about your life in the music industry- just like give us a brief overview.**

A: Sure. So I began playing the piano at a very young age. I have a Masters of Music in Piano Performance. I've traveled the world performing with various orchestras as well as giving solo recitals. I also have recorded a few albums. Currently I am a high school choir and music theory teacher and also teach private piano lessons.

**Q: Great. I think that is just helpful for context for the rest of the interview. So my first question is a little broad. Do you consider yourself to be an ally for women? How so? Maybe you could give us an example.**

A: Great first question. Yes, I do consider myself an ally. Having the great fortune of being raised by a very strong mother, my respect for women was cultivated from a very young age. As such, having found myself in a profession with mostly a women majority, becoming an ally to my female colleagues has been a natural occurrence. Over my thirty plus year teaching and performing career in music I have served as teacher, mentor, and collaborator to many female musicians. An example from my experience, while not specific, you know, lends itself to this topic. My applied piano professor from graduate school was what I would call "extremely old school" in his philosophy of teaching. In a conversation with him one day he told me that he would no longer be teaching women. You know, I was astounded with this and tried to figure out, asked him why. He told me they (meaning women) were a "waste of his time" as they would "only get married and have kids" and thus his teaching, in his words "would be a waste of his time". Because I had been his student for some time and I felt the need to speak, I vehemently disagreed with him. I argued that for the health of our profession teaching women should be a priority as they would be more likely to pass the teaching on to their children, thus keeping the profession alive. And we had many more similar conversations during my time as his student, and I would like to think that I helped some aspiring young female pianists further their education as my professor did not, in fact, stop teaching women. His radical views notwithstanding, he was a brilliant musician.

**Q: Great. That was a very informative answer. Thanks for that example. I'm definitely glad that he continued teaching women and hope that his views were softened. I was hoping you could speak a little bit about being a male ally even in a heavily female work force. How has working with mostly women shaped the way you see women as leaders and your allyship for them? And if you could give us any examples?**

A: As I said before, having a strong mother has helped shape me as someone who

naturally looks to women to lead. Also add to that two strong aunts and my grandmother, who was definitely the family rock, so yeah it's not difficult to understand how my respect for women's ideas goes deep, and I'm happy to listen, hear, and implement their ideas. I find, you know generally speaking, that women are superior to men as leaders when it comes to collaboration and conflict resolution. And in the music world where collaboration is such an important tool for success, these women can be invaluable in teaching us how to resolve conflicts in a manner that is equitable and beneficial for all. I have witnessed women leaders many time exercising restraint in the face of often petty behavior as they worked to resolve conflicts. And the music industry can definitely be incredibly petty. And I know I would have not been as successful in showing a similar level of restraint as a man. My allyship for several of my students and peers has taken the guise mostly of boosting their self-confidence. In the music world where self-doubt can easily derail a career before it gets started, I've found that being an encourager has a profound effect on a person's self-worth.

**Q: Great. Yeah and, you know, I think that females in general have a sense of lower self-worth than men, you know because society often makes it that way, so being aware of that is very important.**

**A: Absolutely.**

**Q: So kind of going off that. How do you speak up for women when they are overlooked, particularly in work?**

**A:** Yeah so I think that my female colleagues would label me as an ally. I think that this has happened in part because of my upbringing, but also because I am the father to two very high achieving young women and also the husband of a very talented and highly effective teacher. Because I think people know how I feel about my women colleagues, I rarely have found the opportunity to speak up for women as people almost never speak negatively about my female colleagues in my presence. I have in the past, however, found it necessary to speak in opposition to older colleagues who grew up in an age when our profession was mostly men- like the story I told earlier about my professor. I am also a firm believer in giving people a chance to fail. While this on the surface sounds negative, I don't think it is. You know, we learn far more from our failures than our successes, and in today's society of instant gratification and having information at our fingertips, I've found that some people will give up even before undertaking a task. Overlooking anyone without giving them a chance at something shows a limited imagination. So I think we should give everyone a chance.

**Q: That's very interesting about you feeling like your male colleagues don't, you know, speak ill of your female colleagues when you are around. So a related question- do you attribute an idea to a woman who offered it, and do you endorse worthy ideas and ensure the appropriate person is remembered for them?**

**A:** So I think "worthy ideas" would depend on the listener to determine what is worthy or not. In my performing and teaching profession, where excellence is necessary for survival, all ideas are welcome and vetted. My students often speak of other teachers having "favorites".



When I occasionally ask them if I also show favoritism they universally answer in the negative as I'm known for valuing excellence regardless of the source. Worthy or unworthy, I believe both ideas should be placed at the feet of whomever presents the ideas.

**Q: Nice, so switching gears a little bit. We've talked briefly about hiring practices and the idea of a blind resume. We even spoke about in in the context of an orchestra and auditioning for it. Do you have any ideas on hiring practices that are clear and transparent? Perhaps a blind resume evaluation or evaluate resumes without names attached in order to reduce potential gender bias? I was wondering about your ideas especially in the music industry.**

**A:** I do believe in transparency in hiring, using formal qualifications and practical experience in almost equal measure. However, oftentimes in the music world, jobs are more bent to a specific gender. An example would be hiring a soprano to teach a group of young female singers as opposed to a man, and vice versa. Outside of these very specific examples, I believe the most qualified should always be hired. In the music industry where one's formal training is so important, I've found that a "music family tree", for want of a better phrase, tends to play a big part in hiring. One's teachers and teachers of teachers and so on help to shape a musician's qualifications. It is also important when hiring to know what kind of student a teacher produces. Is the student sufficiently prepared in the subject matter, etc. and things like that.

**Q: Yeah I think that definitely makes sense about how some jobs need to have female employees for practical purposes. Ok we're gonna switch gears again haha. We've also been talking about the importance of having male mentors for female employees. There are you know often much more male leaders than female leaders to mentor young women, so they are very important to cultivating young leaders. However, I was wondering if you fear a backlash especially in the age of MeToo and being an older man?**

**A:** This is a very delicate topic, especially in today's culture and in my mostly female profession. In mentoring my younger female colleagues, I strive to be overly professional, keeping them at arms-length. There can be no question that the relationship is mentor-mentee, and not friends. In our current world of "perception is reality", one cannot be too careful. The best of intentions can have disastrous results. But an unfortunate casualty in this can make one seem somewhat cold and callus even in the face of helping a young colleague attain their goals. There is no perfect solution to this topic. I admit today's MeToo climate has caused me to back away somewhat from mentoring to avoid being painted with the often broad brush our current society uses.

**Q: Yeah it is definitely very hard. We don't wanna leave females behind and maybe not mentor them as much as males, but I could see how men could be worried about how their professional interest in the female could look to the outside world. It's very hard to strike a balance and I'm not sure the best way to do it, but it's interesting to hear your input on the subject. We've also been talking a lot about work-family policies and how men are less likely to take leave, how places don't have equal leave policies, and how women are seen as less committed to their work by taking advantage of them. What are your views on work-family policies, such as parent leave, flex time, and part-time work? Especially for the type of work you are in.**

**A:** If we are speaking of maternal/paternal leave for workers, I'm in favor of both. I do understand, however, that traditional roles do play a significant part in the perception of our society. I would argue that my music world would, generally speaking, be more accepting of supportive work-family policies if for no other reason than the somewhat feminine bent of the profession. As said earlier, some music professions have stereotypes that, while not all consuming, can color a person's view of the profession and individuals in that profession. Being somewhat cocooned in a professional world where men are often seen as having feminine tendencies, the traditional outside male views rarely, I think, enter into this context.

**Q: That makes sense for sure. So, on a scale of one to five- one being not likely at all and five being very likely- how likely would it be for you to request & participate in work-family policies, like parental leave, if your family situation made that need applicable?**

**A:** In any situation where my family would be adversely affected and I needed and was allowed time away from work, I would rate a five on the given scale. Having a family means putting the needs of others above yourself and working for the successes of those family members. There is no situation where I would not request the time away from work to ensure my family's well-being.

**Q: Good to hear! On a scale of one to five- one being not likely at all and five being very likely- how likely do you think your male peers would request & participate in one of the company's work-family policies, like parental leave, if their family situation made that need applicable?**

**A:** I would say that because of the nature of my profession a higher percentage of men would participate in a company's work-family policy than the general public. I think the scale score would be a four. I would like to think any male in any profession would take advantage of such a program if their family needed it. However, pressures to be manly and gender roles prevalent in our society would possibly preclude some males from taking advantage of said program.

**Q: Yes, I definitely agree. On a scale of one to five- one being not influenced and five being very likely to influence- how much of your decision to participate in the work-family policies influenced by your perception of what is accepted and expected by leadership, management and your male peers?**

**A:** I would rate myself a two on that question. Because our jobs are so important to the practical parts of our lives, it would be an unrealistic not to take our leaderships' views into account when thinking about this topic. You know, business is business after all. If I'm not at work, leadership has to be able to have the work continue. While I would like to think my management team cares as much about my family as I do, that's an impossible position to take. Practicality in the work environment must at least be considered when determining whether to take advantage of these policies.

**Q: Yeah I think that if people were honest with themselves they would probably come to the same conclusion. On a scale of one to five- one being not comfortable and five being very comfortable- how comfortable do you feel in your ability to fully be yourself at work?**

**A:** On the given scale I would rate myself as four. Historically speaking musicians and performers are often seen as quite different from the general public. Performing in any medium for an audience is consistently seen as one of the more difficult and stress inducing activities for anyone. A successful performer must not just be able to function under these circumstances but enjoy and want them. Since I have been a performer since childhood, I long ago accepted the fact that I am different from others and that others will see me as such. Any insecurity I may have felt from these truths have long since faded into the past. I encourage my students to embrace the differences as often those unique qualities are what help them succeed in the global community. That being said, one does not exist in a vacuum and we all temper our speech, so being fully ourselves in the workplace and rating that a five would be pretty impossible in my opinion.

**Q: That's an interesting way to look at it. I could see how being a musician kind of necessitates being a little different and introspective. I do want to know a little more if you feel like you need to conform to the societal pressures to be "manly." Like to not show emotion or be empathetic. Society often tells men that they need to act tough, stick to specified gender roles, and fit into this man box. So I was wondering how this societal pressure interacted with your life as a musician and in a career that most people would probably view as more feminine. And if you ever felt any type of pressure to act a certain way.**

**A:** Yeah so for better or worse I was raised under the auspices of what I would call a southern upbringing. Hard work was rewarded and laziness was not. I was encouraged to get as much formal education as possible and strive to have a life that improved on my parents' lives. According to the man box definition I think my older brother would fit the bill; however, even though we were raised in the same house, my parents thankfully had the foresight to allow me to explore and pursue what would ultimately become my profession. It is a profession where I feel I am the exception, not the rule. I have vivid memories of being bullied and teased for playing the piano as a young boy. I suppose the man-box in me was present as I got into several physical fights over what some perceived as my lack of toughness and masculinity by playing the piano as a boy. But you know now I laugh when I think of one fight where I was covered head to toe in dirt with my nose bleeding as I sat at the piano playing for a chapel service as an eleven year old. Many professions have stereotypical descriptions of those who choose those careers. The concert pianist (aka the anti-man box) world is no different. And while I am a southern heterosexual man, I'm also a musician who must use my own vulnerability in performance and be able to draw from within a multitude of emotions and experiences to successfully interpret music. In this, as with most of my life, the "man box" definition tends to find incongruence in me.

**Q: Great. Thanks so much for doing this. I know your answers and insights of being a man in the music world will be very helpful for our report!**

## **Interview #25**

**Q: Thank you so much for taking the time to do this.**

**A:** Of course, no problem.

**Q: So I just have a few general and then some more specific questions about how you view allyship, women leadership, and how you personally have experienced both of those things.**

**A:** Yep yeah sounds good.

**Q:** Great. So my first question is how would you define allyship and being a male ally in general?

**A:** Yeah so I think first and foremost, it means recognizing that gender-based inequities exist. Knowing that and recognizing that it is a problem is the first step and it's an important step if we want to change anything. Being an ally also means being cognitive of how your own behavior might contribute to perpetuating those inequities and working to limit that behavior and just being conscious that you have these biases and trying to better yourself. Moreover, I think it means working to combat the inequities perpetuated by others in different ways- like speaking out when you hear somebody saying something off color and things like that.

**Q: Awesome that's great to hear. So the next question is a little more specific. How do you speak up for women when they are overlooked? How do you help amplify women's voices, not competing with them for influence or for the sake of showcasing what an admirable feminist you are? Do you have any specific instance from your time in the workforce where you did this and took concrete steps to be an ally?**

**A:** Well I think an important point would be working to ensure they have the floor to speak, but not speaking for them. Just using your influence, possibly that you have because you're a male, to give women the opportunity to speak and not taking credit for anything that they say just because they were able to say it because of you. Then maybe higher ups will recognize that they have good ideas and will invite them themselves to speak more and give them more responsibility. To be honest, I haven't really faced a situation like this in my own workforce experience, but I recognize it is something I should probably be more on the lookout for and maybe be more proactive about it.

**Q: Yeah it definitely is very important to be proactive and look out for these things otherwise they go unnoticed and change takes a much longer time. But your ideas definitely sound nice if they could be implemented for sure. Now, I know you worked for a few years before law school, so I was hoping you could shed some light on how it was working with women colleagues and bosses and how they shaped your view of women in the workforce?**

**A:** Yeah so I primarily have had women bosses throughout my work career, and have also managed women employees as a boss myself. I'm not entirely sure how it has shaped my view of women in the workforce. It is not really something I have thought about, perhaps because it

hasn't really shaped my views at all. I think I already had a lot of respect for women in the workforce and never found it like weird or anything that my bosses and colleagues were female. My most recent female boss was awesome and was the closest mentor I have had in the workforce, but I never really thought of her as a "female boss." She was more so just my boss. Similarly, my female colleagues and team members were also generally awesome, but I don't think working with them has shaped my view of women in the workplace in any significant way. I likewise didn't put much thought into their gender.

**Q: Great thanks so much for being so honest. So you mentioned how you managed women employees in your job and I was hoping we could talk a little bit more about that. If no formal format exists, how do you (or will) offer peer to peer mentoring? Like would you schedule phone appointments? Find a coffee shop or office with other people around? How do you keep it professional? And finally did you have any instances of when you were a mentor to a woman at work? If you could just speak a bit on those questions.**

**A:** Yeah. For sure. I usually had weekly one on one meetings with the female teammates I managed and with my boss. These weren't like formally required and usually were related to projects we were working on, but I also found them to be incredibly valuable for mentoring purposes. I was able to ask law school and career related questions to my boss and was able to answer any career or company related questions my teammates asked. I don't think it was difficult to keep mentoring type conversations professional. I viewed my boss and colleagues as friends, but I tended to avoid interacting socially with any colleagues, male or female, outside of the office, so it didn't ever feel like we were crossing over the professionalism line. But yeah that's probably more of a personal trait of mine. If I ever wanted to talk to a previous boss or colleague about mentoring-type issues now, I would probably text or email them to set up a phone call. I wouldn't have any problem doing that. I think I had good relationships with all of them.

**Q: Cool. Now kind of going off of that, we've been speaking in class about how men mentoring women can make a large impact. You know, there are naturally more male mentors available than female mentors, and a big way to ensure that we have women leaders in the future is to have men mentor them. However, this is sometimes perceived as inappropriate. Do you fear a backlash or worry that people will think there is an inappropriate relationship occurring especially with regards to the Me Too movement?**

**A:** No, although maybe my perspective will change when I am older and maybe might be perceived as a creep or something.

**Q. Yeah that makes sense. In class we have also been talking about de-biasing the workplace whether that be through parental leave, bias training, or just any policies like that. Do you have any ideas about how to implement these policies successfully? And just what would you do to de-bias the workplace?**

**A:** Yeah so I think from an abstract level you'd want policies first and foremost that are undertaken from a genuine place. Granted you'd wanna do certain programs for insurance purposes to cover your butt for employment discrimination, but it's also important to do it from

a human standpoint. Secondly you wouldn't want to, you would wanna be conscious that you weren't going so all in that it's way too much- you want genuine buy in from the employees. From having worked for a few years before law school I saw that people normally take the training seriously but there is definitely an element of eyes glazing over- but you wanna push forward regardless. With regard to specific policies, I think you definitely wanna look at not just what market standard policies are but wanna aspire to be industry leading in such categories. You also wanna, with the increasingly work from home environment we are in, wanna make sure people actually get to be on maternity leave and not working from home when they are on maternity leave at home just because everyone else is. Also you would want to find a healthy balance between social events and there being a safe atmosphere, and not creating an atmosphere that is like a boy's club.

**Q: Great. We've actually discussed all those things you talked about so you definitely are on the right track I think haha! So on a scale of 1 to 5, 1 being not comfortable and 5 being very comfortable, how comfortable do you feel in your ability to fully be yourself at work? I'm kinda getting at how "manly" do you feel like you have to be at work. I'm asking this because there is this construct called the "man box." This construct basically, you know, tells men that they need to act manly whether that be tough or self-sufficient or really work-focused and not family-focused. And men hear this from, you know, all over society. They aren't supposed to cry or show emotion or be empathetic. Basically they need to stick to their outdated gender role. And I was just wondering how much these descriptions relate to something that you have experienced?**

**A:** Yeah that makes sense. I think I would rate myself a two, but not for the reasons mentioned and needing to be manly at work. I think I generally have a juvenile sense of humor, which is probably most times inappropriate for a workplace setting.

**Q: Haha yeah maybe sometimes.**

**A:** Yeah but I just wanna say that I realize that that behavior should probably stay out of the workplace! But yeah I also don't mind at all acting like a different person at work than I do at home so the fact that I rated that a two doesn't really bother me.

**Q: What about the man box question. Do you ever feel those pressures even outside of the work context?**

**A:** Yeah I mean I think that those types of societal pressures are super pervasive and, you know, really problematic. But I mean I'm not really sure I've ever had anyone like verbalize to me to "not cry" or "act tough" though. Yeah that's probably a consequence of fortunately being brought up in a really supportive environment. It's possible that these societal pressures have maybe manifested themselves in me and I just haven't realized it or have been able to articulate it, but on the whole it is not something that I have struggled with. At least I can't think of a specific example.

**Q: Fantastic. That's all I have for you. Thanks again for taking the time to do this. This was very helpful and you gave some really good answers!**

## **Interview #26**

**Q: You have shared us with your amazing time studying at Hongkong University as a JD candidate. I am wondering have you noticed any situation of women in leadership in HK? Do you reckon that in HK, women/women of color are underrepresented or overlooked? And how do you speak up for women when they are overlooked?**

**A:** Chinese customary law is a valid source of modern Hong Kong law. When the British government first came in power, it declared that "the natives of the island...and all natives of China thereto resorting, shall be governed according to the laws and customs of China, every description of torture excepted." Some of those customs display strong paternalistic implications. For example, only male members of the family are entitled to inherit land and property. Not until the 1970s did the first wave of the feminist movement hit Hong Kong. The battlefield then concentrated on the labor market and the marriage system. Advocates protested for polygamy eradication and "equal pay for equal work." A decade later, industrialization began to challenge the social landscape of the city. More women joined the workforce, although few were offered managerial positions. Despite the increase of female workers in number, women remained the main undertakers of most domestic responsibilities, including childcare and daily house chores. Heavy domestic responsibilities inevitably burden their career prospect. From the late 1980s to the early 2000s, Hong Kong gradually shifted from a manufacturing-oriented economy to a service-based economy. The transition further liberalized community understanding of gender and equality. The judiciary is a significant part of this liberalization movement. For example, in *Equal Opportunities Commission v. Director of Education*, when being asked to determine the constitutionality of a gender-based public school transfer system, Hartmann J has made a vivid comment: "Is it not also feasible, indeed probable, that among those girls is a girl who is herself a 'late bloomer' but who has conquered her handicap, if it may be called that, by a regime of study? There can be no question of that girl enjoying any temporary or artificial advantage over the boys in her school. The unequal treatment she has received is due to her sex." As the urge for gender equality becomes more compelling, women's social status during this period observably improved. The number of female leaders also increase. Notably, the former president of the Hong Kong Bar Association and the current Chief Executive are both female. According to the Legislative Council's official statistics in 2018, the proportion of female legislators holding seats in the legislation has quintupled since the 1980s. Likewise, a study unpacks that women earn 27% more salaries in the financial industry than their male counterparts.

However, while women's social status improved, the longstanding caregiver role that the society allocated to females has not diminished much. Long working hours, heavy domestic duties, and intense competition at work continually coerce working women to choose between work and family. "How would you balance your work and family life? When do you plan to have a child?" - those are not uncommon questions that a female candidate may encounter in a job interview. Although some employers are willing to accommodate employees' demands, there are no universal policies at the regulatory level that require other employers to follow suits. As a result, those who aim higher at work are forced to postpone marital or child-bearing age. A female partner of an elite law firm once advised my friend at the end of her internship to prioritize her career before 30 - "family can wait." The choice between domestic responsibilities and work-life may be more unpleasant for indigent families with realistic financial concerns. Hong Kong is one

of the most expensive cities to live in the world. Few are capable of affording an apartment with their salaries; on the other hand, the inadequate supply of public housing pushes those families to squeeze three generations in a tiny room on a monthly rental basis. Mothers have to work. Some have to take multiple low paid employment in order to make up for the family's daily expenditure. It is unimaginable how they could possibly strike a balance, given that hiring a caretaker to share domestic duties is nothing but a pipe dream.

I have to confess I am confused about the meaning of the phrase "women/women of color are underrepresented or overlooked" in the question. The majority of Hong Kong population is Asian. In other words, the majority of the female population is woman-of-color. Therefore, I may rephrase the question as "whether racial minority women are underrepresented or overlooked." A short answer is: Yes, unfortunately. My observation on this matter has a lot to do with my experience with JWB. I will explore it in detail in question 3.

**Q: When you studied and worked for Justice Without Borders in HK, have you worked with any women in leadership, and how do you feel about them, including but not limited to their personality, working style, etc. What is the difference between male leaders and their female counterparts?**

**A:** I joined Justice Without Borders (JWB) as a legal fellow. JWB is an NGO that provides legal support to victims of labor exploitation and human trafficking to seek fair compensation. Both of my supervisors are female. One of them, Justine, is from Hong Kong. She earned her Bachelor of Law degree a few years. She undertook the managerial role in the office. My colleague, Nanor, is the second person in charge. She spent most of her early life in California and returned to Hong Kong for law school. Both of them are incredibly passionate about social justice and master so many talents that make me envy them.

Most of our victims are female from South Asia, including Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippine, who come to Hong Kong to work as domestic workers. However, because they are unfamiliar with Hong Kong law, some employers tend to deduct their wages unjustifiably. In some extreme but not uncommon cases, female workers are also verbally, physically or sexually abused by their employers or their family members. One of the many challenges that I have encountered is that it is hard for me to build a trust relationship with my clients in a short period. I remembered that during the first interview with my first client, who was beaten by the male host multiple times, I was completely in the blank - not knowing how to conduct the interview. Nanor, sitting on the other side of the table, appeared to be confident, mature yet full of compassion. She comforted the victim while assisting her in reconstructing the incident. To my surprised, in less than 30 minutes, we already gathered most of the information we needed to prepare her case file. If Nanor were not there, I do not doubt that that would be a long but futile day.

This will bring me back to the racial issues in question 2. I had the opportunity to read through all files of the JWB's past case. It is shocking how severe racial discrimination is in Hong Kong. Unfortunately, to my knowledge, there are not many female leaders with ethnic backgrounds other than Chinese Asian who has assumed a public office in Hong Kong. But I have never researched this topic. Therefore, my understanding/conclusion might be wrong. That being said,



more and more professionals are willing to help combat racial inequality. For example, apart from NGOs like JWB, I also know many architects who input great effort to design high-quality rest stations for domestic workers.

Regarding the last sub-question, I do not want to be overly generalized on whether female and male leaders are different. I believe gender does not define a person's professional capacity, intelligence, or decency.

**Q: As a future male leader, How would you structure the design and layout of the workplace to advance diversity?**

**A:** I do not have an expertise in office design. Most of my works focus on theme parks. These two types of programs require very different skill sets. I apologize that I might not be able to offer much on this question.

However, one thing noticeable is that most of the offices nowadays employ a so-called “open-plan” design format, i.e., a format that enables everyone to see everyone else. Professor Igo in her book *the Known Citizen* has fiercely criticized this design strategy for its potential intrusion of female’s privacy. I find her argument quite compelling. Thus, architects should be more mindful about protecting individual privacy in the workplace to accommodate employees’ legitimate personal needs.

**Q: This question is about sexual harassment. As you know, MeToo Movement is advocated by lots of celebrities who shared their stories of sexual harassment. In your mind, how is the #MeToo Movement shaping norms of masculinity?**

**A:** This is a very good question but perhaps requires more profound research. I must confess that my knowledge about MeToo is very limited. That being said, I do appreciate that leaders of MeToo have input great efforts to break through the traditional dichotomy understanding of gender and attempted to include more people with different perceptions about gender and stereotypes to the conversation.

**Q: From you own opinion and based on your abundant working/life experience, how do you construct male allyship for women? (in both daily life and work place). Do you really think women can achieve family-work balance in your home country China? Do you think women in HK are much easier (or harder) to achieve work and family balance than those in Mainland China?**

**A:** I think I have touched upon this question a bit when I talked about working/life balancing problems. I do not have working experience in Mainland. Therefore, I cannot say lightly whether it is easy to achieve a working/life balance. I know people like my mom, who are quite successful in drawing boundaries between her work and personal life. Meanwhile, there are people like my godmother, a known workaholic, who work round the clock. My guess is that to what extent could an individual balance her life depends on multiple factors: where does she live; what does she do; has she established her own family; what is her career ambition; what is her educational background, and so on. The list is non-exhaustive.

Regarding the last question, my short answer is: Depends. If we compare women living in Shanghai or Beijing and Hong Kong (the big cities in China) there might not be much difference. But if we compare those working in Yunnan (a small-sized city) and Hong Kong, the conclusion might differ.

## **Interview #27**

**Q: Do you consider yourself to be an ally for women? How so? If you answered no, will you be afraid of being a male ally, speaking out for the underrepresented women?**

A: I am not quite sure about the exact meaning of female ally or male ally but I do indeed want to speak out for the underrepresented women. I sincerely believe that women can play more role in many industries and positions to represent the group such as participating in politics, acting as the leader of the company et al.

**Q: I know you spent one year studying at LSE, in London. Did you notice any exclusions for women and women of color back then in the UK Media or in your daily life? And can you recall the women/women leaders you knew in the States and in the U.K., do you think their voice could be heard? If not, have you ever helped them to speak out; If yes, what difference can you find in terms of how they get their voice heard between them in these two nations you stayed and studied.**

A: I did not notice any exclusions actually. The director of the LSE is a woman. Her voice is always being heard in my opinion. She leads many seminar talks with many other famous experts and can often express her own opinions and remarks. In the US, I think Ms Elise Kraemer can be considered as a women leader because she is leading the Graduate Program team. She always has a say in the matters of the graduate program and I think her voice is being heard as well. I cannot find many significant differences between the way of how they get heard. I think both of them get heard because they do have outstanding expertise in their areas and thus people will respect their opinions and thoughts about matters in these areas.

**Q: You shared us with your wonderful working experience in China big law firms and famous Byte Dance corporations as an in-house counsel, did you find out How would these big companies boost gender diversity within their own operations? And what is your opinions when working with any female leaders? Does the way you see women in positions of power influence your view of women leaders?**

A: Actually both the law firm and the corporation I interned at have more female employee than male employee. I cannot tell how they boost their gender diversity. But I do notice that because many employee there were female, they were more likely to prefer male candidates when they were interviewing candidates.

Female leaders are often face with a dilemma—balancing between family and work. My previous partner in the law firm is a female leader. She had to take care of her children while also being responsible to her work.

The experience of working with female leaders makes me feel that they deserve more respect and support.

**Q: Among those big firms you worked for, what is the corporate culture that elevates both**

**male and female employees through appropriate symbols and non-stereotypical leadership roles?**

**A:** In my opinion, Bytedance does not prefer man to be leaders. The leader of the local legal team of Bytedance is a female as well.

**Q: As a future male leader, how will you eliminate gender bias eliminated in performance reviews? For example, you know, some hiring practices are clear and transparent and some are blind resume evaluation.**

**A:** Maybe it is better that during resume evaluation, we ask the candidates not to provide gender information in the resume and we evaluate resumes based on other information rather than gender. During interview process, our interviewers should have both female and male leaders.

**Q: As a future male leader in decision-making role in a company (and soon you'll be), how can you devise a mechanism in care giving that works for both sexes? Do you think women should be given more time and money considering they experience physical change when giving to birth?**

**A:** I will not go to a company to be honest because I will go to academia. But I do think women should be give more support and respect if they choose to have children. The company should not discriminate any women who want to give birth and raise children.

## **Interview #28**

**Q: Thank you so much for taking the time for this interview. You are the managing partner of your firm's Providence office. How long have you been working as a lawyer and managing partner of your law firm's Providence office?**

A: I started as a summer associate after my second year [of law school] in 1980, and I graduated in 1981. And so I've been with the same firm for those 39 years. 39 plus if you include my summer program. I've been the managing partner of the Providence office for 15 years. And for the first 10 of those 15 years, I was the co-managing partner of the office -- I shared the role with a female.

**Q: How do you define allyship?**

A: I would define it as a state of welcoming either people or firms or countries that are in some way different -- but they are collaborative, and working together for a common interest or common goal.

**Q: Do you consider yourself to be an ally for women? How so? This can be within your law firm or in daily life.**

A: Yes. For one thing I have great respect and admiration for my wife and her professional career, for your mother and her professional career, for both of my daughters and their professional careers, for my former co-managing partner (who was in a different field of law but a terrific leader). She taught me a lot, and I think taught her a lot, too. And I feel very strongly that our women partners and associates are great colleagues that should be supported and rewarded in the same way as men are. I feel very much that I am an ally.

**Q: Does the firm have any form of diversity training, and if so, do you think it has been effective?**

A: We do have diversity training -- we have regular seminars and we have a chief diversity officer who has organized outside trainers to come in and do diversity training. I think something that was far more successful was that our diversity officer organized "town halls" following the issues this year relating to violence against people of color.

And so our diversity officer would put about 75 people on a series of conference calls--since we couldn't get the whole firm on, that would be too much-- and it was voluntary but people were strongly encouraged to attend. And so [during these calls] we would talk about what was going on [in the country] and what the impact meant in particular to our lawyers of color. And I think that this was far more impactful than the diversity training we'd had before. But we are very committed to diversity and inclusion as a firm -- this is a statement that our managing partner makes once a week in one form or another.

**Q: Do you serve on any boards that promote diversity and inclusion in your firm?**

A: We have a diversity committee at our firm, and although I am not on that board, I think as the office managing partner I am held accountable to see the promotion of diversity and inclusion wherever possible. And that means, for example, making sure that we are interviewing and hiring women summer associates and women associates, and promoting women for partner when the time has come. We also have a mentorship program where mentors [in the firm] meet one on one with an associate, and I have a woman of color who is my mentee in the Providence office. So I feel that I am involved, even though I am not on the board of the diversity committee.

**Q: What is your approach to mentorship? Are there any aspects of mentorship that you have found to be especially important?**

A: My mentee is a 9<sup>th</sup> year associate, and so she is coming up for partner very soon. So I've been talking to her about how she can put her best foot forward, which would include some business development efforts. And it is hard because she has family obligations--and not to mention there is Covid now. But there have been some things I've been able to do to help my mentee in [the area of Business Development].

For example, I got a cold call from someone in Newport who needed a lawyer to help with a particular complaint. I made sure that I talked to my associate and I said, do you think you can handle this on your own? And she said yes. So I said okay, you take it -- this is your client and it turned out that it became a client of ours.

I also have a former partner at [a large company] who handles a lot of litigation, and I encourage my mentee to reach out to her directly. Asking for business is really a learned skill, and so my next plan is [for my mentee and I] to make a joint "ask." I'll make it clear to my friend [at the large company] that this is not business for me -- it's going to be business for [my mentee.]

**Q: Has the firm developed a Mansfield Certification program, which calls for 30% of women in leadership?**

A: Yes, we are Mansfield certified. We're advancing.

**Q: Was a paternity option ever offered to you during your career, and did you take it?**

A: No, it was not offered to me. It is offered now, and I would say more than 50% of the men take it. But I think the length [that they are out] is usually shorter.

**Q: What are your ideas on hiring practices such as blind résumés, or résumés without names attached in order to reduce potential gender bias? Do you think their benefits outweigh their shortcomings?**

A: I don't feel that I am biased based on resume gender, or other determinants. I don't see resumes without names, but I'm not sure I would absolutely need to see [a name] if someone felt really strongly about [keeping their name hidden]. But you know you don't focus on the name -- you focus on what they have done: how they have performed, what their interests are. So the name to me is totally irrelevant.

So I can't say that having someone's name [on a resume] is beneficial, and I think having someone's name left off doesn't hurt anything. But I think [showing names] is way to recall people – if you see a resume with “Laurel Sutherland” and you say “wow, this person is fantastic” then you have a reference point to say “I really like this Laurel Sutherland.” If you didn't have your name on the resume, I would say “Oh, that Penn Law grad, or that Penn Law student” when there could be several applicants [who had gone to Penn Law.] I tend to think in the grand scheme of things I'd like to see a name [on a resume] so I can distinguish among the applicants, but if someone felt strongly against it, I would refer to them as “Nameless” [as a point of reference] and say “let's hire her!”

**Q: Do you feel that the legal industry has made significant improvements in the areas of diversity and female leadership during your career?**

A: Yes, no question. When I arrived in 1981 there was one female partner at my firm. And I think that we've come a long, long way since then.

**Q: As the legal industry keeps improving, what areas need the most attention?**

A: I think we need to find ways to help our women partners particularly in the area of business development. We're still dealing with clients--and there is a preponderance of men among the decision-makers and clients-- and I think that makes it a little harder for women partners to do what the men partners do. For example, [the men partners] say “let's have a drink.” Well, if a woman partner asks the male business client to have a drink, a question is – does she have to worry about there being misinterpretation about what she is suggesting. Other examples are men going to the golf course. So that's one area we need to work on and figure out how to support women more.

I also think we have to continue to support women particularly in the child-raising years. If you are both a mom and practicing lawyer, those two things are going to collide relatively frequently. And I think that the men have to be supportive there – and sometimes that means that you are not going to ask women to take less pay, because they are also managing their household, even if they are not billing as many hours as you are. There is a tradeoff -- and that is that the mother is trying to raise children, and develop her practice, and develop business. . . and that's all hard to do! So I do think we need to work on that.

**Q: How do you think males can be better allies to women in the professional world?**

A: When you take an analogy of a football or basketball team, you have some people who are really tall and close to the basket on the team, or some people who are quick to bring the ball on the team. In football, you have the big lineman, the tall quarterbacks, the fast receivers. My point is that if you're functioning as a team--and there's no question that a legal practice and a law firm is best if people view themselves as part of a team--whether that is on a transaction, in a courtroom, or pitching for business--we have to recognize that there are all sorts of different teammates and they each bring a particular skill set and contribute in a special way. And I think what men need to do is to become more cognizant of what women can offer in that team –

whether that's on a transaction, or in a courtroom, or pitching for business. And I think we're getting there – but there is farther to go. You need a team, and a team is truly made of all sorts of different talents.



## **Interview #29**

**Q: How do you define allyship? Ally?**

**A:** Its first making sure there is available and appropriate space for other minority groups and women to lead the discussion. Not only that, but there is a distinction between mentorship and sponsorship. A mentor will give you advice and guidance, but a sponsor will be able to go to bat for you. For example, mentioning your name when discussions are being made about partnership or who to include in a deal team. Someone who is always willing to vouch for you. I think that is what allyship is about.

**Q: Do you consider yourself to be an ally for women? How so?**

**A:** I believe so. I haven't had much experience in the professional realm because I went straight into law school from undergrad, but in the groups and boards I have been on, I have always tried to advocate for more female oriented groups and events and minority groups and events.

**Q: How do you speak up for women when they are overlooked?**

**A:** When an idea comes up, I make it clear whose idea it was so that the person is credited and can be relied on in the future.

**Q: Do you attribute an idea to a woman who offered it, and you endorse worthy ideas and ensure the appropriate person is remembered for them?**

**A:** Yes, I try to ensure that the appropriate person is remembered as it can play a role in their development in the organization. Especially in law firms it is important to remember to do that.

**Q: How have you put women on center stage? How would you do it?**

**A:** It's about providing a space, but also allowing women and women leaders to lead discussion. Especially when it is something tailored to women, and especially women of color who face broader discrimination on that intersection. I want them to have the voice to lead and I just provide the resources wherever I can so that that it is an event or experience that they feel satisfied with.

**Q:** On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not comfortable, 5-very comfortable) how comfortable do you feel in your ability to fully be yourself at work/school?

**A:** 5 out of 5. I'm fairly relaxed and I don't feel any restrictions on me being myself.

**Q:** The "man box" refers to a set of beliefs, communicated by parents, families, the media, peers, and other members of society, that place pressure on men to act a certain way. These pressures tell men to be self-sufficient, to act tough, to be physically attractive in a certain way, to stick to rigid gender roles, to be heterosexual, to not cry or show emotion, and to

**use aggression to resolve conflicts. How much do these descriptions relate to something that you have experienced?**

**A:** I think there is a lot of intersections in immigrant culture and even within American culture. For example, I was raised by two strong women in my household whose beliefs might be different from other people from Bangladesh who might be more conservative or very religious.

These descriptions I have heard of in other cultures and even the US in general. For example, growing up in Arizona, amongst Latinos there is a large Mexican community and I've heard of the "Machismo" culture in that community. I've seen other instances of it growing up when comparing different groups. And as I have grown up in a female dominated household, I have seen how this differs from other groups and cultures.

**Q: What role does cultural differences (regional, ethnic, religious, class) if any, play in your attitudes to masculinity and allyship?**

**A:** I think it is very important to be attune to cultural nuances. It may be a different approach when talking to a white American woman compared to talking to a woman from Saudi Arabia. I always try to be careful and take consideration of cultural norms and nuances before approaching people about any type of subject.

**Q: Does the way you see women in positions of power influence your view of women leaders?**

**A:** I think it is important in general to see women in positions of power. Seeing people like yourself or family members can have a major positive impact. For example, we saw how Obama in the White House provided a boost to morale for many people. I think it is important because it solidifies an image. For example, seeing Kamala Harris on TV as the VP elect, it shows the breaking of boundaries of not only what has happened but what can happen for future generations, so having that depicted is very important.

**Q: Has the way you have seen women in positions of power on television influenced your actions or decisions to be an ally for women in your professional life?**

**A:** Not really, but hearing people's personal stories and narratives has helped me better understand how it would feel like to be in their shoes. For example, one of my mentors is a female lawyer, a General Counsel now in Philly, and her story has provided more of an impact than just seeing it portrayed on TV. Hearing her obstacles and narratives has been invaluable in my opinion.

### **Interview #30**

**Q: Great! So first, how would you describe what you do day-to-day?**

**A:** Mostly, I work for myself. I have one part-time attorney and two part-time employees—one is a paralegal and one is a legal assistant. In that capacity, I run the company and I get all the clients, so that's the marketing and getting all the work. And then I work on the clients, I do the legal work and whatever work needs to be done. And I supervise the employees and make sure they're doing a good job. I give out work by delegating to the people. I make sure the bills get paid.

As far as working, I do three or four main things. I do trusts and estates, which can be broken down into will and trust preparation, and when people die, probate and estate taxes and things like that. I also do real estate, mostly residential, every once in a while commercial. I do litigation, mostly estate-related, but sometimes just regular litigation. Those are the areas I do most, every once in a while I'll do something else, like sometimes I'll do a prenup or something like that, but it's all mostly related to what I do. Oh, and I also do taxes, I do income taxes and give tax advice.

For the firm I'm of counsel to, a small boutique firm, I do all that same work because they don't have anyone who does any of that type of work—residential real estate, estate planning, probate planning. Litigation they have, and I help them with the estate related litigation, they have their own regular litigators and commercial real estate attorneys.

**Q: Can you explain a little bit about your career trajectory?**

**A:** When I got out of law school, my first job was working for a Big 8 Accounting Firm, when there were eight and now there's only four. I was in the tax department, specializing in tax work. I was there for two or three years. Then I worked for two small law firms that did litigation. And near the end of the time I was working at second firm, I started to do some estate planning on my own on the side. And then I left and did estate planning and some litigation on my own for a couple of years working out of my apartment. And then I worked with another [male] attorney for a while on two or three cases, but mostly we worked on our own in a shared space. Then I just worked for myself since then.

**Q: Tell me about how you got involved with RPJ [the boutique firm that you are of counsel]?**

**A:** When I was with [the other attorney], it was shared office space, there was a lot of individual people and sometimes two/three person firms. They were all on one floor because it was more advantageous-- you could get a good floor if everyone contributes, instead of having your own little office. So, there were probably about 20 attorneys on floor. Three or four of them were one or two people firms, three or four were two or three people firms. And on that floor, were two single person firms: Heidi [a named partner at RPJ] and another guy who combined together to start their own firm. After about six months they wanted to leave and go to a new floor and start their own firm, and they asked me if I wanted to go with them, to move. And they didn't need an

employee, so they asked me if I could be of counsel, which was to help them with their firm, and in exchange for helping them I would get an office. So that's when I started working with Heidi [one of the named partners of the firm], and that was in 1994.

And then about ten or fifteen years ago, Heidi and her partner split up. He did mostly litigation and Heidi did mostly employment and IP. She said that she was going to start her own firm and move to a new place, and she asked if I would work with her and still be of counsel to her because I worked with her a lot more than with her partner, who only did corporate litigation. And I said sure, and I moved with her and had the same relationship, of counsel.

**Q: How would you describe your beginning relationship with Heidi, how you first met and connected?**

**A:** It was professional. The first thing we worked on together was an estate, where she did the intellectual property [IP] and I did the taxes and estate work—it was the estate of Duke Ellington, one of the most famous jazz musicians of all time, he wrote “You Don’t Mean a Thing if You Ain’t Got That Swing” I don’t know if you’ve heard of that song, and “Take the A Train.”

Anyway, I did the tax and estate and she did the IP, like licensing for the songs and contracts and things like that. And, actually, there was a little litigation, and her partner did the litigation for the estate.

**Q: How has your relationship changed and how is it now?**

Well, we became a lot more friendly as we worked over time. She is a really nice person and she is really smart, and I think she thinks the same thing of me. So, we work well together. I think we’ve worked together for about 27 years now. Whenever we get a chance, I refer work to her and she refers work to me. We’re friendly and work well together and I guess for 27 years its worked out pretty good. Her firm has expanded a lot, when she started [her firm] was like three people besides me, and now they have ten or twelve attorneys and four or five paralegals and other support staff.

**Q: How have you noticed her firm grow and evolve as a place that is welcome for women and, kind of, “feminist friendly”?**

**A:** When she started out, her two partners were men. The first firm was RPL, [where the] two men, they did different types of things than her-- one did corporate work, his background was in investment banking, and the other did legal work for charities, his big clients were like the UN and others like that, and she did what she does now which was employment and IP, and as she grew, most of the people that she hired in her area [employment and intellectual property] were women--not solely, but mostly. So she kept promoting and affiliating with women in her area. Eventually the other two men left, and two other women became named partners. There are other partners there who are not named partners, some are women and some are men, but all named partners are now women.

**Q: How do you define allyship? And do you consider yourself an ally to women? How so?**

**A:** Allyship is someone who works with others and helps others, and yes I would. Well, all the people I've ever hired and worked [with] within my little firm have been women, whether they've been paralegals or attorneys-- I've hired two attorneys and three or four paralegals and two or three legal assistants—and they have all been women. And at Heidi's firm, there are a few men, but mostly I work with the women who, when I work in litigation with Alice [another of the named partners at RPJ] and others, it's mostly always with women.

Growing up, I didn't think about being an ally or feminist. In the 60s and early 70s we didn't really talk like that, it wasn't a topic that we talked about, it wasn't in the range of things we ever thought about. But things changed over time. Well, my grandma on my mother's side worked for a long time in the clothing business-- she was a single mother because her husband had passed away. My mother had also worked for a long time, in the army for a general, and she was very proud of that. And so I grew up around women and mothers who worked, and a lot of people didn't have that in the 60s. Then I married someone who worked, I was always around women who worked.

I guess it's mostly when I had my family, my wife and my daughters, that really made me not only more a feminist, but also believing in feminism. They are very strong and have strong feelings, and that's something I agree with them [on].

**Q: How do you speak up for women when they are overlooked?**

**A:** I'm not sure what you're asking, because in a small firm it's hard for you to overlook women, because there's not that many people to overlook. There aren't big groups, and I only look at some and not other groups, or it's not that I make different barriers or smaller subgroups, there are just people and they happen to all be women in my little firm. And when I work of counsel, there aren't enough people to put people in different slots. That's what happens in a small firm, we discussed, in a big firm you can categorize people, but there's no categories in a such a small firm.

I don't work with other people where I have to see what people are doing one way or the other. I'm sure it happens in Heidi's firm, but I'm not part of that, I only work on specific projects with them, I'm not part of the management there. I'm not an employee or a partner, I'm just of counsel in an intermediate area.

**Q: Does your place of employment have any form of diversity training? Have you ever partaken in any form of diversity training?**

**A:** In my smaller office, we haven't had any [such] training. At Heidi's office, I did attend a training at some point. New York requires them to do something, and as counsel they asked me to be a part of it. It's been a while now, but they discussed things you should and should not do. For me, everything seemed pretty obvious, but I guess for some people they're not. It had questions and answers and hypotheticals, but it didn't affect me as much, because I didn't have to discriminate between men and women, I only work with women. I didn't have to put women in one slot and men in another.

**Q: How have you put a woman/ women on center stage? How would you do it?**

**A:** In my work. In real estate, whenever there are closings, I send the female attorney who works for me to the closings so she's in charge. When I deal with estates and someone has to gather a lot of information, I send my paralegal and she's in charge of that. Whenever there's a project, I try not to micromanage and just let them do what they need to do, and since it's such a small firm, they're on the center stage.

**Q: Have you taken any concrete steps to serve as an ally to women and/or other marginalized groups?**

**A:** Sticking up for women? There have been times when there have been problems with clients, and I stick up for my staff, but not because they're women but because they work for me. There have been times where people had issues with people who work for me and I stick up for my attorney or paralegal when the time came. I don't think I can think of a time when someone has put someone down because they were a woman, it's just that they were upset with what was happening. I'm sure it has happened and it has happened in other places, but I can't think of a time when I've come across that.

**Q: Can you think of a time when you supported Heidi?**

**A:** I guess, with Heidi, there were times that she had issues, it's hard to discuss here, but she relied on me to help her and I did, and I think that she appreciated that. And that I support her because when anyone needs legal work that she can do and that I can't do, I refer her and she knows that I have total confidence in her and I've sent her a lot of work, I think she appreciates that I refer to her with work over anybody else.

I think, in my field, supporting someone means you trust them enough that you send your clients to them, because when you send a client to somebody it reflects on you because if you send them to somebody that doesn't do a good job, then they won't come back to me either because they don't trust my judgment. So, referring is a very important thing in the law, because if you don't refer somebody good, that means your judgment is no good and they won't stick around with you either. So I support her by sending her clients which reflects well on me because everyone's always been pretty happy.

That's not something that you haven't really dealt with, but referring clients is very important in a small firm because that's how you get new clients. And it's important that you take care in the person who refers work to you, and she refers a lot of works to me too.

**Q: Do your places of employment, your office or RPJ, have a formal or informal parental or family leave program in place?**

**A:** RPJ has something in place, because right now there are two women at the firm, one recently gave birth and one will give birth in another week or two, and one has taken leave and one will be taking leave. And they recently set up a special room for them so they can make it more

comfortable for them to be in the office. I think they have some sort of program, but I'm not so sure.

[In my firm], all the people I've employed were older and had older children, or two were very young and didn't have kids while under my employment, so I was never in a position where I had to make that decision. And in terms of family leave, none of my employees have been in that position where they've had to do that.

**Q: Did you have the opportunity to take paternity leave? Did you take it?**

**A:** I did not have the opportunity to take paternity leave. When I had children, I was working for myself at the time, so there was no formal paternity leave to take. When I was working for somebody else, I didn't have kids. When I had my kids, I didn't take that much time off, because when you work for yourself, if you take off then there's nobody working. But at the those times [when I had my kids], I was mainly working out of the house so it makes it easier. Which I guess is the benefit of working for yourself, when you work for yourself you have more options.

**Q: That leads me to my next questions about flexibility, can you talk a little about how you have implemented flexibility in your work to balance work and life and how have you implemented that for your employees?**

**A:** I think that's one of the main things I have with my employees, is the flexibility. Currently I have employee, a legal assistant, who works four out of five days a week so that she can have a second job that she likes to do.

Another employee, the attorney [Darice], has four children, so for the past few years she hasn't had regular hours. I trust her to come in when she needs to be in. Many times she'll come in at 11:00 am or 12:00 pm and leave at 2:00, 3:00, 4:00, 5:00 or 6:00 pm, depending on her schedule. I think it enables her to have a job that would be difficult to find anywhere else, because everyone else [other law firms] wants a structured schedule, and I'm totally okay with that [her having a flexible schedule] because I think she's a responsible person and because I'm flexible.

In terms of my own flexibility, I work at home, I work at the office, I work sometimes in both places, I work on nights or on weekends, whatever needs to be done. I can do that because I work for myself and I have people that support me, at work and in the family, and I think it makes it a lot better place to be, because I can have the flexibility. If I worked for somebody else, I may work until 8:00 pm/9:00 pm and get home at 10:00 pm. Now, working for myself, I can leave 6:00/7:00 pm, be with the family, and then work 10:00 pm to 12:00 am, and spend more time with the family because I can make gaps on my own.

**Q: Could you go a little bit more in depth of the pros of flexibility? Do you think that really makes a difference in work product or work satisfaction?**

**A:** I think that they [my employees] are happier because they have the flexibility for them to do what they need and want to do. I think, one of the things I thought about in terms of being an ally, is that I am there for them because they have needs. Unfortunately in our society, if men

have four children they don't ask men to have the flexible schedule like a woman, but I accommodate that because I think it's important that they need the time to do what they want and not have to worry about putting job or family first, that they can put both first. And if something happens, I can back them up, too, if something happens. But, I think having flexibility makes them a lot happier because they can be both a parent and a worker.

**Q: Along those lines, have you introduced any [other] policies to help women and women of color at your place of employment?**

**A:** I guess that I don't generally hire that many people, and when I do hire when I need people, they usually stay for a long time. So, there's no policy to implement.

But, the attorney that I currently employ with the four kids is a Latina [Darice], and I did hire an Asian woman [Helen] as an attorney for several years, when I moved from my office in NYC to Long Island, she was in the city and moved to Long Island with me, and she's of Japanese descent. There was no policy, I had met her and thought she was a good person and good employee, it's important to be both. She was with me for a few years also. But I don't have policy one way over the other.

As far as more flexible policies goes, during summers, for Darice, many times she has to take a month or two without coming into the office, and so she'll work remotely or from home. So, that's also a flexibility that's not only day to day, but month to month.

**Q: What do you think about remote options in general?**

**A:** I'm fine with working remotely if you can do it. A lot of my work can be done that way. And for women, especially, if it makes it easier to get the job done, I'd rather have somebody working who's good and be flexible, rather than not be flexible and have somebody isn't as good.

**Q: Have you ever served as a mentor?**

**A:** Not specifically, but I think that some of them consider me like mentors. Darice [current attorney] looks up to me I think—whenever she has a problem she always comes to me. Same thing with Helen [former attorney], when she worked for me, she looked up to me and respected what I did. So, I wasn't a specific mentor, but I always thought that they respected me, and that's kind of like a mentor.

**Q: Do you feel any discomfort serving as a mentor following the #MeToo Movement?**

**A:** No, because I never treated women badly that I ever had to think about what I did in that respect.

**Q: What do you think the culture of your office is? What do you think the culture of an office should be that elevates both male and female employees?**



**A:** I think that the culture of my office is friendly. There's no competition because everyone does something different. The paralegal does paralegal stuff, and there's only one. The attorney other than me does her work [real estate], and there's nobody else. And the office worker does her work, and it's only her. So, it's very collegial, but it's more friendly.

I guess the ideal is one that treats people... "the same" is not the right word... but treats people without regard to their sex. It's hard to do that, but I think that's the ideal.

**Q: How is the #MeToo movement shaping norms of masculinity?**

**A:** I don't know if it's affecting masculinity, but I think it's affecting men in the way they deal with women. Like me, I don't think it matters, but people who are more disrespectful of women, they have to think before they act, and a lot of times they didn't think that they had to do that in the past.

**Q: What are your perceptions on non-linear leadership tracks that take into consideration women with families?**

**A:** I think it's a hard question because, in big law firms, the leadership track is usually for people who want to be a partner. And a partner is more than just being the best person, because in my opinion, you also have to bring in work—there are plenty of attorneys who are great attorneys but they have to be employees because they're not bringing in any work. You also have to be a good boss, because if you're not a good boss, people aren't going to want to work for you and clients aren't going to want to be your clients. So, it involves more than just a path, it's also having the other qualities that you need to be a partner. But, it should be the same for men and women, that if someone is going to be a good partner, it doesn't matter if it's a man or a woman.

Which brings me to Heidi's office, where most of the partners are women—their clients like them and their employees like them, and one partner has a little baby. But, as far as partnership track or leadership track, I don't think it should matter-- it's the same skillset, and if you have it, it should be the same for men and women.

**Q: That's definitely an interesting answer, but the three named partners at RPJ didn't take time off/don't have children. How do you think women lawyers who have/don't have children their career trajectory is different and how do you think it could be different in the future?**

**A:** I think it definitely helped their career track by not having children because they were always there. In order to be a partner, you have to build, you don't just one day start as a lawyer and have 100 clients. You have to keep your current clients happy, who send more clients and if you take six or nine months off, you could have a gap, and then clients could go different places and you'd have to start all over again.

I guess that didn't affect the three main partners. But, I still don't think it would have affected them that much because their clients really liked them. And even if they had taken time off I think that their clients would have stayed, their clients really liked them, and they were good

attorneys to begin with which is also important, I don't think the fact that they were women mattered. And Heidi really liked them, their clients really liked them, I think Heidi wouldn't have named them as partners if she didn't think they were up to be a partner, the quality of person to be a partner, especially a named partner.

**Q: How has your relationship with Alice [named partner at RPJ] been-- you've done a few litigations together, in the courtroom, interacting with clients, or your working relationship?**

**A:** I think we work really well together, we complement each other. There are certain things she's really good at and there are certain things that I'm really good at and we both respect each other in that area. She's brought me in on cases to help her and I've brought her in on cases to help me. We've been in the courtroom together, not any trials, because most of the times it has just motions and stuff, but we've worked on depositions together.

One thing we did together is we gave a talk at a seminar to a group of LGBT women on the North Fork of Long Island where she has a summer home and we talked about estate planning for them. It was right after Supreme Court case that allowed same sex marriage, and I talked to all the women in the group about their estate planning rights and how the case affected them and what they could do, and Alice is part of that group and invited me to speak.

**Q: Supportive work-family policies have become increasingly more common. However, research shows that men's responses to these policies are shaped less by their own personal beliefs, and by their perceptions of what is accepted and expected by their male peers. On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not likely at all, 5-very likely), how likely would it be for you to request & participate in work-family policies (i.e. Parental Leave or Flexible Work Arrangement) if your family situation made that need applicable?**

**A:** Because I'm in a small firm, and I work for myself, it's a little different because I can take time off, be home and work at the same time. I can work in the evenings, I can work a couple of hours at home do a lot of the work—it's not "off-off," it's just flexibility to do what I need. So 5, because I'm very flexible.

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not likely at all, 5-very likely), how likely do you think your male peers would request & participate in one of the company's work-family policies (i.e. Parental Leave or Flexible Work Arrangement) if their family situation made that need applicable?**

**A:** I know other solo practitioners, and I think they're a 5 too because they have that same flexibility that I have, which is when you work for yourself you can do what they need to do. You could work around the situation, because sometimes you can't just take off because there's no one to give the work to. But, you can still take eight hours in the center of the day and say "I'm not going to work," and then work at night to make up for it.

**Q: Data has shown that when women do speak out, they can be ignored, or have their ideas taken. As an ally, how have you/will you address this?**

**A:** I have a good story on that, actually. My first employee, Helen [an attorney], came to me for that exact reason. She was working at another firm, doing elder care, and she was the attorney that won a big lawsuit, and it kind of made the news a little bit. And the firm she worked for, they did a lot of press releases to stay in the news a lot, and when they came to interview the firm the partner took full credit for the win. And they not only did not credit her, they didn't even mention her. She felt very put off and unappreciated, and it made her start to look [to work] for somebody else and she ended up with me.

And I always remembered that, so whenever anything happens and there's a good result, I always tell client that it was the result of the person who did it, because I think it's important for their self-esteem and happiness, to know that if you do something that somebody appreciates it.

**Q: That is a great story! And that's great how that informs you in how you interact with your employees and clients today. When you see men and women paired together on television, in movies, or other media platforms, what tends to be their relationship?**

**A:** That's too general, they could be married, friends, partners, a lot of things, it's hard to know.

**Q: How often do you see women in leadership roles on television? Women of color?**

**A:** Rarely, and even more rarely. It mean, it happens, there are TV shows, like How to Get Away With Murder, and there's a couple of [others], but not many.

**Q: Does the way you see women in positions of power influence your view of women leaders?**

**A:** Sure, because that's what you think of... you only think of people who you see, you can't think of people who you don't see. That's like when, the other day, when Kamala Harris became the Vice President elect, and everyone says that little girls can now see themselves in that position, it's hard to aspire to something that you've never seen anyone else do.

I can tell you another story! I think you know this story. It's an opposite story. My cousin is an obstetrician, and she's partner in her medical practice with another woman obstetrician. And her son would go to work with her sometimes when he was small. One day, the partner couldn't be there at work, and so they had a temporary replacement for the day, and it was a man doctor, and he told his mother that "Oh, I now know that I can be a doctor, I didn't know that men could be doctors!" because he had only seen women as doctors. That was his life experience, that women were doctors.

**Q: That's so funny! I've never heard that story—that is a great story. Well, another media portrayal question is: Has the way you have seen women in positions of power on television influenced your actions or decisions to be an ally for women in your professional life?**

**A:** No, I think I would have done it anyway.

**Q: Do you fear ally-ship or resulting backlash based on how the media portrayal of women?**

**A:** That's more of a big firm question. If you promote a woman who... a certain type who is portrayed a certain way on television, would people be prejudiced from what they've seen rather than "it's the right thing to do"? It doesn't affect me, I'm going to do what I think is right, I don't answer to anyone. I don't have a partner to say "What are you doing?", I don't have a staff who is going to say "What are you doing?" So it doesn't affect me as much.

**Q: What about female lawyers on TV?**

**A:** I think [representation of female lawyers is] fair. On *The Good Wife*, it [the lawyer who was a woman] was a person who was conflicted on how to balance family and law and moving up in a law firm. There had been other women in other TV shows. In *Suits*, the main partner was a black woman, the TV show revolved around her partner, a guy, but she was the managing partner, and she was pretty tough. But that was a role, it wasn't based on anybody in particular. But there's been other movies, there was the movie about RBG, which showed her struggle to get to the top when people wouldn't hire her even though she was top of her class at Harvard and Columbia. So there are certain representations of women, and I'm sure they're all real and some of them are fictional, but it all goes into the back of everyone's minds when they make decisions because that's what they think about.

**Q: How do you think representation of women as lawyers has changed?**

**A:** I think it's changed as stronger. In *LA Law*, there were women lawyers and they weren't as strong as the lawyers now you see on TV.

**Q: Do you think the stereotype of a woman as a lawyer has changed since you started 30 years ago?**

**A:** Yes. Well first of all, there's more women lawyers. And the lawyers who are women are now more partners, and more strong partners, and more in the front of the show than in the back of the show-- more central characters.

**Q: How about in real life, how do you think the image of a female lawyer has changed and shifted?**

**A:** There's more women now than when I started. And the women you see are the ones who are more in the media, so those are the ones you think about. I mean, there are plenty of women you don't see, but the ones people see are all really good attorneys because that's how you see them. But, seeing more of them is leading to other positions for other women because people have become more comfortable seeing women in those positions.

**Q: How about women who are sole practitioners that work for themselves, do you know any?**

**A:** Sure. They work in the areas that I work in, they do estate planning, real estate, there's actually a divorce attorney-- people ask me for attorneys all the time, they don't know everybody. So when someone wants a divorce, there's a sole practitioner who is a woman to do divorce work, and there's in real estate I come across different women a couple of times when there are purchases and sales of houses. So, I come across them all the time.

In the areas that that I am, I would say there's an equal amount [of men and women sole practitioners]. But in litigation there's not, I rarely come across a solo practitioner who's a woman in litigation. I'm sure they're out there but I just haven't come across them. But there are certain fields that women end up going into more, like trusts and estates.

**Q: Do you think there are more women who are in trust and estates than other fields? Why do you think so?**

**A:** Yes, and I don't know. Maybe at the bigger firms they get put in that area. Maybe because it's less confrontational and litigious, and I'll use stereotypes, but maybe women don't want to be in a position where they're always arguing like in litigation, and there's not a lot of arguing in trusts and estates. It's more personal, you're dealing with families, and it's just a different type of practice.

## **Interview #31**

### **Q: How do you define allyship? Ally?**

**A:** For me, as a straight, white, cisgender male, allyship is defined as (1) being aware of the discrimination, both individual and systemic, that holds women and BIPOC back; (2) being aware of your own privilege, implicit biases, and how the white patriarchy environment shapes and limits your actions; and (3) actively working to empower women and BIPOC.

Importantly, awareness requires understanding that the fight against discrimination is inherently intersectional—you cannot be just an ally to “women” in abstract because women are, of course, part of a multitude of historically marginalized groups. Real women are not faced with siloed discrimination only on account of their womanhood—they face discrimination for being black, for being trans, for being disabled, and for being many other things. Ignorance of these factors is ignorance of reality. Without identifying white, heteronormative patriarchy as the root problem, allyship is incomplete.

It is also important to note that today’s discrimination, particularly in elite western society, takes place through a “thousand paper cuts” perhaps more so than through any one overt action or policy. Allyship requires identifying these microaggressions, in systems and in ourselves, and working to rectify them.

### **Q: Do you consider yourself to be an ally for women? How so?**

**A:** Yes, I do. At this stage of my life, I mainly see my role as an advocate and evangelist: I can, and have a duty to be, the bridge to bring more straight white cis men on board as allies. I am not in leadership at a law firm, or a corporation, or in government; I can’t directly change policy. But I can advocate on behalf of the historically marginalized, particularly with other straight white cis men. Unfortunately, I think a lot of intersectional feminist ideas are rejected by white men because they see these ideas as hostile, adverse to their interests. Having someone like myself present those ideas helps demonstrate that, in fact, we all are better off in a more equitable society.

### **Q: How do you speak up for women when they are overlooked?**

**A:** My strategy is generally to create space for the overlooked women to speak for themselves. For example, when I am in a meeting and male voices are dominating the conversation, I purposefully step in and ask the quiet or overlooked participants what their opinion is on the question at issue, or if they have information on something under discussion; anything to get the attention on them and let them run with it. If I have had prior conversations with the person, I will try to call back to those conversations, saying something like “X and I were speaking earlier about Y and I thought X had a great point—X, could you talk about that here?” I always try to avoid speaking in place of women; that is not my place. But I do my best to create space to allow them to broadcast their own thoughts and personality.

**Q: How do you help amplify women's voices, not competing with them for influence or for the sake of showcasing what an admirable feminist you are?**

**A:** Generally, I try to make my contributions or amplifications as subtle as possible. Like I was discussing previously, I try to let people who have the experience of being a woman, or being black, or being queer speak for themselves. I view my role a facilitator, not a spokesman. Sometimes facilitation is as simple as not talking unless my input is requested: for example, in our Women, Law, and Leadership class I try to be there as an active listener and learner instead of looking to make myself heard. I view that class as a space for the women and BIPOC to speak about and unpack their experiences, and often I believe my voice would not serve the interest of the class. So instead I listen.

**Q: How do you bolster and draw attention to women's voices, and the voices of women of color?**

**A:** Again, I try to be a facilitator or subtle amplifier. Often, I step in when their voices are ignored to bring them into the conversation. For example, I remember in 1L Con Law I noticed that one of my black colleagues had raised his hand repeatedly without the professor (apparently) seeing their hand or, if the professor had seen, their question or comment continued to go unacknowledged. I then raised my hand and was near-immediately called upon. I said that I noticed my colleague had a comment or question, and the professor then called on my colleague.

In other settings, I try to limit my vocal contributions to comments I believe best move the conversation forward rather than just to hear myself talk. I also try to explicitly seek out comment from women, and women of color in particular, when I realize that they are being shut out of the conversation.

**Q: What is proactive allyship? How do you behave when women or other members of minority groups are not in the room?**

**A:** This question, I believe, is one of the key areas of self-reflection for white, particularly white male, allies. I do not behave differently when women or other minority groups are not in the room, except to more proactively call out bad behavior by other white people, particularly white men.

Particularly with white men, I have often observed a kind of culture or code switch occur when the group is all-white, especially when it is all-white male, where people in the group then believe they can “relax” and speak freely regarding minority groups and women as if everyone else in the group shares their patriarchal views. In these settings, I find it of paramount importance to call out bad behavior. This demonstrates to these other white people, these other white men, that I take allyship to heart. Anything else shows that your allyship is performative. Modeling good allyship even among white people and men helps sell that these values actually matter. Unfortunately, many white people, mostly white men, are more dismissive of intersectional messaging when it comes from women or BIPOC. Reinforcing it in exclusively white or white male settings makes these ideas impossible to ignore.

**Q: How is the MeToo movement shaping norms of masculinity?**

**A:** Overall, I think the MeToo movement has made a positive impact on mainstream masculinity norms by illuminating toxic behavior. I think the movement has emphasized the need for proactive allyship, speaking up against fellow men who are abusers or otherwise supporting marginalized groups in the workplace. The movement has also revealed a fissure within men generally, between those who see MeToo as a threat and those who see it as long overdue. Unfortunately, the former group is reshaping their masculinity norms to be defensive, embracing such strategies as the “Pence Rule” and refusing to mentor women. Notably, even men in this group, I think, realize that the behavior of these workplace abusers is wrong—I haven’t heard anyone try to defend Weinstein or Lauer or any of the other well-publicized cases. They just buy into the false narrative that women are looking to take down men with false claims of harassment. This distinction is still progress, albeit not much, because it shows that even in this group the norm for acceptable behavior rejects these cases.

**Q: Men mentoring women can make a large impact. Do you fear a backlash?**

**A:** I don’t fear any backlash.

First of all, the question assumes or implies that “backlash” would be in the form of a meritless sexual assault or harassment claim based on one-on-one interaction with a woman from work. The narrative that men are at risk from pervasive false claims of assault or harassment doesn’t have merit. I think everyone understands that such allegations are immensely damaging to the accused, risking social condemnation, firing, civil and potential criminal investigation. Further, and more importantly, victims of assault and harassment who do come forward sadly face vicious backlash themselves. The reality is that such allegations are not a decision made lightly or on a whim.

Second, I know that none of my actions will come anywhere near the line for harassment. Mentoring relationships, in particular, I see as requiring a heightened level of professionalism than peer-to-peer interaction with colleagues. Mentorship implies some power imbalance, be it merely from longer experience in an organization or field, or from a formal organizational hierarchy. I believe this imbalance should foreclose actions, such as attempting to ask a colleague out once, that may be legal or acceptable in the peer-to-peer environment but are wholly inappropriate in the mentorship setting. Even in a peer-to-peer setting, I know I won’t do anything that would spark any backlash.

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not comfortable, 5-very comfortable) how comfortable do you feel in your ability to fully be yourself at work?**

**A:** The “man box” refers to a set of beliefs, communicated by parents, families, the media, peers, and other members of society, that place pressure on men to act a certain way. These pressures tell men to be self-sufficient, to act tough, to be physically attractive in a certain way, to stick to rigid gender roles, to be heterosexual, to not cry or show emotion, and to use aggression to resolve conflicts.



**Q: How much do these descriptions relate to something that you have experienced?**

**A:** This “man box,” which is essentially the straight cis male paradigm, has played a role in my life since childhood. I remember growing up as a slightly awkward, book-loving kid and being derisively called “gay” by kids at school or in my neighborhood—I remember this didn’t make sense to me as a young kid because I played sports and wasn’t into art . . . clearly, these caricature notions of heterosexual vs. homosexuality masculinity had enveloped my childhood. Even today, these notions still bubble to the surface in comments I hear from other men. For example, I like to stay ahead of fashion trends, so I started occasionally carrying a small purse or tote bag. Predictably, I got comments, even from my generally progressive friends, about this choice. On a more serious note, the pressure to not cry or show sadness has certainly ingrained itself among my male friends. I can see the emotional difference between the depth of some of my friendships with men versus those with women.

**Q What role does cultural differences (regional, ethnic, religious, class) if any, play in your attitudes to masculinity and allyship?**

**A:** I think my approach to allyship and fluid masculinity is enabled by the fact that I don’t hold traditional masculinity as an essential part of my sense of self and place. I see personal insecurity as a driving force in traditional masculinity: much of it is performative. Personally, I credit my work to find and maintain inner peace as the biggest enabler of my allyship. Men who are not comfortable with their true selves, which inevitably are not going to be mirror images of the traditional masculine ideal, I think are more likely to act in accordance with these norms to demonstrate, to themselves and others, their worth. Performative masculinity also provides a metric for these men to feel superior to other men who do not adhere so rigidly to traditional notions, providing the internal or external affirmation they need.

I see cultural differences causing differences in how masculinity is performed rather than whether it is performed. For example, men who wear camo and go hunting can be doing the same thing as men who live on the golf course when the purpose behind these activities is to signal their masculinity.

**Q: When you see men and women paired together on television, in movies, or other media platforms, what tends to be their relationship?**

**A:** Unfortunately, there tends to be at least some level of sexual-romantic undertone to their relationship, though I have noticed a more progressive trend in recent years.

**Q: How often do you see women in leadership roles on television? Women of color?**

**A:** Similar to the male-female relationship, I have generally observed a positive trend in recent TV shows of having women and women of color in leadership roles.

**Q: Does the way you see women in positions of power influence your view of women leaders?**

**A:** No, at least not consciously.

**Q:** Has the way you have seen women in positions of power on television influenced your actions or decisions to be an ally for women in your professional life?

**A:** No.

**Q:** Do you fear ally-ship or resulting backlash based on how the media portrayal of women?

**A:** No.

## **Interview #32**

### **Q: How do you define allyship? Ally?**

**A:** I define allyship as being a supportive listener to problems that are faced by a group of people who you do not belong to. The goal is sympathizing with those who don't look like you or have the same characteristics.

### **Q: Do you consider yourself to be an ally for women? How so?**

**A:** Yes, I consider myself to be an ally for women by evolving my views and actively listening. Every day we get information about disparities around the world and it is taking that information into actionable items on my part that allows me to consider myself an ally.

### **Q: How do you speak up for women when they are overlooked?**

**A:** By reminding women of their qualifications and speaking up about the relationship that I have with them. By reminding others why this person's voice is invaluable to our current conversation and how it leads to a more robust conversation so they should be listened to.

### **Q: How do you make sure women, especially women of color literally take seats at the table, rather than standing on the sidelines?**

**A:** I make sure women, especially women of color take seats at the table by encouraging participation through valuing everyone who is in the room and making sure everyone knows that I think they are valued.

### **Q: What are your ideas on the world of work/law firm?**

**A:** I think there is a lot of bias that needs to be addressed, specifically in the law firm setting.

### **Q: How would you help the company start a program to attract a diverse talent pool?**

**A:** I would rely on my experience of being a Black man in America. I would go to underrepresented communities and be intentional in the interview process with the questions I ask. I would also look to local organizations with underrepresented communities and make a point of emphasize in hiring and promoting the most qualified candidates as well as those who would otherwise be overlooked. I would also actively seek out women who are not represented in certain fields.

### **Q: What are your ideas on hiring practices that are clear and transparent?**

**A:** Blind resume evaluation. Evaluate resumes without names attached in order to reduce potential gender bias. Blind resume is a small piece in a complicated puzzle, it might be one step we can take in the right direction, but we should not stop there. We should continue to create further steps that promote diversity in hiring.

**Q: How will you eliminate gender bias in performance reviews?**

**A:** I think reviews should be based on quantitative data and take into consideration externalities that may lead to differences between women and men.

**Q: What work/life balance policies through flexible work policies, support systems are available?**

**A:** I would implement a highly flexible program that is dependent on productivity. There is no requirement that someone be in the office from 9-5. That would not be relevant because the emphasis is ensuring that the work gets done, with whatever flexibility that is necessary. I would also highly encourage an in-house day care, gym, and wellness opportunities that promote employee well-being. These programs will also center on diversity wellness.

**Q: How would you create processes and incentives for those in the firm/company to serve as a mentor for women in the community, particularly those seeking to engage in industries that have been historically difficult for women to penetrate?**

**A:** I would focus on increasing women leadership positions and the number of women in leadership programs. I would also establish a women-led program that has full autonomy and led exclusively by women.

**Q: How is the Me Too movement shaping norms of masculinity?**

**A:** I think it is encouraging men to really look inward and reflect on their behavior to ensure that they are treating women with respect.

**Q: How do you understand that there are times when certain gender specific policies can serve a legitimate purpose, however, that these must be determined on a case by case basis?**

**A:** Yes, I agree that we need gender specific policies that are tailored to meet essential goals in increasing women in the work place. They do need to be determined on a case by case basis to ensure that they are actually making the work place more equitable.

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not comfortable, 5-very comfortable) how comfortable do you feel in your ability to fully be yourself at work?**

**A:** As a Black man, I feel 1.

**Q: The “man box” refers to a set of beliefs, communicated by parents, families, the media, peers, and other members of society, that place pressure on men to act a certain way. These pressures tell men to be self-sufficient, to act tough, to be physically attractive in a certain way, to stick to rigid gender roles, to be heterosexual, to not cry or show emotion, and to use aggression to resolve conflicts. How much do these descriptions relate to something that you have experienced?**

**A:** They describe my experiences very much, I sometimes feel that I am expected to behave a certain way based on the intersection of my gender and race. Or that society believes they know the way I will act as a result of these characteristics.

**Q: Does the way you see women in positions of power influence your view of women leaders?**

**A:** Yes, growing up I was always inspired by my mother and her friends. I thought they were the smartest people I knew, and seeing women like them obtain positions of power is very meaningful to me.

### **Interview #33**

**Q: How do you define allyship? Ally?**

**A:** To me, allyship is no different than friendship. It means being there for people and having their back. You support them. It is different in the sense that you are advocating for them in instances that might not affect you.

**Q: Do you consider yourself to be an ally for women? How so?**

**A:** Yes, I encourage women to speak for themselves and be confident in what they say or believe. If they are not respected, I will advocate on their behalf.

**Q: How do you speak up for women when they are overlooked?**

**A:** I encourage others to listen to women who are speaking if they express to me that they feel as though they are not being heard or respected.

**Q: Do you notice exclusion every day? Do you notice who are not there? Are you proactive? Marc Benioff, ED of Salesforce noticed exclusion and corrected it.**

**A:** I actively try to include women when I notice they aren't there, when they are actively being excluded. I try to encourage women to know that I want to make them comfortable in situations where they have not previously been involved in.

**Q: Data has shown that when women do speak out, they can be ignored, or have their ideas taken. As an ally, how will you address this?**

**A:** Any time someone's ideas are overlooked, I am good at stopping and having them repeat that. Sometimes in a group setting there is an overbearing person in the group, if you don't have another dominant personality that person can overshadow so it is important to encourage women to reiterate what was said. It is also important to call out the person who is dominating the situation, especially if they are a man.

**Q: How would you help the company start a program to attract a diverse talent pool?**

**A:** Every company has diversity goals but what needs to happen is education in certain industries, you don't normally see that many women of color in it, there needs to be more of a community there, starting an ally group for outreach for people who are not already within the company, need to create a pool of people. There needs to be a better job for outreach, if the flow that is coming in the door isn't diverse, you have a hard time retaining it. You need to encourage women in industries like STEM, we want to provide resources so they can receive an education in such fields and then will enter the work force. People are more likely to connect with people who look like them, so we need to get more people into the door so they can mentor other women.

**Q: What are your ideas on hiring practices that are clear and transparent? Blind resume evaluation. Evaluate resumes without names attached in order to reduce potential gender bias**

**A:** I like this, people should be hired based on merit without any bias affecting the decision.

**Q: How would you create a policy on equal wages for equal work?**

**A:** Paying a salary specifically based on merit.

**Q: What is the corporate culture that elevates both male and female employees through appropriate symbols and non-stereotypical leadership roles?**

**A:** A culture that is based on how you are actually performing, based on your output while taking into consideration tangible factors that might affect output.

**Q: How will you structure a company's core mission on diversity?**

**A:** By prioritizing an open culture that embraces everyone's experiences and beliefs. Diversity of thought is important, so we should strive for that.

**Q: How would you collaborate with organizations across industries on research and data backed initiatives that could help generate new ideas and strategies?**

**A:** I would provide organizations with data and information about diversity efforts in our company as well as incorporate the data and feedback from other companies into our daily management.

**Q: How is the Me Too movement shaping norms of masculinity?**

**A:** I think the Me Too movement has been good in a lot of ways because men are being held accountable for their actions. This will hopefully lead to a greater cultural shift to equality.

**Q: Men mentoring women can make a large impact. Do you fear backlash?**

**A:** I personally do not fear backlash, but I can see men who are in power might feel that mentoring someone who is younger can make you nervous.

**Q: How do you understand that there are times when certain gender specific policies can serve a legitimate purpose, however, that these must be determined on a case by case basis?**

**A:** I think these are essential to ensure that we have a more equitable work environment. Some inequalities can only be addressed with gender-specific policies.

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not comfortable, 5-very comfortable) how comfortable do you feel in your ability to fully be yourself at work?**

A: I feel 3.

**Q: The “man box” refers to a set of beliefs, communicated by parents, families, the media, peers, and other members of society, that place pressure on men to act a certain way. These pressures tell men to be self-sufficient, to act tough, to be physically attractive in a certain way, to stick to rigid gender roles, to be heterosexual, to not cry or show emotion, and to use aggression to resolve conflicts. How much do these descriptions relate to something that you have experienced?**

A: I think men are often forced into wrong stereotypes that need to be addressed, and I find that they often happen to me.

**Q: How often do you see women in leadership roles on television? Women of color?**

A: I think media visibility has increased but I think there are many opportunities where we can see more women, especially women of color.



## **Interview #34**

### **Q: How would you define allyship? Ally?**

**A:** I think the first step to allyship is understanding. Listening to whoever you're trying to be an ally to and understanding the concerns that they have and issues that they face—overall, trying to come from a place of understanding and empathy. From there, you can then take action to make things better, to help, and show support.

### **Q: Do you consider yourself to be an ally for women? How so?**

**A:** Yes, definitely. I really respect a lot of the women in my life. I grew up with sisters, and I have a lot of female friends. It has always struck me as obvious that women should have equal rights and opportunities, and as I got older I realized that that sentiment wasn't so obvious to everyone and that wasn't the reality in the world right now, so I felt an obligation to be an ally.

### **Q: How do you, and have you, stood up for women when they are overlooked?**

**A:** I was in the music field before law school. Historically, there is a lot of sexism in that industry. I had a group of friends and fellow students that felt that they were being shut down in conversations when trying to contribute—that they were not being heard or listened to. It wasn't just me by any means, but many in our circle tried to listen to them, hear where they were coming from. I tried to critically assess what I was doing, the environment that I and others were generally contributing to, and what we could do as a group to try to combat that.

### **Q: How do you bolster and draw attention to women's voices and the voices of women of color?**

**A:** For me, the first step is listening and trying to understand before I try to amplify voices, if I'm speaking at all, rather than stepping in to speak for someone. I never want to presume anything or risk misunderstanding, but at the same time recognize that sometimes it's the unfortunate reality that women are less heard or less listened to. And I do think, for women of color, they face that to an even greater extent. So, I think it's important to still come at it from that angle of understanding, but also come at it with mindset that they might have a different set of cultural or life experiences that I probably don't fully understand, which makes it even more important.

### **Q: Have you had any experiences with other women leaders on eboard of APALSA, or have any anecdotes from your interactions with them?**

**A:** Our Board is roughly half women. Our co-president is also a woman, and she is fantastic. I think, or at least I hope, I do a good job of bringing everyone in the fold and listening to everyone. Every time our board meets, we're intentional in going around zoom room and having every person on the board say hi and say what they've been up to, working on, what their areas of concern are. I think, or I hope, that that contributes to more equitable dialogue.

### **Q: How has your experience been in Lambda?**

**A:** I find it [my interactions with women] to be a little different in that context because it's an LGBTQ organization and a lot of the people in that organization, whether biologically male or female, don't ascribe to either their traditional gender roles or stereotypes. So I think that, in some cases, leads to mitigating traditional instances of sexist behavior, though I'm definitely sure that's not always the case. Our two presidents are both women... I think it's a different environment, I suppose.

**Q: What is proactive allyship? How do you behave when women or other members of minority groups are not in the room?**

**A:** I think creating space for conversations about sexism or feminism is important to me. I try to be hyper aware not interjecting myself in a place that I don't belong as a primary voice as an ally, at least that's how I think about allies to the Asian community or allies to the LGBT community, in that we want them to be supportive and understanding. So I suppose that wanting to be an ally to another group like women, I'd want to approach it that same way. Often, too, I think that leads me to be not as proactive as I could be.

**Q: Do you notice exclusion every day? Do you notice who are not there? Are you proactive?**

**A:** I think, in a virtual environment, it can be really hard to notice exclusion. If you're in a class with 100 people, you only see ten on your screen. I think now more than ever, we don't notice who's not there, who's being excluded, or who isn't given a chance to speak or be heard. I imagine that's one of the real harms of the learning environment that were in right now-- people who are traditionally marginalized are marginalized more because we are so remote and distant from each other.

I think when you're in person it's a lot easier--If you're in a room with a lot of people and you're all meeting or chatting or having a conversation about something, you notice if someone's not participating. And I like to think, or at least I try, to notice if someone is being made uncomfortable by the conversation that is going on. I think those interpersonal queues is something that we don't have anymore.

I try to be proactive. I guess, again, it goes back to virtual thing-- that if I see someone feeling or being excluded, it's a lot easier to bring them into the conversation or address why they're being uncomfortable if it's easier to perceive that, so I guess, unfortunately, I'm less proactive now because I don't know how to be, I guess.

**Q: Could you go a little bit more into your background, more generally?**

I grew up with sisters. My mom was a big figure in my life. My dad was around but working a lot, so I was around women all the time in my younger years. I don't know if that led me to be a feminist, but once I was older and more aware to know what feminism was, I realized that of course I'm a feminist, why would I not be, it's as simple as that. I never had a moment where I thought maybe I'm not a feminist or not an ally. It [being a feminist/ally] is something I've always tried to do. I'm not the perfect ally, but I've always tried to promote feminism.

**Q: How do you or will you open the doors to more participation from women and women of color in the future?**

**A:** I definitely hope to [open doors for women in the future]. As far as how do I do that, I'm not so sure. I guess it comes back to trying to notice when people are being mistreated, excluded, or otherwise being marginalized. That's easier said than done, but if I can do that, then I can take it from there and think critically about what I can do to help.

Intersectionality is something I always try to be aware of, but it's hard to say how exactly to fix the problems of women of color or women of other intersecting identities. It's a really tough question.

I think trying to create space for these conversations is important. I think affinity groups in law school or professional settings are important. For example, you can have a Women's, Black, or an Asian group, and then within those groups, you can have Black women or Asian queer women who can find each other...I think a lot of the time the first step is to have that community, and then you can maybe first create an environment of allyship in that small group. Say, for example, I'm in an Asian group, and Asian women have a particular concern, and then hopefully the entire Asian community can become aware of those concerns and be allies to Asian women. If the same is happening to all women or all women of color, maybe it starts in those smaller places and then it grows into a broader conversation or a broader movement that way. That's just one idea, but that's what comes to mind.

**Q: Data is shown that when women do speak out, they can be ignored, or have their ideas taken. As an ally, how will you address this?**

**A:** I try to never steal someone's idea, male or female, but I'm sure I'm guilty of that. One thing I'm trying to be conscious of is giving credit if I'm repeating or using another person's idea, I think that's really important.

I think it's easy to see how, if women are not properly credited for their ideas, that's part of where the power imbalance comes from, so it's important to make sure credited for their work and their ideas.

I think it's also important to structure conversations in a way that everyone has a chance to speak and it's not just one man or several men talking over someone else, because we all know that happens all the time, unfortunately. I think, sometimes, if you're in a professional setting, having structure in a meeting or making sure that everyone present has chance to be heard can help.

**Q: How have you put a woman/women on center stage? How would you do it?**

**A:** I suppose that one particular story comes to mind, and certainly I didn't put this woman on center stage, but I had this close friend in grad school who was a woman (I went to school for music) and she was a euphonium player, which is a low brass instrument. Music in general, but

that subset of the music field of people who play brass instruments, is heavily male dominated, and I guess women sometimes face greater than normal challenges breaking into that field.

This friend of mine started her own social media channel/network and it kind of centers, among other things, what it's like to be a woman in that field. I think that's hugely important, so I always wanted to do everything I could to support her in doing that because it is such a valuable thing. Even though it affects only a small part of a pretty niche industry, I always wanted to be there for her if she wanted guidance on how to say something, how to present something, how to organize or execute certain things, or how partnerships work. And it's taken off lately, which I've been glad to see. I would never take credit for putting her on center stage, but she certainly is on center stage now and I hope I helped her out a little bit in getting there.

**Q: I love that you took it very literal because she's on center stage!**

**A:** Yes! She has a very successful Instagram/YouTube presence now.

**Q: So cool! Would you mind talking a little bit more about gender dynamics in the music field because I don't know much about it?**

**A:** It, traditionally, was a heavily male dominated field, especially in classical music which is where I focus-- it was very much a boys club or something like that. Hiring was done not on the merits but who you knew, and for these middle aged/old men [those that they knew were] other middle aged or old men. So, it's not hard to see why that keeps women and minorities out.

I think the industry has taken steps to combat that. We have now what are called blind auditions, so you can't see who is auditioning for a certain spot, you can only choose who sounds the best. So, it tends to be purely merit based in that regard. And now we do have a lot more women in the industry, which is amazing, but they still face a lot of sexism. I had professors in grad school, and this was only a year or two ago, and I've heard them say things like "that was pretty good for a girl," and make incredibly sexist comments like that, and I guess it shocks you that it was 2018/2019 at the time and people still say things like that as if that's acceptable. So I suppose that women are more represented in music now, but that doesn't mean that it's easier for them to participate.

**Q: How would you help a company or law firm set up a program to attract a diverse talent pool?**

**A:** I think that's really important. I think from my perspective, as someone who is going through recruiting process right now, I think one of the most helpful things is to have personal interactions with the community you're trying to reach (women, minorities, women of color) and to reach out on personal level. I think that any law firm can send you a brochure showing you how diverse they are with their three Black partners on front page. But they all do that now, and that's functionally meaningless in this world. I think that female attorneys can try to proactively reach out and help mentor young female law students, and for women of color [to] reach out and try to recruit or mentor other women of color to enter the field of law, I think is really important.

Every law firm now has a brochure or video about how diverse they are, I think that's fine, but it doesn't do much. I think when they have actual outreach by human beings, it makes a big difference. Or when they send a recruiting team to campus, you notice how many women or people of color there are, and sometimes there's not that many, and that says something about a workplace. So showing representation and being proactive in fostering relationships and mentorships is really important.

**Q: What do you think of options for telecommuting?**

**A:** Like generally, I think it definitely should exist. I'm certainly no fan of being on zoom all the time, I personally don't really like remote work, but I think it's important to be flexible about it. People have family responsibilities, and I guess it's possible that women have disproportionate family responsibilities, and I think an option for telecommuting, at least part time, as something that can help people in that position who might otherwise have to choose between family and career.

Conversely, if there was more telecommuting post-COVID going forward, you could see how a man who is the primary breadwinner for a family could take on more of those family responsibilities and a woman could focus more on her career if she wants to do that in her situation. I think telecommuting could lead to more opportunity for equity, which is definitely a positive.

But at the same time, you see how this environment marginalizes some people even more than they already have been, so you want to take steps to combat that. Maybe permanent remote work forever 100% of the time isn't the answer, but certainly a more flexible policy, like a couple days a week or whenever you need to--there's no reason that shouldn't be disallowed at this point.

**Q: Would you ever or would you think about putting in place in the future a program of male allies in a workplace/law firm and what would that look like?**

**A:** I think my first thought is if that's an appropriate thing to do, for a bunch of men to get together and talk about issues that they don't experience in their day to day lives. Male allyship and awareness is hugely important, but I don't know if those conversations should ever take place without women. It's not something I've thought about a lot, but that's just my initial reactions.

**Q: That goes to my next question, how do you talk about women in spaces without women, and how have you noticed those interactions differed?**

**A:** I would like to think I talk about women the same way whether they're there or not, whether that is true or not, I'm not sure.

If I'm in a space where another man makes an offhand comment, I would try to be very clear cut about it. Kind of like what I was just talking about where I had professors who would say things like "That's pretty good for a woman" and a couple of times I would say "No, that was pretty good generally, not for anyone of either sex." I think just trying to correct those

misunderstandings when you see them is important. I guess a lot of people come from a cultural place where they don't realize that they're saying something wrong or harmful or even offensive, where they should realize it but they just don't. I think calling that out, in a way that's not attacking someone, giving them the benefit of the doubt that it's an innocent comment, when in truth it's not, and I suppose being very factual about the solution. And just trying to draw awareness to that when it happens.

**Q: How do you understand that there are times when certain gender specific policies can serve a legitimate purpose, however, that these must be determined on a case-by-case basis?**

**A:** I guess I think a lot about the LGBT community in my own life, and I generally tend to think that sex specific policies generally aren't a great idea, that everyone should have the same opportunities and flexibility in workplace to do what is right for them.

But at the same time, I recognize that women, particularly with things like pregnancy, face things that men just do not. So, certainly in those contexts, a sex specific policy is not a bad thing.

But, generally, I come at it from place for equal family leave programs for men and women or whatever, just like as equal as possible, unless there's a truly a reason to make a differentiation.

**Q: As an ally who will be in a decision-making role in the future, how will you help prevent retaliation and unequal treatment upon parental leave?**

**A:** I guess, just trying to make sure they are brought back into the fold. Like in a law firm setting, if a woman takes maternity leave, when she comes back, she should get her clients back, have a full workload, and immediately be reintegrated into her day-to-day work and shouldn't be punished career-wise for having taken maternity leave.

**Q: How will you send out the message that work family policies are important to men and women aren't the only ones caring for family members?**

**A:** I think that's really important. I think again, if you're in position in charge of a family leave policy, first off, your policy shouldn't have gender terms in it, just a family policy not just for men and women. I think you should make it clear that it's just as okay for man to take family leave as it is for a woman. That it's totally permissible for people of either sex to take on caregiving responsibilities.

And I guess you also want to make it clear that for gay couples having a child, they should be able to take leave just like anyone else. I think its important to be mindful of that, I guess.

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not likely at all, 5-very likely), how likely would it be for you to request & participate in work-family policies (i.e. Parental Leave or Flexible Work Arrangement) if your family situation made that need applicable?**

**A:** 5, definitely. I would probably take it, judgment be damned. Frankly, I'm never going to put my work above my family, as much as whatever firm might hate that. Maybe retaliation would be a real thing that would happen, but I'd prefer to take the family leave and deal with the fallout, I suppose.

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not likely at all, 5-very likely), how likely do you think your male peers would request & participate in one of the company's work-family policies (i.e. Parental Leave or Flexible Work Arrangement) if their family situation made that need applicable?**

**A:** I think that the subset of people that I associate with are probably not representative-- those that I'm close with are more likely to do that-- but I see how a lot of straight, older, more conservative men probably wouldn't. But, that could definitely be something that I'm just assuming. So I guess for my friends: 5. For all men: 3, maybe?

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not influenced, 5-very likely to influence), how much of your decision to participate in the work-family policies influenced by your perception of what is accepted and expected by leadership/management and your male peers?**

**A:** 1.5 or 2. It would factor in for sure, but it's not going to be a deciding factor.

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not comfortable, 5-very comfortable) how comfortable do you feel in your ability to fully be yourself at work?**

**A:** I think 5, pretty comfortable.

**Q: The "man box" refers to a set of beliefs, communicated by parents, families, the media, peers, and other members of society, that place pressure on men to act a certain way. These pressures tell men to be self-sufficient, to act tough, to be physically attractive in a certain way, to stick to rigid gender roles, to be heterosexual, to not cry or show emotion, and to use aggression to resolve conflicts. How much do these descriptions relate to something that you have experienced?**

**A:** I don't think, in this time in my life, I feel pressure to fit in this man box. But, I have experienced this in the past. When I see other people who feel the need to be in this max box, I find it kind of jarring and uncomfortable to see someone who has to be aggressively or overtly macho, or traditionally masculine or whatever.

When I was younger, there were certain masculinity norms or heterosexuality norms that I felt pressure to fit into. But, meeting more open-minded people in college helped, and once you get out of that box a tiny bit, it's a much better place to be-- I don't naturally ascribe to most of those characteristics.

In terms of a professional setting, sometimes I think maybe if I did go into that masculinity box, people would take me more seriously. But, I'm at a point where I don't care. I'm not going to be unprofessional, but that doesn't have anything to do with gender norms in the

traditional sense nor should it. I'm stubborn about that--I'm not going to act in any particular kind of way, besides basic professionalism. And I wouldn't choose a workplace that expected me to do that.

**Q: What role does cultural differences (regional, ethnic, religious, class) if any, play in your attitudes to masculinity and allyship?**

**A:** I grew up in a super feminist household, which was great and informed a lot of my views. My dad's family is pretty conservative and pretty Catholic, so hanging out with cousins and aunts and uncles as a kid, I was exposed to some different things than were in my own house-- like the women would make the food and set the table and clean, and men don't do anything, which was very bizarre to me.

Growing up South, in the Bible Belt in suburbs, everything was very Christian and very Southern. Gender norms exist in those spaces more than in the spaces with the people I know and associate with now.

I always rejected traditional gender roles because of how I grew up, but at the same time there were places where that was not case, and I can see that there's a tension there, how things were in my house were not how they were for other people, which helped me understand more about these differences.

**Q: When you see men and women paired together on television, in movies, or other media platforms, what tends to be their relationship?**

**A:** Maybe a 95% a romantic portrayal, but I guess there are situations in which its not, but those are probably the exception rather than the norm. Even though there has been, very recently, a movement toward more representation in film and TV, that is long overdue. And unfortunately for most of my life, you have mostly seen men in power.

**Q: How often do you see women in leadership roles on television? Women of color?**

**A:** I think it's also changing in the workplace. More women [are] coming into power, you know we're about to have a female Vice President, and maybe 10 years ago that wouldn't have been realistic. There are now more women in powerful circles that are dominated by men, even when things are changing. We have more women in power but that's not enough-- women are more than half of the population, and that should be reflected in leadership in everything. So, we've still got a lot of work to do.

**Q: Does the way you see women in positions of power influence your view of women leaders? Has the way you have seen women in positions of power on television influenced your actions or decisions to be an ally for women in your professional life?**

**A:** I really admire female leaders. But, now that I think about it, I guess it sticks out [seeing a female leader as opposed to just a leader]. Whenever I see a female leader, particularly one that I



agree with and I think is doing great things, I think the fact that that sticks out to me says something.

### **Interview #35**

**Q: Have you taken concrete steps to serve as an ally to women and/or other marginalized groups? What do those steps tend to look like?**

**A:** Yes, he joined affinity clubs, like Return on Equality club. He also attended training workshops about the LGBT community in college. He has spoken at panels about minority groups and how they can be successful in business.

**Q: What further actions promote inclusivity and equality within those groups?**

**A:** Student groups at Penn Law and Wharton have a good mix of men and women in leadership, which is a positive. The clubs often take on causes to further diversity. For example, in Wharton, the African American student club, private equity club, investment management clubs all have affiliate organizations geared towards Women (such as the Women investment club). Many of these clubs make joint efforts to make the general student body more knowledgeable on these issues. Finally, the “white party” social event takes place annually at the Wharton school. It’s an LGBTQ social event to raise awareness, and members do their part in the planning and marketing of these events.

## **Interview #36**

**Q: How would you help the company start a program to attract a diverse talent pool? (role debiasing).**

**A:** Broaden recruiting outreach to areas and organizations that have exposure to minority talent.

**Q: How would you structure a company's core mission on diversity? (CEO)**

**A:** Emphasizing the fact that a wider array of perspectives can help the company access a larger customer base.

**Q: What kind of global and local outreach program would you design? Examples might be supporting global symposia, leadership excellence for women awards and symposiums? (moving needle).**

**A:** Special awards for people because of their gender or minority status seems patronizing and would likely lead to tokenization. The most impactful thing I could think of is to find the most competent people who are women/minorities, give them responsibility, and give them a prominent role in the organization.

**Q: Men mentoring women can make a large impact. Do you fear a backlash? (me too)**

**A:** I don't fear backlash from the prospect of mentoring someone; that seems like a positive relationship. My primary concern would be the appearance to outsiders that there is some sort of inappropriate relationship or desire underlying the mentoring. I also wouldn't want a potential mentee to be concerned about my motives. I think this can be overcome by always conducting oneself in a professional manner, taking appropriate safeguards, and fostering a culture of mentorship throughout the organization.

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not likely at all, 5-very likely), how likely would it be for you to request & participate in work-family policies (i.e. Parental Leave or Flexible Work Arrangement) if your family situation made that need applicable?**

**A:** 4

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not likely at all, 5-very likely), how likely do you think your male peers would request & participate in one of the company's work-family policies (i.e. Parental Leave or Flexible Work Arrangement) if their family situation made that need applicable?**

**A:** 3

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not influenced, 5-very likely to influence), how much of your decision to participate in the work-family policies influenced by your perception of what is accepted and expected by leadership/management and your male peers? (work fam)**

**A: 3**

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not comfortable, 5-very comfortable) how comfortable do you feel in your ability to fully be yourself at work? (gender norms)**

**A: 5**

**Q: The “man box” refers to a set of beliefs, communicated by parents, families, the media, peers, and other members of society, that place pressure on men to act a certain way. These pressures tell men to be self-sufficient, to act tough, to be physically attractive in a certain way, to stick to rigid gender roles, to be heterosexual, to not cry or show emotion, and to use aggression to resolve conflicts. How much do these descriptions relate to something that you have experienced? (gender norms)**

**A:** I do try to conform to conventional standards about what makes men attractive. I exercise regularly, and I have paid for personal training and nutritional advice with the goal of having a particular physique. I also have tried to limit displays of emotion or sentimentality, especially in a dating context.

**Q: When you see men and women paired together on television, in movies, or other media platforms, what tends to be their relationship? (media)**

**A:** Coworkers

## **Interview #37**

### **Q: How do you define allyship? Ally?**

**A:** I think being an ally is trying to stay focused on issues relating to gender equality, doing your effort to understand what are the problems that related to gender inequality in our society, whether it's in workplace, schools, at education settings, or at home; and you know, make sure you are thinking about them and speaking for them. At the very best, you can bring your effort and to solve these problems. But, at the very least, I think you should be well aware of what are the issues that women are facing in our society.

### **Q: Do you consider yourself to be an ally for women? How so?**

**A:** Yes, definitely. Because, well, I'm in law school, and half of the students at my law school are women. And I interact with them a lot. For example, we are in same classes, same study groups, and same affinity group. So, I think being an ally, to me, is being able to interact with them, and you know, be of help and support to your female friends from your school and your social circle. This is why I consider myself as being an ally for women.

### **Q: How do you bolster and draw attention to women's voices, and the voices of women of color?**

**A:** To me, I think the number one thing that people and organizations should do to bolster women's voices is to give them opportunities. For example, if you are in a corporation, you should elect female directors into the board of directors; if you are in schools, you should let female take more responsibility in management, you know, bigger responsibility, and let them be part of the decision making process. When it comes to voices of women of color, I think the same rationale should apply. You should give them representation, and make sure that their voices are heard, and when the major decision are being made, make sure that their considerations and concerns are being addressed.

### **Q: To be an ally is to bring intersectionality to the forefront. Gender is only one axis of difference. How do you or will you open the doors to more participation from women and women of color?**

**A:** So related to the previous question, I think here it is really opening more opportunities to women. For example, in college and graduate school application process, you can recruit and admit more women, more female students to the incoming class; in the work setting, you can recruit more female employees, and provide more protections for their health, their job benefits, and security; and at home, you should provide better benefits for moms, you know, regarding pregnancy and maternity leave. I think providing more benefits and opportunities for women is the key to bring them more participation.

### **Q: The role of allyship in debiasing the workplace: What are your ideas on the world of workplace? How would you help the company start a program to attract a diverse talent pool?**

**A:** I very much agree that it is very important to debias the workplace and bring more diverse pool to the workplace. And that means more employees with minority backgrounds, female from LGBTQ group, and other underrepresented groups in the society. So, I think one way a company can start a program to attract diverse talent pool is to provide more interviewing and recruiting opportunities for women exclusively. For example, when applicants are interviewing for jobs, you should provide more women targeting recruitment fair, job fair, interview practices specifically to women, and you know, provide for those women who otherwise cannot get those opportunities because they might not have heard of it, and maybe have more barriers to do well in these opportunities. So, I believe the number one thing is just to make sure that you deliver the opportunities that you want to open up to women.

**Q: How would you create a policy on equal wages for equal work? What rules and criteria will you create for promotions? How will you eliminate gender bias in performance reviews?**

**A:** I think each company should set its internal company policy to ensure that its female employees are paid equally to its male employees, for example, offering them same level of benefits, same level of bonus. And for female employees who need more benefit in terms of, you know, maternity leave and pregnancy, you should make sure that their husbands who work at the company have time to take care of their families.

And I think one rule for promotion is that, you can set the promotion programs to be more favorable to women, because in some companies there are maybe fewer female employees overall, so you want to make sure that at least one out of maybe five or ten employees is a woman. Otherwise, because of the disproportionate representation in the employees, women may have fewer chances.

**Q: What do you think is the corporate culture that elevates both male and female employees through appropriate symbols and non-stereotypical leadership roles?**

**A:** I think this is a good question. You can, for example, foster more conversations between male and female employees, and organize meeting, group activities, and roundtable discussions where male and female employees can meet, communicate, discuss their problems, and let everybody express what they need and what kind of help they want to have. So in this way, the management people can better reflect on those problems and provide solutions.

**Q: What do you think of the stereotypes of women in workplace? And how would you counter it?**

**A:** I think one stereotype of women in workplace that I've heard of is that, female employees need to go on pregnancy leave or maternity leave, and it would be tough for companies to ensure a stable employee team. But I think it is nonsense, because it should be exactly the opposite. Companies should ensure women who when on maternity leave can get their proper benefits, job benefits, and security, and when they return, they can still adjust back to their roles. And for these stereotypes, they really require the effort from both the employees themselves and the

company. Because the employees to express their issues and problems to the management team, and let them know how important it is to make sure they are treated equally, and there's no pregnancy discrimination. And companies should hold some events to better publicize the ways that corporations can cope with these issues.

**Q: How will you structure a company's core mission on diversity?**

**A:** I think a mission on diversity should be a commitment, not a statement. Basically, it should be entrenched into the company's values. By this I mean, making sure that everybody who works at this company understand that it is critical for the company to have a diverse pool of employees. It is also critical for the management people to understand that there should be no discrimination against female employees and employees who have minority backgrounds from other races, from people with different sexual orientation, and disability. And I think, only in this way, by emphasizing those values and making everybody understand, can we eliminate stereotypes and protect the rights of these female employees.

**Q: How would you create processes and incentives for those in the firm/ company to serve as a mentor for women in the community, particularly those seeking to engage in industries that have historically been difficult for women to penetrate?**

**A:** I think mentorship is very important, so it is very important to make sure that women in the community who want mentorship can actually have one. And you can ask directly the women who want mentorship that, what kind of mentorship they like, what the things are that they are looking for to get out of the mentorship relationship. Also, make sure that you pick a mentor and pair them with somebody that feel most comfortable working with. In those industries that have historically been difficult for women to penetrate, I think it's more important to make sure that they are mentored. And it's also helpful when women can have access to different mentors, for example, one mentor who can help with their careers professionally, and another mentor who can help them with life problems and mental health issues, or just be a friend on a personal basis. So, providing access to different mentorships helps.

**Q; Men mentoring women can make a large impact. Do you fear a backlash?**

**A:** Well, I think there is a chance of backlash, but I do think the value of having a mentor exceeds the danger of backlash. As I said in the last question, I believe the existence of mentorship programs is really very important because otherwise some women wouldn't be able to seek advice, ask question, and have solutions. So, I think we should make sure that there are mentorship programs, but also on the other hand, make sure that the mentorship relationships run properly and on a fair basis, and make sure that they are transparent, efficient, and adequate. We should provide all mentors and mentees with resources to sustain the mentorship relationship on the long term basis.

**Q: As an ally, how can you transform the social value attached to child-care including the role of both parents in caregiving?**

**A:** Well, it's a tough question. I think both dad and mom have responsibilities to take on the burden to raise a child. Neither person of the two should do most of the job. I think, you know, it's always hard to strike a balance, because someone may be busier, someone may be going through a hard time during her life. So, for me, it comes down to really being able to share the burden on a collective basis. If you feel difficult to do some part of the work, say if the child needs care at home, then I think both of the parents should take their time to ensure that somebody is there to take care of the child. It's not an exclusive responsibility of either of them. You should also make sure that parents are well aware of the child's need for care and love from both parents, because if the child can only spend time with one parent, that child will be more attached emotionally to that parent, and I believe that is not healthy for a child's growth.

**Q: How do you understand that there are times when certain gender specific policies can serve a legitimate purpose, however, that these must be determined on a case by case basis?**

**A:** There are certain gender specific policies. For example, there are places where traditionally didn't recruit female employees or female students. I remember there's one case, *United States v. Virginia*, which struck down the long-standing male-only admission policy of the Virginia Military Institute. The reason provided for the original male-only policy was that, the school believed that only male students can deal with the physical burden to be a soldier. In the end, the policy was repealed. But there are still many people believe that the male-only policy has its rationale. To me, I hope this kind of cases can be fewer and fewer, because there's no evidence that men can definitely excel women at anything.

**Q: As an ally, how can you play an integral role in constructing these equalizing policies?**

**A:** As I said in the first question, I believe as an ally, what I should do is to listen to people who are suffering from discrimination, and make sure that their voices are heard, make sure that their problems are addressed, and whatever issue they have they'll always have proper way to seek redress. To me, I have many female friends, and I often talk to them, and whenever they have problems I'll try my best to help them to find a good solution, whether it is through talk, conversation, or negotiation. I think it is important to make sure that whoever you know that is having problems related to gender discrimination, can get help and solve those problems. And I think everyone should take part in this process.

**Q: How will you send out the message that work family policies are important to men, and women aren't the only ones caring for family members?**

**A:** It is a very important message to send, because as said previously, family care is a responsibility for both moms and dads, and I think it is in the interest of the child to make sure that both mom and dad take care of the child. You can send this message to men, and let them know that, if they don't take on this burden, they are not being responsible fathers, and they are not being responsible husbands as well, because they are leaving too much job to their wives and it is not a healthy family relationship. You can also send this message to women, and let them know that, it is not their exclusive job to do everything, and their husbands should be part of this process. So, I think it is hard, but it is an on-going process, and we should just move on and do it.



**Q: How will you address challenges that care givers (both female and male) face upon returning to the office?**

**A:** I think it is important for companies to let care givers know that their jobs will not be affected once they come back from family leave. And it is important to make sure that they are having same benefits, their positions are kept. Once care givers come back, it might be hard for them to get back to their normal work routine, so companies should give them less work, lighter work, and give them some time to ensure a smooth transition.

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not likely at all, 5-very likely), how likely would it be for you to request & participate in work-family policies (i.e. Parental Leave or Flexible Work Arrangement) if your family situation made that need applicable?**

**A:** 5 – Very likely.

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not likely at all, 5-very likely), how likely do you think your male peers would request & participate in one of the company's work-family policies (i.e. Parental Leave or Flexible Work Arrangement) if their family situation made that need applicable?**

**A:** 5 – Very likely.

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not influenced, 5-very likely to influence), how much of your decision to participate in the work-family policies influenced by your perception of what is accepted and expected by leadership/management and your male peers?**

**A:** 4 – Likely.

**Q: When you see men and women paired together on television, in movies, or other media platforms, what tends to be their relationship?**

**A:** I think there can be a variety of relationships. Most of the times they are teams, working as colleagues as friends, as peers, and they work together to solve problems, whether it is in work, whether it is in life, and they help each other. I mean, it's a great relationship set that can provide great support and assistance.

**Q: How often do you see women in leadership roles on television? Women of color?**

**A:** I think it is definitely less often to see women rather than men to be in leadership roles on television, especially women of color, because of historical stereotypes and discrimination against women. But I'm glad that, gradually, we can see more women of leadership, power, management, and important role in different kind of organizations. In fact, we just got a United States Vice President who is the first women of color to be in this position. So, it is an unfortunate fact that we don't have that many women as men in leadership roles at the moment, but I'm sure that imbalance will decrease as we move on.

**Q: Does the way you see women in positions of power influence your view of women leaders?**

**A:** Definitely. Because to me, it is always important to have women's voices represented in positions of power. And I think the more women in position of power I see, the better confidence I have in this society to achieve genuine gender equality. And my view of women leaders is that, their contribution, and their being part of the decision making process helps in making the best decision. So, the more women in positions of power I see, the happier I am about all the effort that the society is making to address gender inequality.

**Q: Has the way you have seen women in positions of power on television influenced your actions or decisions to be an ally for women in your professional life?**

**A:** I don't think it will influence me in any strong way, because I've always considered myself to be an ally for women in my professional life. There're many female colleagues in the legal profession, and I work with them a lot. So, I always believe that it's important to be an ally. With more and more women joining the workforce, and becoming leaders, I think the traditional stereotypes will gradually fade away and hopefully, one day, totally disappear.

## **Interview #38**

### **Q: How do you define allyship? Ally?**

**A:** I believe allyship is someone who help and support. First, it is important to have a comprehensive understanding of what the feminist movement is, including but not limited to historical events, not historical trends, but the development of why and how the feminist movement started. I think that is something an ally should have a basic understanding of. I mean it's important to get women their rights, like their physical rights, but it's equally important to understand the philosophical justification behind it.

Other than that, physical support is also important, promoting physical support in their own capacity, and also promoting the idea. I think that's the crucial part.

### **Q: Do you consider yourself to be an ally for women? How so?**

**A:** Yes, I think I am, definitely. Not just an ally, I think I'm a feminist, male feminists to be accurate. Besides encouraging women to be more ambitious and try to help them achieving their goals, I voiced out on social media mostly about injustice and the inequality between the two genders, on western platforms like Facebook and Twitter, but also on Chinese platforms like WeChat and Weibo.

I think the most important part of being an ally is not just doing specific things or meeting specific criteria, but also always staying in that "state of mind." Not doing this purposefully, like, say, because I have this identity, or I just identify myself as a feminist ally, so I have to do something. I don't think it works that way. An ally should first recognize the obvious and apparent difficulties for female to gender equality under the social context, and at the same time help women recognize the reality, but also encourage them not to be afraid of it.

### **Q: How do you bolster and draw attention to women's voices, and the voices of women of color?**

Like I said before, for me I think it's mainly about spreading the ideas on social media, because I think this is the most effective way we have in the 21st century probably. Still the fundamental reason is that, I think the movement or the allyship, the core of it, is really to find the seeds or to help develop the seeds of the idea of gender equality. Lack of that idea is what caused the problem we have right now. So presenting or promoting the ideas of gender equality is equally important to providing physical assistance.

### **Q: To be an ally is to bring intersectionality to the forefront. Gender is only one axis of difference. How do you or will you open the doors to more participation from women and women of color?**

**A:** I will, definitely. First of all, I think it's important to provide help or at least participate in providing a non-hostile or even a welcoming environment for women, in education setting and workplace. Second, although it is basic but I do think it should be enforced more rigorously, that

a person's resume should be prevented from discrimination by, like, kicking off his or her name from the resume, because people can Google the name or can just tell the gender of that person from the name. Third, I do think, in the United States and probably most parts of the world, there's a lot that can be done for pregnant women, or for women who just gave birth to their children. I think that is a concern and also a risk for a lot of female employees, because that is a very big factor in causing the inequality in the job market. So for us who want to open the doors for women, it's not just to get them in or get them the opportunities. It's also important to make the environment and the policy overall for woman to be protecting.

**Q: The role of allyship in debiasing the workplace: What are your ideas on the world of workplace? How would you help the company start a program to attract a diverse talent pool?**

**A:** For the idea of workplace I think we have to start with what "work" means. I won't go back to far to Marx or something. But I do think "work" is not just people make earnings to support themselves and their families, but is an important part of somebody's identity, and is closely tied to their self-evaluation and their self-dignity. Because, I mean, if you don't have that kind of independency psychologically and economically, I can't see the situation that you really have a healthy life. So when we speak about the equal rights in the workplace, we're not just talking about the equal pay.

I think we can come back to this later, but for the particular issue of diverse and talent pool, I think we need to know what the reason is that underlies this goal. From what I know, like I said in the previous question, first and foremost, employers have concerns for the risk or the potentiality that female employees might get pregnant; like, they will have to pay for their pregnancy and pay for maternity leave. I can see how this is sort of a solid argument if you are using only business logic. I mean I can understand it, but I don't think it is right. I don't want to go too far, but I do think there is some important or inherited biological burden in terms of reproducing. Instead of avoiding it or making it even harder for the gender who is handling this burden, what we should do is to alleviate it as a society, because I mean as part of the society the employers, male employers or female employers, they benefit from women reproducing the next generation. It's more like a common moral issue for us to take care of. Sorry I'm going off topic.

But I think a program need to include non-discriminating trainings for the employers, and also trainings for employees and employers about how to build a non-hostile or welcoming environment for women to work in, including but not limited to eliminating workplace harassment or sexism. And the pregnancy issue should definitely be addressed, because as I said before it's not just to give women equal shots of sending their resumes, but to help them actually even the costs, both opportunity costs and physical costs, of staying at that job.

**Q: How would you create a policy on equal wages for equal work? What rules and criteria will you create for promotions? How will you eliminate gender bias in performance reviews?**

**A:** I don't have specific policy in mind but I think the general guidance or the general principle should be that you don't make discriminating policies in your de facto practice of wages. I mean,

it's really hard to regulate things like this before wage are actually send out; it's more like you do it after it happens, like after those checks are written. I understand like how salary is kind of a personal or individualized contract between one employee and the employer. But I think it has been often used as the scapegoat for wage discrimination in the workplace.

I think it's the same thing for promotion. You should give some benefits to the under-represented groups in your managing board, letting them serve managing positions. Not just the board of directors per se, but also the middle level managing positions of that company. And it's not just about gender, but also about race and diversity of background. The goal is not to paint a good picture of the company; the goal is really to make everybody feel welcomed, like let everyone know that it's okay to be different or it's okay to be coming from a very unique background, and no matter how alone you think you might be in the company, you are not going to be discriminated. I think that's the important message you need to send out when you are drafting your criteria.

As for eliminating gender bias in performance review, just the same answer, like the solutions in the previous question will solve this too. Because if you have a very diverse managing level when you're managing a team, they'll take care of it. For example, female bosses may have a better understanding of what their female employees are going through. Male employees might argue that they will be discriminated because of that, but I think that will be offset by the other portion of male bosses.

**Q: What do you think is the corporate culture that elevates both male and female employees through appropriate symbols and non-stereotypical leadership roles?**

**A:** Redefine what it means to be a leader. It is not men in horseback pointing his finger to the sky. It could be much more subtle, much more gentle, much more communicative and tender. Leader has to exert authority but people has to stop imagine authority in only a masculine sense. Authority could be communication; appropriate and effective yet caring communication. Not cold or overbearing.

**Q: What do you think of the stereotypes of women in workplace? And how would you counter it?**

**A:** I do think one of the very influential and stubborn stereotype of women in workplace is that female leaders resemble men, or their masculinity is just as much as men. I think that is a very poisoning stereotype, because if you promote a female leader under this logic, you are basically not promoting a female. You are promoting her just because she is very much a like a man. The bottom line is that you just want a man. I think it might go into the debate of, should you lean in in the system or should you change it? But I think this particular stereotype that women leaders are like men forces out both arguments. Because even if you want to lean in, you adjust to the system.

The solution as always is to redefine what every image of leadership and authority looks like. Like I said at very beginning, it's all about ideas, all about how people conceptualize the notion of women. Because it's basically a socially constructed idea that woman is like a box; whatever

description, whatever identity, whatever text you place in this box can change through time. So if this is the root of the problem, you need to solve it from the root of it, which is changing the conception of some unwarranted assumption about women and men, and about the power structure of the society.

**Q: How will you structure a company's core mission on diversity?**

**A:** The core mission, or at least the surface, is to give each group, each gender group or other demographic group equal representation of them. It's not like social Darwinism or something. It's not the jungle rule. I think it's really showing the humanity side of our society, of the company. This is the surface, and I think the real core or the underlying purpose is to contribute to the overall big social movement of elevating women to the equal position or the equal level, and to eliminate the hidden costs or the higher opportunity costs for women to have a chance in the workplace as men do.

**Q: How would you create processes and incentives for those in the firm/ company to serve as a mentor for women in the community, particularly those seeking to engage in industries that have historically been difficult for women to penetrate?**

**A:** It is important to change selection and promotion criteria within company. There could be some outside agency or counseling directed toward women. But if we set a process within company to specifically mentor women, I fear this may put women in a undesirable position. Maybe something more subtle than that.

**Q: Men mentoring women can make a large impact. Do you fear a backlash?**

**A:** No. I think a lot of men are anti-feminist supporters. They have this kind of mindset that you are betraying your own gender because you're helping the other gender. This is silly because basically it's to preclude the possibility of an equal and harmonic mutual relationship between the two genders. They see it more from an antagonized view. But actually this is not like the zero-sum game theory kind of scenario. This is an one plus one equals more than two situation. So if they can see it through, they'll understand that they have nothing to fear because they'll never be betrayed. Male feminists like me won't do anything bad for men. Anything we do to help achieving equal gender in this society will also liberate a lot of stereotypes and unnecessary burden for the male. So you don't have to fear for any bad things, because there shouldn't be any.

**Q: As an ally, how can you transform the social value attached to child-care including the role of both parents in caregiving?**

**A:** Make that task belong to both parents, not just female. And we should be more supportive of women in child-care period, like giving subsidy, and especially never penalize them for this. Besides rising the social awareness of this idea, I think it's important to do as one single man in the society what I can do. Just don't assume that those are mom's job, for example, like feeding the bottles during the middle of the night, giving showers to the baby or changing their diapers. A lot of them are seen as a mom job, because they seem to be more attached to or have a closer tie to the baby because they live for 10 months together. This is not a fair description and this is far

from a tenable justification of less duty for the father than the mother in a relationship. I think this idea need to be corrected. And also as an ally I myself need to adhere to it very closely.

**Q: How do you understand that there are times when certain gender specific policies can serve a legitimate purpose, however, that these must be determined on a case by case basis?**

**A:** Doing things case by case basis will increase the difficulty and complicate the process. This is almost always a debate of efficiency and protection of individual rights. I do see the legitimacy of the utilitarian claim that the company or the government have to assist in certain kind of operating efficiency of the policy per se, which means that the interests of some groups or a few number of individuals will be compromised. And people would only think that you should just follow it. I think it's a dangerous claim because it can be a slippery slope. You cannot give an exact number of how many women's rights will be compromised until you say no. This is too much. Even if it takes more time, more energy and more money to evaluate a case or to judge based on that case, you should do it because this is not just some collectivism claim that you should just take one for the team. I think it's a basic respect you can and you should have for another human being in your society no matter what gender she or he is.

**Q: As an ally, how can you play an integral role in constructing these equalizing policies?**

**A:** Talking to colleagues for starters. I don't think a lot of people who is not so positively responding to feminist movement or supporting the movement are having malicious intent. I think more of them are just lacking the opportunity to be exposed to the idea or to be convinced to some extent like why it matters or why we should do this. Because if no one ever explains to them everything behind the simple argument of equal pay, equal rights or pregnancy maternity leave, they will just simply perceive it as unfair. I think for starter, you need to plan this kind of seeds in people's thoughts. Just have something for them to contemplate. I think after that, most of them will come around and support equalizing policy. I think that's the very basic requirement of it. Besides this you can certainly make valuable suggestions. You can make constructive criticism of those existing policies.

**Q: How will you send out the message that work family policies are important to men, and women aren't the only ones caring for family members?**

**A:** For a starter, I think it will be a very unreasonable and irresponsible claim to assume that men just naturally suit or more incline to work or to make money to support the family than women. Because not just me but a lot of male fellows have just as much desire as the mothers do to spend time raising his children. And the current barbaric assumption about men's orientation of a family matter just prevent them from even saying something like this, because they will feel embarrassed, like not manly enough, to say something like this. This is toxic. I think as for how to send out this kind of messages, just remind men to spend time with their children. Just reignite their suppressed desire, remind them the good time they have with their children. And it also works a lot for a mother to have a good communication with the father about the detailed family arrangement, about both in terms of time and in terms of money, like who should contribute how much. I think there should be information send out to women too,

about you should not and you cannot be the only one taking care of your children. That's bad for you, bad for the father and definitely bad for the health of your children.

**Q: How will you address challenges that care givers (both female and male) face upon returning to the office?**

**A:** Give them support. Give them briefing and update, and perhaps some new training. Challenges comes from both outside and inside. Let's talk about something inside first. For the caregiver herself or himself and also for his or her partner, I think the biggest challenge is that he or she cannot spend that much time to take care of the newborn. I'm not a parent but I can imagine that a parent, especially the parent of a newborn, like you see a life that is so dependent on you, that is just solely your responsibility, that you can't abandon him or her to go to work. I can only imagine how guilty I would feel and I would get worried thinking about what if something happened to the baby while working or what if he or she is not being taken care of. That's why I think there should be training. Maybe it's both training and psychological consultation for this kind of separation anxiety situation. I think besides understanding this kind of separation anxiety the partner is going through, it's important to step in to provide physical support. I mean your partner must trust you much more than the other people. So you should step in and give a hand even just for one hour or two hours to support. I think that's the internal part. For the external part, I'm referring to the companies, and it's challenging. You should make the company a welcoming environment for this kind of returning. First, you should have some kind of formalized procedure of work transition, like to catch this person up with what happened, what's happening and what should one do. And also I think there should be training for employers or bosses to understand the difficulty and the necessity of giving the returning employees a time period or some transition period for them to adjust to the work mode. There cannot be that kind of high expectation for them both in terms of their work quality, and also mostly the workload. I think that's the most important thing in terms of the external factor.

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not likely at all, 5-very likely), how likely would it be for you to request & participate in work-family policies (i.e. Parental Leave or Flexible Work Arrangement) if your family situation made that need applicable?**

**A:** 4 – Likely.

**A: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not likely at all, 5-very likely), how likely do you think your male peers would request & participate in one of the company's work-family policies (i.e. Parental Leave or Flexible Work Arrangement) if their family situation made that need applicable?**

**A:** 2 – Not likely.

**A: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not influenced, 5-very likely to influence), how much of your decision to participate in the work-family policies influenced by your perception of what is accepted and expected by leadership/management and your male peers?**

**A:** 3 – Hard to say.



**Q: Does the way you see women in positions of power influence your view of women leaders?**

**A:** Not for me particularly, but I think that will exercise a lot of influence for people who don't really have an opinion or enough background knowledge of the feminist. Because I think this is a very human thing or it's basically pure cognitive science that we mimic what we learn, and I think visualization or acknowledgement is like the most important way for us to get to know this world. If you see both literally and in terms of intellectually female leaders, you will be more inclined to agree with the idea that women can handle power. It's that simple.

### **Interview #39**

**Q: How do you define allyship? Ally?**

**A:** I define allyship as viewing the other party as equal and realizing that he/she may have a completely different, potentially more difficult experience than me in the workplace/school/society due to his/her unique characteristics. As an ally, the goal is to serve as an advocate and facilitate greater diversity and inclusion within communities.

**Q: Do you consider yourself to be an ally for women? How so?**

**A:** Yes, I consider myself an ally. I strongly believe in the importance of equality, inclusion, and fairness in education and the workplace, for example. Often times, the focus incorrectly shifts from merit and capability to immutable characteristics that do not impact the job, so the former qualities should take precedence in all situations.

**Q: Do you attribute an idea to a woman who offered it, and you endorse worthy ideas and ensure the appropriate person is remembered for them?**

**A:** Yes, definitely. As a third year law student, I've worked on teams with people of diverse and unique backgrounds, and each time I'm impressed by their individual contributions to the team. I believe that each and every person I've collaborated with, either for an academic or personal assignment, has offered incredible ideas and deserve recognition for their work.

**Q: Are there times when you have or will privilege some women over others?**

**A:** As a Korean American male, there are times where I will have privilege over others, but at the same time, I have faced and will face some unique obstacles as well. Everyone does to an extent and it is important to create awareness around this fact.

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not comfortable, 5-very comfortable) how comfortable do you feel in your ability to fully be yourself at work/school?**

**A:** 5

**Q: The "man box" refers to a set of beliefs, communicated by parents, families, the media, peers, and other members of society, that place pressure on men to act a certain way. These pressures tell men to be self-sufficient, to act tough, to be physically attractive in a certain way, to stick to rigid gender roles, to be heterosexual, to not cry or show emotion, and to use aggression to resolve conflicts. How much do these descriptions relate to something that you have experienced?**

**A:** I would say all of these listed beliefs have been engrained in my mind and for many of my friends, especially when going through high school/early development. In college, I found that these norms were less pronounced, and there was more flexibility to forge your identity over

time. However, in the workplace and in greater society, it seems that such expectations are still prevalent and therefore will have some degree of influence.

**Q: Does the way you see women in positions of power influence your view of women leaders?**

**A:** Yes, it just reaffirms the belief that they can thrive in such roles, which are often high stakes / high pressure situations.

**Q: Has the way you have seen women in positions of power on television influenced your actions or decisions to be an ally for women in your professional life?**

**A:** Not as much. Often times, I don't put much weight into what's on t.v. as opposed to my observations from my personal experience.

## **Interview #40**

### **Q: How do you define allyship and an ally?**

**A:** I think that allyship has to be an active process, that you're committed to lifting up marginalized communities whenever possible. And it's something that I think that you have to, like I said, it has to be an active process that you really embody. And I think an ally—the definition of ally goes along with my definition of allyship—that you have to be someone who is willing to not only believe certain things, but also stand by and support and actively promote policies in the workplace that help groups that are outside of your own.

### **Q: Do you consider yourself to be an ally for women?**

**A:** I hope so. I feel like I try to. Many of my close friends are women, and I tried to be supportive of them, in whatever ways that I can. I have pretty limited experience in the workplace, so I can't say that I have been an active advocate on that front, but I hope to be once I enter a position where I would have more authority to actually be doing something about the status of marginalized groups.

### **Q: Do you feel like you're an ally in the law school space?**

**A:** I hope so. But I also feel like I could be doing more. I think that I haven't because I'm surrounded by so many women, just in terms of my personal friendships. I think that it's something that maybe I should actively be asking more like: “How can I be more supportive?” or “How can I be more of an active ally?” And that's something that I should probably work on.

### **Q: How do you speak up for women when they are overlooked?**

**A:** I think that I try. I feel like, especially in the zoom setting, it's easy to interrupt people, and I feel like I tend to be overly on the side of letting people speak or being like: “Oh, I'm sorry. No, go ahead.” Or just stepping back in a conversation when I feel like I've been speaking a lot and just being very mindful of that. I think that would be the most pertinent example that comes up recently.

### **Q: How do you amplify women's voices and not compete with them for influence or for the sake of showcasing what an admirable feminist you are?**

**A:** I mean, I think it would be a similar answer to the last question. But I feel like if someone makes a really good point, I try to explicitly say: “Oh, I thought that was a really good point. And I just wanted to build on it in this way.” Instead of saying or just taking their idea and building off of it. I try to give credit where credit is due.

### **Q: Would you say that's how you bolster and draw attention to women's voices?**

**A:** Yeah, sure.

**Q: How would you define proactive allyship? And how do you behave when women or other members of minority groups are not in the room?**

A: I think it's very important to behave the same because I think it's almost more pernicious if you're going to be saying bad things about people when they're not there. I think that's worse than saying it in front of their face, especially when it comes to the context of degrading marginalized communities. So, I feel like in order to be proactive, you really have to be actively always checking yourself, always thinking how you could potentially be better, and just not being in the corner, and actually speaking up when you see that something is not right.

**Q: Do you feel like you notice exclusion every day? And do you notice who's not there in the room?**

A: I think I noticed it a lot more in terms of race, less so than gender. Because I—at least in recent memory—in the classes that I've been, especially the small class where you see people every day, they're very predominantly feminine. But I feel like I've noticed, in particular about race, at least for these two classes, because often we talk about race and sometimes it strikes me as a little bit strange when it's all white people with one or two Asian people, to be having a conversation about slavery, it's just weird. It's something that's very definitely noticeable.

**Q: What classes are these?**

A: *History and Theory of Contract Law* and *History of Privacy in the Law*.

**Q: Now we'll move on to a nuanced understanding of allyship and intersectionality. How do you or will you open the doors to more participation from women and women of color?**

A: I feel there's a couple ways of going about this. I feel like some people take the road of actively saying, “Oh X person, what do you think about this?” But I think that's so weird because I feel like if I put myself in those shoes, I would never want to, if I actually genuinely don't have thoughts about something going on, I never want to be cold-called by a coworker or a boss or something. I feel like if I were ever in the position of hiring or in the position of interviewing, I would definitely want to actively seek out women and women of color. And make sure—I don't want to say quota, because that I think that is problematic, that term is problematic, that concept is problematic—but just actively trying to find different voices to join whatever organization that I was in.

**Q: And how do you think you would make sure that women, especially women of color, literally take seats at the table, rather than standing on the sidelines?**

A: I mean, literally, I feel it's important to be like: “Oh, come sit down.” I've gotten into that dynamic, actually meetings, where it's very actually charged, who *actually* sits at the table. My boss was supposed to be like: “Oh, come take a seat”, which I think has a lot of meaning and power in and of itself. And I also think that it's an issue of listening to their ideas and taking them seriously, especially even if they're not the most senior person, because often the most senior people are not members of those groups.

**Q: Do you often feel like it's the women who are on the sidelines that need to get invited to sit down or?**

**A:** Just in my limited experience, I feel like it's more so women think more before they speak, whereas men often like the sound of their own voices and participate even when they have nothing meaningful to say. So, I don't know if it's necessarily an issue of inviting them to the table but more like helping women feel like their ideas are valued. And that is something that could be helped or reinforced by the actions that other people take.

**Q: Data has shown that when women do speak up, they can be ignored, or they can have their ideas taken. And so, as an ally, how will you address this?**

**A:** Relating to what I said before, explicitly attributing an idea to someone who has given it and saying like, “Oh, that is a great point. I want to shout that out. I want to highlight it or I agree.” And I think that's a big part of it—attribution.

**Q: Do *you* attribute an idea to a woman who offered it and do you endorse where the ideas and make sure that person is remembered for it?**

**A:** I hope so. I tried to do that.

**Q: Have you ever put a woman or women in center stage? And if you do, or you haven't, how would you do so?**

**A:** I haven't really been in the position to do that, I think. If I were—thinking in a fictional workplace scenario—I probably would want to speak individually to women who I felt had good ideas and say: “Are you interested in taking the reins on this? Are you interested in leading this meeting? Are you interested in doing a presentation about what you found?” And I feel like those are the best ways of actively offering opportunities for leadership to women.

**Q: If no formal format exists, how do you, or how will you offer peer to peer mentorship? Do you think you'll schedule phone appointments? Find a coffee shop? And how do you keep it professional?**

**A:** The obvious issue of people thinking that you're hitting on them or inappropriately speaking to them, I think that—I'm not exempt from that—but I mean, I feel like I, very obviously, present as not being interested in women. I think it's funny to me how there's so much scrutiny or so much heightened attention of how to address women professionally, whereas I feel it's such a basic thing. Don't comment on someone's appearance. Don't touch them. And just be explicit and upfront about your intentions. And I think that's just the best way to do it. Yeah, like scheduling a coffee chat or even swinging by someone's office. I think there's a lot of different ways you could approach it.

**Q: In the world of law firms, would you help set up programs that will attract a diverse talent pool?**

**A:** I hope so. I would be if I were in the position to be creating these programs. I think that it would be a huge priority of mine, actually being very intentional about recruiting and hiring, because I think that there's a lot to be said about critical mass. A place doesn't necessarily feel welcoming to certain groups unless you have a large amount of people who are very publicly and visibly part of the organization. So, I think that would be probably the most important thing. And making sure that there are robust recruiting programs, and also robust pipeline programs to leadership and encouraging people who want to be in those positions of authority at the firm.

**Q: What are your ideas on practice for hiring practices that are clear and transparent? Like, what do you think about blind resume evaluations?**

**A:** I don't like blind resume evaluations, because they probably reinforce biases. And I feel the only way to really address inequity is to face it head on and say, "We are actively looking for talent that does not belong to these traditionally dominant groups." And I feel like explicitly naming that and explicitly actively doing it is much better than saying, we're just not going to consider all these different external factors."

**Q: Do you have any ideas about certain hiring practices that you would recommend?**

**A:** This might be sort of a controversial idea, but we should consider race, we should consider gender, we should consider all these things. And explicitly say we're actively looking for people who belong in these groups and we actively want to hire more of them and we will preference you if you belong to these groups. I think that's something that's becoming increasingly under scrutiny, but nothing's going to change until you actively try to bring more of those people into the fold. Not only bringing those people into the fold but making sure that the organization itself is committed and feels the same way about it. I feel that that's also an important part because I think that it's also destructive to hire a bunch of people and then have a bunch of people in the organization think: "Oh, you're only here because of X, this whatever reason."

**Q: Right. And, do you have any ideas about how you would structure the design and layout of the workplace to advance diversity, whether through portraits, our architecture, and things like that?**

**A:** I mean, maybe not design it like a law school that has all the giant paintings of our former old white male deans. To me, that's like a smaller thing, just because I think that, at the end of the day, the most important thing is whether you have faces that look like you in the firm. But I mean, there's definitely certain ways that you can design a firm to make it seem more welcoming, such as not have huge leather couches and cherry wood tables that just seem like old money. Something that's a little bit younger or more approachable, warmer—I feel like that would probably go a long, or not a long way, but some way towards the friendliness of the built environment that you're in.

**Q: I've never really thought about that but it's true. Like, if it's like all mahogany and leather couches, it just feels like very old school. How would you create a policy on equal wages for equal work?**

**A:** Just saying *that*. I think have that as a broad North Star guiding principle would go a long way. In terms of specifics, I don't know, maybe having a someone in HR or recruiting, whose sole job is to keep track of salaries and wages and do some sort of analytics with respect to that and making sure that the firm is committed to that policy. That's all I can think of right now.

**Q: How would you boost gender diversity within your firm's operations and improve retention and lower the considerable costs of staff turnover?**

**A:** Beyond all the things I said before just about recruiting and pipeline programs, I think having really strong affinity groups is a big part of that. Because I feel like once people feel like they have that robust sort of support network, they're more willing to stay at a job long term. And that's the only additional thing I can think of beyond what I've already said.

**Q: What rules and criteria will you create for promotions? And how do you think you'll eliminate gender biases in performance reviews?**

**A:** Explicitly saying: “We are explicitly making a commitment to actively promote people who belong to those groups”—I think that would be one of the biggest things. I think having an HR system that's dedicated to robustly investigating complaints. And people feeling like they are able to and feeling like the organization takes allegations of gender bias seriously. I feel like that would go to, hopefully, ameliorate and help improve the situation. But I feel like there's an unconscious—sometimes, it's like people prefer certain people, their own groups, and then they'll gravitate towards them and want to mentor them. And so, if we were in more of a formal mentorship program, pairing people up who normally wouldn't gravitate towards each other initially, maybe that would be one way to address this.

**Q: And what are any sexual harassment policies or interactive trainings you will put in place in the workplace? And how do you think you'll deal with arbitration clauses in sexual harassment policies?**

**A:** I think the training is often really ineffective, because I feel people tune out when they're being lectured on. And so, I think that the policies have to have real teeth. If people know, if it's common knowledge that this person is a harasser and has been there, but they're still there because they're a rainmaker, that sort of stuff is unacceptable. If people at the firm actually know that there will be consequences—real meaningful consequences—for people who don't abide by those guidelines, I think that would go a long way towards people feeling comfortable coming forward. Also, people who shouldn't be in positions of authority *should* no longer be in those positions of authority. And I also think that in terms of making trainings better, it should be simple. Like what I said before, it shouldn't be that hard for people not to sexually harass other people, but for some reason, it's still such a big issue. So I think that making those trainings very clear but also saying in those trainings, these are the repercussions and you will be held accountable for them if you if you violate them. I think those are the things I can think of right now.

**Q: Would you get rid of arbitration clauses?**



**A:** Yes, I would. Because I think that I think that arbitration is a way to skirt the legal obligations and rights of employees and employers.

**Q: How will you ensure that there is no penalty for flexibility?**

**A:** First off, it has to be an explicit policy that says that, but I think so much of it happens informally. It's so easy to cover up, to be like: "This person just did a bad job and that's why they're not being promoted." I think it's very hard to ferret out because it goes again, back to the importance of having a really robust HR, who is dedicated and motivated to addressing these issues and actively looking into them.

**Q: What do you think of options for telecommuting?**

**A:** Oh, that sounds good. Honestly, the more flexibility with work, the better. Unless it means that people are just working longer hours. I feel like the flexibility also has to come with a commitment to understanding that people have lives and people have families and outside of work and just sort of honor that whenever whenever possible.

**Q: Yeah, I definitely heard that people now work more with work from home. What are some networking or mentorship sponsorship opportunities you think would benefit gender or minorities in the workplace?**

**A:** So much of this has already been done. For example, making sure that there are robust affinity groups and again, being very intentional about matching people and being like, "Oh, I'm not going to match the woman of color with the other woman of color. No, I'm intentionally going to match the woman of color with this very senior white male partner who probably wouldn't have interacted with her outside of this mentorship relationship. I think a lot of it has to do with individualization because it's so hard to implement these sorts of policies on a firm-wide basis. I think that if there are people who are devoted to giving that sort of individualized attention and making these matches very intentionally, and actually having an outside lens on how the workplace functions, not on a macro level, but on a micro level, I feel like that would help.

I also wonder for matching, let's say a minority, or a female woman of color with an old white male, if they would even connect, because I've heard some complaints from people at a firm who were saying that it's harder as a female associate sometimes to connect with certain male partners. So it's much harder to get work from them, because you just can't connect with them. But I think matching people who wouldn't otherwise interact might be a step in the right direction.

**Q: What is the corporate culture that elevates both male and female employees through appropriate symbols and non-stereotypical leadership roles?**

**A:** I'm a big proponent of material gains. To me, a lot of these things don't mean anything if they don't result in material gains for the group that they're intending to benefit. Policies that

contribute to those material gains are saying, “We're committed to hiring more people who belong in these groups”; or “We're committed to having these flexible workplace policies”; “We are actually going to seriously implement them.”

**Q: Would you implement or put in place a program to counter stereotypes?**

**A:** I think this is implicit. I sometimes doubt the efficacy of implicit bias training, or any training that gives us tips. I think there are instances where people just don't know, and they say something, or they rely on something that is a stereotype. At this moment in 2020, it's more often people relying on it, and they just don't see anything wrong with it or they don't care. So I don't know. Again, to me, programs that actually results in material gains and more faces that look like yours in the workplace are more effective than any training program on stereotypes

**Q: Make sense. How would you structure a company's core mission on diversity?**

**A:** First of all, the Diversity Committee has to be diverse. They should have the ear of the people who are at the highest levels of the organization and their recommendations should be taken seriously. It also should be very open, because it doesn't make sense to have a Diversity Committee comprised exclusively of people who are at the highest levels of organization. Diversity is such a ground-up operation that requires the voices of people at all levels of the organization, because they have a closer awareness of what it's like to enter the organization.

**Q: Beyond the strong affinity groups that you've mentioned, and the mentorships between different types of people, are there other programs and plans for career planning, mentorship, role models and networking that you would recommend?**

**A:** It's very important to have networking or recruiting in spaces that feel comfortable for people of marginalized communities. The one example that comes to mind is doing really intense recruiting, like at HBCUs or recruiting at women's colleges. If you're inviting them to your fancy, mahogany-filled law firm, that's not going to be a space people necessarily feel comfortable in and I think meeting people at a space designed for them would go a long way towards building trust.

**Q: Do you know whether your firm has any work life balance policies, such as flexible work policies or other support systems in place?**

**A:** I feel like they always wave their hand at them, but I don't know specifically.

**Q: Do you know whether they are participating or partnering with any external organizations that advocate female empowerment or contribute to the wider community?**

**A:** I think that we mean effort. I think every firm says this. I do think that my firm actually is pretty good at this, that they have a very active pro-bono practice that does not penalized. Your pro-bono hours are billable hours and they really seem to lift it up in every single firmwide call. We always have a spotlight on all the pro-bono matters that we've been taking on. I do think that, over the summer, we partner with the ACLU or some other organizations that focus on racial

justice, and we helped raise or do like a matching program for them. So I think that's at least what I've experienced so far.

**Q: Do you know if they participate in gender empowerment or programs that specifically help any women.**

A: I have not heard of anything so far. But that doesn't necessarily mean it didn't exist.

**Q: Do you know if your firm participates in any gender equality programs or conferences?**

A: I don't know.

**Q: How would you collaborate with organizations across industries on research and data backed initiatives that could help generate new ideas and strategies?**

A: On the issue of diversity?

**Q: Yeah, or like gender bias.**

A: I think that speaks to a really important thing that I want to underscore that it's really important to consult people who actually are devoting their life to this or have a really intimate understanding of what it takes to actually make workplaces more inclusive. I think it's interesting and good to interview allies, but there's a limited amount that I know just coming from my position. I think it's important for law firms to invest in or to seek out people who are doing this for a living, who have these lived experiences and can speak from a more substantiated position, essentially. If I had that control, I would definitely want the law firm to invest resources into pursuing those avenues.

**Q: Do you have any ideas about what your firm or a company can do to promote work outside of the organization to advance gender justice and diversity?**

A: Material commitment is a big thing. I feel like actively saying: "We are going to give a huge chunk of our revenue or a meaningful portion of our revenue towards these causes."; "We are going to devote pro bono hours to these causes." I think that is one of the best to demonstrate that commitment.

**Q: And what do you think your firm can do in terms of processes and incentives for people in the firm to serve as mentors for women in the community, particularly in those seeking to engage in industries that have historically been difficult for women to penetrate?**

A: I don't know. I'm not sure I can answer that question.

**Q: I'm thinking about when you were mentioning how billable hours could include work done for these people?**

**A:** Or you can use billable hours if you like for mentorship or something? I don't know if that's already the case at some other firms. But I would also provide an incentive.

**Q: Do you know if your firm's policies on billable hours encompasses mentorship?**

**A:** There's some sort of allotment for recruiting, I think, but I'm not sure. I think that also includes mentorship, but I'm not positive.

**Q: How would you create provisions for annual bonuses as a way to incentive it, incentivize focus on and improve diversity?**

**A:** I'm also not sure how to answer the question. I think my gut instinct is always to give more money to women, people of color, but I struggle with a way to articulate that in a way that is, actually make sense. It all comes down to: how do you make sure that these people are materially taken care of? And it's hard for me to figure out how to actually address that in a way that seems diplomatic.

**Q: Right. How would you create external pressure from clients to improve together and if you move to the client side, would you?**

**A:** If the client is being problematic, have a conversation with them about it and if it crosses the line into really egregious behavior, then recognizing that the well-being of our employees is more important than having this client. I think all the things that would apply to law firm would apply to client, like all the stuff about recruiting and all this stuff about having really robust mentorship. I feel like all those things, all those basic principles would be transferable to a client.

**Q: And what do you think about firms or companies like Microsoft that make it clear that they factor diversity and inclusion in their hiring efforts and will reward firms that do focus on those issues, like when they're hiring firms, they care about those issues pressures firms to have diverse teams.**

**A:** Yeah, I think that's great. The only thing is--my immediate thought was, what about the pushback from whatever. But I feel it's important to not always be concerned about that, and to not be afraid to be a leader in your field. I think it weeds out people that you wouldn't want in your organization or to be working with people who don't think that's a good idea or wouldn't be committed to that kind of policy. I think it's hard as a law firm to control which clients comes in because you're in the position to want more business. But I feel like you have a lot of control over where you dedicate your pro-bono hours and services. Explicitly looking for organizations that lift up those groups is something good to keep in mind.

**Q: Right. I think there is a growing trend of in-house counsels requesting the law firm ensure that they have diverse associates on those teams.**

**A:** I think that's great, but if there's a lack of diversity, then you don't want that person to be put into groups or practices they don't want or put in practice and then they're stretched too thin. I

think it's important for them to be intentional about it and make sure that there are enough people at the start to be able to staff those teams in a way that makes sense.

**Q: How will you develop certification programs like the Mansfield principle, which calls for 30% women in leadership?**

**A:** You just have to commit to doing that. You just have to have everyone at all levels of organization commit to actually making that happen. I thought you could follow what university admissions have done, where basically every single year, they have a certain amount of people who are fond of certain groups, but they never say that it's a quota, because that would be illegal. This could work with law firms where every year, you at least try to meet a certain number, but not explicitly say that because that's something that's a lightning rod for controversy.

**Q: Would you design any global or local outreach programs and if so, what kind? Examples might be including supporting global symposia or leadership excellence for women awards?**

**A:** Sure, yes.

**Q: How is the Me Too movement shaping norms of masculinity?**

**A:** I hope that it's making men realize that they shouldn't harass or assault people. That is the impact that I hope it's having. I hope it's creating a masculinity that's less so about exerting your power through physically intimidating people and a masculinity that's more mindful of gender dynamics. That is what I hope. I do not hope that it is creating men who are frustrated and are scared and think that they are not able to talk. I hope it's creating a more thoughtful and more mindful masculinity that doesn't do these fucked up things to people.

**Q: The men mentoring women can make a large impact. Do you fear a backlash because of this Me Too movement?**

**A:** I do fear of backlash. But also, I would be the first person to say that that backlash is just totally unfounded because again, I do think it's very simple for people not to make others feel uncomfortable. I think there's very basic guidelines or basic rules that people should abide by. Maybe I'm biased, because I've never really been in that position. I've never really had to be. But again, I think it's pretty clear, at least to me.

**Q: Now, we'll move on to allyship and family work policies. So as an ally, how can you transform the social value attached to child care, including the role of both parents and caregiving equally?**

**A:** I think allowing for paternal leave, as much paternal leave as maternity leave, and having both of those policies be very generous. There are so many informal things like how people are penalizing women for leaving. I think that the trickier question. I don't know how to answer how to avoid how to address those sorts of more informal penalties.

**Q: How do you understand that there are times when certain gender specific policies can serve a legitimate purpose, however, that these must be determined on a case by case basis?**

A: I think it's goes to actually speaking to the woman in your organization and seeing what they think and what they want. Because maybe they do want a women-specific policy on something they think could be beneficial for them. And I feel like it's important to honor and value those desires. And having some flexibility, like having these sorts of policies but also allowing for individual exceptions.

**Q: As an ally, how do you play an integral role in constructing these equalizing policies and constructing care as a policy issue?**

A: I think lifting up the voices of women who are already advocating for them, , actively agreeing with them, explicitly saying “I support these policies.”

**Q: As an ally, who will who may one day be in a decision-making role, how would you prevent retaliation and unequal treatment upon parental leave?**

A: I'm not sure how to answer that beyond what I've said already.

**Q: How would you send out the message that work-family policies are important to men and women aren't the only ones who are caring for family members?**

A: I think having a broad flexible program that recognizes that caretaking takes many forms, not just for parents with kids. Creating policies to allow all different kinds of people to use them and then also, this is such a small thing, but if there's any sort of messaging, visual message messaging about these programs, whether that comes in the form of a video or that comes before the end of those cheesy workplace posters, making sure that the people in the posters are not just women and children. That's just one idea.

**Q: How will you address challenges that caregivers, both female and male, face upon returning to the office?**

A: I'm just thinking about the issue of, again, the informal stuff is the hardest job directive. How do you prevent people from just not being treated coldly when they come back, from still be integrated into meetings to still feel like they're valued? And all that soft stuff is the hardest step to tackle but I'm not really sure how you'd go about doing that. It's institutional.

**Q: How do you feel about flex hours or agile working options?**

A: I think that's great. And I think that's going to only become more important with the experience that we've had with COVID.

**Q: And what are your perceptions on nonlinear leadership tracks that takes into consideration women with families?**

A: Great.

**Q: Do you feel like your firm has that?**

A: I don't know. I mean, I guess these policies do affect me but they're not on my time horizon, like in the immediate future. So, I haven't really looked into them at all.

**Q: Supportive work-family policies are becoming increasingly common, but research has shown that men's responses to these policies are shaped less by their personal beliefs, and by more by their perception of what is accepted and expected by their male peers. What are your views on such policies?**

A: I think they're great. I think that the more flexibility the better, with the big caveat that it doesn't lead to people just working more hours. Ultimately, I think that's very insidious, and should be, actively, deconstructive. For me, the more flexibility, the less, ultimately, you have to work. And the more you can integrate your life into your workplace, I think the better and more sustainable it is for all of the employees.

**Q: On a scale of one to five, 1 being not very likely and 5 being very likely, how likely would it be for you to request and participate in work-family policies, whether parental leave or flexible work arrangement if your family situation made that applicable?**

A: I'm a big self-advocate, so I think I would say 5, because I feel like I would not feel any hesitation to take advantage of those policies, if I needed them.

**Q: I know you haven't started work yet, but based on your summer experience, how likely do you think your male peers would request and participate in your firm's work-family policies, in their family meeting that need applicable?**

A: Just from my very limited experience, there were quite a few people who I met who had just come back from parental leave, and one of them was a father, so I know that at least one person has taken advantage of those policies.

**Q: Do you think so on a scale of one to five, how much of your decision to participate in the work-family policies is influenced by what you think is accepted and expected by leadership and management at your firm, and your mere male peers?**

A: I don't care about what my male peers think at all. But I do care a little bit about what leadership and management think, not just because it would influence my career trajectory, but at the same time, I wouldn't want to be in an organization that wasn't aligned with my values. At the end of the day, I would rather be at a place that agreed with me and felt the same way about it as I did, or I would just leave.

**Q: And so, on a scale of one to five, 1 being not comfortable, 5 being very comfortable. How comfortable do you feel in your ability to be fully yourself at work? You haven't started but from your summer?**

**A:** I think I was maybe a 3. I think there's certain spheres. There's like, fully comfortable, with friends, and then fully comfortable at work. And I think those are two very different things. And I think I'm able to reach that outer bubble of comfort at work.

**Q:** The “man box” refers to a set of beliefs communicated by parents, families, media, peers, and other members of society that places pressure on men to act a certain way. These pressures tell men to be self-sufficient, to act tough, to be physically attractive in a certain way, to stick to rigid gender roles, to be heterosexual, to not cry or show emotions, and to use aggression to resolve conflicts. How much do these descriptions relate to something that you have experienced?

**A:** I mean, I don't care. I don't think I actively feel those. I think I actively present myself in a way where those expectations wouldn't really necessarily be put on me to begin with. And the only context where I could really speak to that is when I was working in the police department, where I was very much surrounded by masculinity, and in a very traditionally masculine environment. And at those moments, I did feel a little bit more pressure to be a little bit more curt, not have exclamation points in my emails, be a little bit more direct. I think for me, it was moreso I recognize that this is how I need to be to be successful in the organization, not necessarily the organization itself was very masculine. It wasn't like, oh, I feel a need to be more masculine.

**Q:** And what roles do you think cultural differences, whether regional, ethnic, religious, class, if any, play in your attitude to masculinity and allyship?

**A:** I think there's a huge role in that, because I feel it makes sense. My gender is not something that I think about actively all the time, because I don't need to. But my race, my class, like all these things, I have to be very mindful of how those affect how I show up as an ally. And those are things that I am. Those are things I just need to keep mindful of.

**Q:** When you see men and women paired together on television, in movies, or other media platforms, what tends to be their relationship?

**A:** Romantic.

**Q:** How often do you see women in leadership roles on television and women of color in particular?

**A:** I don't know, I watch so much reality TV. I really don't know if I can answer that question.

**Q:** Does the way you see women in positions of power influence your view of women leaders?

**A:** Not really, because I think that these sort of issues of race class, all these things—I've spent a lot of mental space thinking about it. So, I feel like I've been able to create a sort of mentality or sort of framework around it that's separate from how media and all these different things create



messages at me. And so, I feel like it doesn't really influence me that much. But I do always love and support women in positions of influence, but only if they're doing good things.

**Q: So, it sounds like you have not really seen women in positions of power on TV and they haven't really influenced your actions or decisions to be an ally?**

**A:** No, because my entire life, for as long remember, I was surrounded by women. So many of my close friends are women, but I feel like I've seen women in all different sorts of jobs or positions of authority, so I've never really thought that women couldn't do those things because all the ones I've seen are doing those things. So, not really.

## **Interview #41**

**Q: How do you define male allyship?**

**A:** For me, male allyship means contribution, collaboration, and getting oneself updated. To be honest, I did not realize what my female co-workers/classmates may face in their daily and professional life. Now I wish I could contribute no matter what form it may be through male allyship. I can contribute through different platforms, like group seminars in a company and reception parties when entering a new school. It is not just a slogan. Something needs to be done about it, both through words and deeds. I now consider myself being part of allyship.

**Q: As a travel lover and LLM student from Chengdu City, PR China, do you see differences in male allyship across cultures represented in the media?**

**A:** Since I don't know much about American media, I am not sure about the male representation via American media. But I notice an increasing number of women of color when I go to the U.S. Biglaw's websites. There are no such problems in my home country because China is not an international country and most people are just native Asians; there haven't been any foreigners represented in politics or the media thus far.

**Q: I know you have experience working in the Chinese District Court. Are women represented as leaders in the Chinese District Court?**

**A:** Yes. From what I observed, more than half of the leaders are women, and I was lucky to work with them. They are always keen to teach us something that we can learn from each case.

**Q: When you participated in several influential and major insolvency and restructuring cases in China, did you witness gender discrimination?**

**A:** Not thus far and on the contrary. I think nearly 60% of the clients I worked with were women, either as a company's legal representative or as an accountant leader. Also, there were other male workers there. Still, they had quite distinct roles, like they were responsible for safeguard/supervising the cars and maintained the asset safety and guarantee to ensure that everything was in order. I think the working environment was quite diverse back then, so I guess I did not realize the workplace challenges that women face. One reason why the working environment is diverse is my city's unique style, which is the traditional value in our society. That is open-minded and respects women. Females are encouraged to take on leadership positions, regardless of the workplace.

**Q: Does the way you see women in positions of power influence your view of women leaders?**

**A:** Yes. The wonderful and powerful women I worked with shaped my opinions on what women can do. They never complained about their trivial home stuff, like taking care of their children while having such a pressured work. I found them loving their life as well as work. They often introduced me to some amazing TV and reality shows during the lunch break. I was surprised

because I thought they just devoted all of their time to their work (as I believe they dealt with big projects) and didn't know anything about their real life, like what brand is the best when it comes to facial treatment. They are powerful because they know their job well, and they also know how to live a high-quality life. They offered me positive vibes in the workplace and daily life.

**Q: I know that you said that you took this class to learn what women experience in the workplace, is there anything that we discussed that had surprised you?**

**A:** The class discussions broaden my horizons. Living in my own country, there are few race issues because Chinese citizens encounter people from other races in the workplace and average life. I now understand the situations that women and women of color may encounter. Before, I just acknowledged that females would have a long break after they give birth. But now I know much more about their real situations and what men can do to improve specific issues. I now have a bigger picture of these societal issues.

**Q: You also said that you took this class to learn how to become an ally to women. Is there anything that you learned and want to share with those who have not taken this class or are familiar with male allyship?**

**A:** I think this course is amazing. You can have different ideas from people from different backgrounds, and you'll have a deeper understanding of society. For me, a society totally different from where I am from originally. You'll touch on lots of theories and some interesting stories of those men and women in leadership positions in companies and universities. I'd say it is more like a journal, and you'll get accompanied by lots of treasure, which help you see the society and its issues more clearly.

**Q: This semester, we discussed the role of male mentorship and how the #MeToo movement may generate a fear of backlash. Do you fear that when you take on the role of a mentor, you will receive backlash?**

**A:** I am not afraid of being who I really am and what I want to do. People have criticized the #MeToo movement, but I will not step back. I hope those opponents could calm down and listen to the stories. It is not a shame having such voices, the world is diverse, and we all benefit from its diversity. It is everyone's duty/mission to face and solve these problems. It is our destiny to do so, and no one should feel awkward about what they are supposed to do. Sexual harassment is awful, and it is incredibly disgusting when used for leverage and control in the workplace. It is the lingering feudal rotten left-overs from the ancient times and should be eradicated. We are now in the 21st century. I won't feel embarrassed by doing so; on the contrary, I will advocate those and ask them what they would do if your children had such an experience.

**Q: What would you say to those who may be nervous about taking this class or nervous about taking on a male ally role?**

**A:** I understand everyone is different with distinct personalities. Maybe you are nervous about having the title of a male ally, and I won't force or persuade anyone who would feel awkward doing so. All I want to say is that you can do lots of things without the title. For example, I did

not have the concept of male ally before taking this course, but I always did meaningful things, the rights things, I think. When my female co-workers told me her concerns about one person who sent several flirting uncomfortable words to her, I separated the man from my female co-workers in the social hangout dinner. I was more than happy to give her suggestions. I am a male ally because I know that I did something meaningful to my gender and female counterparts. Other people can also unconsciously do good things and keep equity going in the workplace and daily life. I respect everyone's role, and if you chose to step back and give silent dedication or decide to stand out as an advocator, as long as you are on the right path, then we can have the unbreakable allyship in substance.

## **Interview #42**

**Q: How do you define allyship or an ally?**

**A:** I think allyship means supporting a group even if you are not a member of that group and empathizing with an understanding of the situation that people in that group might face and trying to use your own privilege and your own ability to be able to try to improve any adverse situation that people in that group are facing.

**Q: Do you consider yourself to be an ally for women?**

**A:** Yes.

**Q: How so?**

**A:** Generally or in the context of a law firm?

**Q: Generally.**

**A:** I think I always try to elevate the voices of women around me and I try to be cognizant of when men are speaking and cutting off women and just trying to be aware of the dynamics that are happening—the gender dynamics in the room—and I’m trying to support women speaking up more and getting more attention and being acknowledged for the work that they do.

**Q: So, how do you speak up for women when they are overlooked?**

**A:** So for example, if I am facilitating a conversation, I might try to ask a woman in the room what do they think first before I ask men in the room what they think or if it’s being a very heavily male dominated conversation, then I might try to bring in perspectives from women in the room or just encouraging people to share the mic and not dominate airtime.

**Q: How do you help amplify women’s voices, not competing with them for influence or for the sake of showcasing what an admirable feminist you are?**

**A:** I always generally try to speak second so if I’m working with a team member that is a woman and she did a lot of analysis, I always acknowledge her whenever I send an email to a partner or a supervising attorney and say, “Thanks to Sophie” or “Thanks to Kristen for doing this great job.” I think giving credit where credit is due, just like the way that you would for a male colleague, is important. And then, just generally making sure that women are acknowledged for the work that they do because it’s important to also acknowledge that women are also doing substantive work because in a lot of places, there is a tendency for women, and maybe this isn’t the case anymore but at least historically, female attorneys get a lot of clerical work or filing or less substantive work, and so whenever I have a female colleague who has done a lot of substantive analysis, I try to make sure that that is seen and acknowledge the work that was done.

**Q: When you bolster and draw attention to women's voices, how do you help them to gain as large of an audience as possible?**

**A:** If I see work that a female colleague of mine has done, I'll definitely share it or I'll mention it to other colleagues—always being aware of dynamics. Like I saw recently, we have an internal firm newsletter that goes around, so whenever I see teams that are all women, I always just note it or if I know someone on the team, I might reach out to them to say good job on this matter, it looked really interesting, and raise it in conversation with other people.

**Q: Got it. So, how would you define proactive allyship? And, how do you behave when women or other members of minority groups are not in the room?**

**A:** I think proactive allyship is active listening and active learning. So, on the active listening front, it's a lot of acknowledging what people are saying and just sitting with that and understanding what people's concerns are and then being proactive about making change. I think a lot of that is also listening to what concerns that group has or what concerns female colleagues of mine have and trying to address them. And then when minorities are not in the room—well, I'm a minority, so I'm always in the room.

**Q: Do you notice exclusion every day? Do you notice who are not there? And, are you proactive?**

**A:** I think, definitely. I noticed it in another office of the firm that I worked in in Newport Beach. It was a very heavily white office, so there, I noticed the absence of diversity a lot more than I do now where there's more diversity at least, even if it's not complete. And when certain group still aren't represented, I still notice it.

**Q: To be an ally is to bring intersectionality to the forefront. Gender is only one axis of difference. So, how do you or will you open the doors to more participation from women and women of color?**

**A:** I think this is very important. At the junior level, there are more women of color but as you advance up in seniority, people leave the Biglaw environment and people go in-house or they go to other government service. There's a lot of pressures—especially when women take time off to care for children or to start a family—like those burdens are disproportionately placed on female attorneys and especially attorneys of colors. So, I think one thing is you change the recruiting pipeline and make sure that we are more intentional about hiring more women of color and also putting in programs that support them. Like having concrete mentorship opportunities is something that I wished I saw at the firm where partners of color and counsels and senior attorneys that looked like me and were also minorities because it's kind of frustrating when you don't see that there and you know that there are lawyers there that are perfectly qualified and can do those roles but they are not in those positions. So, I think that is one way to do that—to see who is in leadership positions and making the decisions.

**Q: So, how do you make sure women, especially women of color, literally take seats at the table, rather than standing on the sidelines?**

**A:** I think just inviting them in so if you notice that they're not in a conversation, say: "Hey, I really think that X person's expertise would benefit here or I know that X person did the briefing or did a lot of the research here, I think it would be useful to bring them in for this conversation." Or, if they haven't substantively engaged on the case, saying: "I think this would be a good learning opportunity or a good mentorship opportunity. You know, why don't we bring in someone who is more junior to learn and have them learn about this case or this issue or this matter." So, I think, first noticing it, that is the threshold because a lot of people just won't notice it. And then after you notice it, raising awareness of it. I think in most cases, people would be receptive to bringing in more people into the conversation.

**Q: Right. But, data has shown that when women do speak out, they can be ignored, or have their ideas taken. As an ally, how will you address this?**

**A:** I think this goes back to what I was talking about earlier about giving credit, especially giving credit in a written format, so in emails or in cover memos or correspondences. In written correspondence with people, I always try to say this was a team effort, other colleagues did a great job, and giving shout-outs and praise to female colleagues when they do a great job—which is all the time. So, creating a substantive written record of it and also orally when you're giving feedback to a partner or if you're doing a presentation or something, making sure you acknowledge the contributions that everyone's made. So, I think being intentional and public about whose idea it was.

**Q: So, if there was no format that exists for formal mentorship, how will you offer peer to peer mentoring? Would you schedule phone appointments, go to grab coffee?**

**A:** Yeah, definitely—scheduling phone appointments, just checking in frequently, sending a message on skype and just saying, hey how's it going. I think that there is a lot of different types of mentorship too—there's informal mentorship and there's more formal mentorship. I think for peer to peer, informal probably works better. But just being intentional about checking in and being proactive about checking in—doing it frequently, not just once a month but once every week or every two weeks and being consistent about it. And also being a useful mentor, so connecting peers to other people that I know are giving other opportunities and just making general connections.

**Q: Right and so have there been times when you have or will privilege some women over others?**

**A:** I'm sure I do it unintentionally, but I don't intentionally try to do that.

**Q: So now we will move on to the role of allyship in debiasing the workplace. So how would you help the company start a program to attract a diverse talent pool?**

**A:** Recruiting from a wide range of law schools is one way to start because elite law schools are doing a better job of diversifying, but the pipeline still isn't there and talent comes from a lot of different places. So, one thing that I have been encouraging our office to do—so Howard is right

there in DC and we don't typically recruit or hire from Howard—so I have been encouraging the firm to do that. We also have existing structures in place, like our associates and counsel committees and I am a member of that. So that is one way to directly raise issues that associates have to firm leadership so being a member of that and listening and soliciting feedback from people who are in my class year as junior associates because it's very senior associate heavy right now so as the junior associate there, I can try to field those concerns. I think also supporting even pre-law school, supporting pipelines that give scholarships to unrepresented groups to go to college, supporting people to take the LSAT and go to law school, because, especially for first generation lawyers, the legal process and legal profession is sort of a mystery and trying to level that playing field also take a lot of resources and a lot of intentionality from people who are also first generation lawyers. So, just recognizing that people who have a lot of background in the legal profession are going to understand things and know how to navigate the process better than people from other groups that are often minority groups. I think supporting those kinds of initiatives are very important.

**Q: And, what are your ideas on hiring practices that are clear and transparent?**

**A:** I think they're great. I think we need them. I think on-campus interviews, OCI, EIP processes are a black box still.

**Q: So, would you recommend blind résumé evaluation and evaluate résumés without names attached in order to reduce potential gender bias?**

**A:** I still think that there is a lot more beyond just a résumé. I think that's part of the problem actually because even just looking at a résumé privileges certain types of experiences over others so people that have law review membership or moot court experience, where we know that certain groups are more likely to be on law review and more likely to participate in moot court, that assumes certain personality types and people that would be attracted to those kinds of experiences or have the time and ability to be able to do that. So, I think even just deemphasizing certain things that aren't super relevant to practice, like journal experience or traditional markers of prestige, is important. And then in terms of fit, it is important to diversify who is doing the interviewing so if you have more diverse attorneys attend these things, they might connect with applicants in a way that recruiters wouldn't and might give opportunities to other people who might not otherwise be in the room or get the experience.

**Q: How would you structure the design and layout of the workplace to advance diversity, whether its portraits, art, architecture, iconography etc.?**

**A:** I think one that that is very important is making sure our spaces are accessible and using universal design principles. One thing that I've raised with the firm is trying to make our events more accessible so if we have a food layout or a food spread, trying to be more clear about labeling what our different types of foods are, having events in well-lit places that don't have stairs or barriers so that everyone can access them. Being intentional about the type of art that we show, showcasing pieces from diverse artists or from artists in different parts of the world is important. I think also celebrating different types of affinity groups and showcasing different types of artwork is important.



**Q: Right. And, how would you create a policy on equal wages for equal work?**

**A:** I think that in most cases, at least with the exception of Jones Day, a lot of firms probably have that just with lockstep compensation and billables.

**Q: What rules and criteria will you create for promotions?**

**A:** I think the most important thing is client service and strong work. Assuming that that's there, looking at other things like community, citizenship, and pro bono work and leadership work that doesn't necessarily show up in billable hours. So, is someone active in the summer program, did they do a lot of mentoring, were they on the firm diversity committee? Like those types of so called soft-skills and soft experiences I think is also important and should be considered pretty highly.

**Q: I've heard from some female associates that sometimes, because of their gender, they have clients pushback on their opinions, like if a male tell them what to do, they are more likely to accept it whereas if it was a female, they might question it more and that may make the woman look bad in front of the partners. Do you have any thoughts on it?**

**A:** I haven't personally seen that but I think that it's important for the partner to look at it and then say, "You are getting the advice of our law firm and our law firm is made up of all of our lawyers and just because one of our attorneys who happens to be a woman is giving you advice, it doesn't mean that it is less legitimate or different from any advice that I would be giving you." And I think that's the appropriate response and I think saying clients should realize that when they are staffing a matter, they are staffing an entire team and the male partner or the one delivering the actual response, a lot of times, he wouldn't be the one to draft that. A lot of times it is the junior female associate who would be the one to do the legwork, the background research, the analysis that informs the ultimate answer to the client.

**Q: How will you eliminate gender bias in performance reviews?**

**A:** I think you could do blind reviews. I also think it's just as important to have a diverse review committee so having a committee that's staffed by an even ratio of men to women, and diverse attorneys who participate in the review process.

**Q: Right. What are the sexual harassment policies and interactive training you will put in place in the workplace? How will you deal with arbitration clauses in sexual harassment policies? New York and California have done away with this.**

**A:** I think all jurisdiction should remove arbitration provisions and allow people who have experienced for harassment to litigate their cases and have an opportunity to be heard.

**Q: How will you ensure there is no penalty for flexibility?**

**A:** Well I think that actually COVID has been a good example of showing that flexible work environments do work. I think this will be a big sea change for firms and for the legal profession going forward after the pandemic because now that we see work from home is effective and people still get their work done. It is not just an accommodation or a policy choice that people will have more flexibility in the future. So I think in one way, 2020 will be a watershed year for this because I think the old model was thinking that you had to be tied to your desk, you had to be at the office to do work, but with technological advancements, that's just not true. You can work from anywhere and I think that will improve flexibility.

**Q: What clear and transparent rules will you put in place for appointment to committees or leadership opportunities?**

**A:** The Mansfield Rule is a good example of this, encouraging women in senior leadership positions, at least having women who will be considered. Being very open about the criteria that is being used for elevating people to partner is good and having those guidelines and those considerations available somewhere that people can read and understand for themselves.

**Q: Will you put in place a program on male allies and sponsors?**

**A:** Yeah, I think that's a great idea.

**Q: What about a program to counter stereotypes?**

**A:** Yeah, I think a lot of implicit bias training is happening but the more of these training programs we can have, the better.

**Q: Next, we will move to women's leadership as a CEO priority. How will you structure a company's core mission on diversity?**

**A:** Being intentional about having diversity integrated into all the different phases of a law firm, from recruitment to retention. Just being very thoughtful about having it built in into every phase.

**Q: How will you structure the diversity committee and its reporting structure?**

**A:** I would first make sure it is representative so really encouraging it to be a diverse committee and not having diverse associates feel like they need to be pigeonholed into playing that role on a diversity committee. So, this is exactly what this interview is about—building allyship. I think the more people that are comfortable sharing their experiences and raising their concerns, the better. And I don't think the diversity committee needs to be made up of diverse people, but I think that helps. Just getting the broadest range of perspectives that you can on a committee, so making sure that it has an equal balance of junior, mid-level, and senior associates. At the partner level, making sure that it has female partners on it, it has partners with disabilities, it has partners who are minorities on it and that is that it is transparent and has a way to engage with associates and other members of the firm too.

**Q: Do you have any ideas for programs and plans for structured career planning, mentorship, role models and networking?**

A: I don't because I don't have any on the firm.

**Q: You have none?**

A: I don't really have any partner who are Indian partners. Actually, there is one. And I think one other thing to think about here, is also our staff because oftentimes, there is a big silo between the attorneys on one hand and the staff on the other hand. And the staff tends to be much more diverse and have their insular processes for handling issue that come up, but I think it is important to recognize that attorneys rely on our staff and our paralegal support and they help us to do our jobs and we wouldn't be able to do it without that support so also creating a dialogue between attorneys and staff.

**Q: And do you mean to include staff in the diversity efforts?**

A: Yes, include them into diversity committees, have them be involved in the conversation into what is working and what isn't working.

**A: I know that Freshfields had that where the staff was involved in the affinity groups.**

A: Yeah, we don't. Our associates and counsel committees are only for associates and counsel. And same thing for staff attorneys too.

**Q: Does your firm create partnerships with external partners and the broader community on gender empowerment?**

A: Yeah, so I know that my firm has partnership with groups like Diversity Lab and Barbri 1L Preview that does a lot of D&I work.

**Q: Does the firm's CEO or managing partner take on the role of advocate for female empowerment within the wider community through raising awareness, launching initiatives, or acting as ambassadors of gender empowerment?**

A: I think definitely there are partners that do it. I don't know if our managing partner does it but certainly there are partners in different offices that take on that role and we also have a D&I team so I know that those individuals do a lot of that outreach.

**Q: Are these mostly female partners or would you say there are also male partners involved in these efforts?**

A: I think mostly for these gender diversity initiatives, it is mostly female partners but I also know that we have male partners that are good allies.

**Q: Does your firm have any good work/life balance policies through flexible work policies or support systems are available for females?**

**A:** Yes, we have actually them for all attorneys. So, I know we have extensive parental leave—that's both for males and females—and we have flexible hour reduction programs and a sabbatical program that anyone can take advantage of.

**Q: Would you say the diversity efforts are targeted towards certain groups or like relatively well-defined groups, specifically first-generation college graduates or mothers returning to work because it sounds like it's available for everyone?**

**A:** I think it is pretty general, like all those programs. Actually, one of the areas that I think we can improve is making more targeted efforts for specific groups, like first generation lawyers or mothers returning from work.

**Q: Do you think that the firm makes women's empowerment or the empowerment of women part of the firm's corporate social responsibility efforts or are they just focused on general promotion of diversity?**

**A:** I think it's general promoting diversity. I don't think I've really seen it in our CSR policies explicitly.

**Q: Are there any other gender equality programs or conferences is the firm engaged in?**

**A:** I don't know the specific ones but I'm sure that we do engage in them.

**Q: Next, we'll move on to discuss collaborating with industry partners locally and globally. How do you think your firm promotes work outside of its organizations to advance gender justice and diversity?**

**A:** So, I think that our pro-bono partners do a lot of this type of work. We work a lot with the ACLU on gender discrimination cases and abortion access and reproductive rights cases. A lot of our pro-bono work is focused on that area. So, generally, at a societal level, that's how we can contribute.

**A: If you were to become a leader of a firm or company, how would you create processes and incentives for those in the firm or company to serve as a mentor for women in the community?**

**A:** I think outreach programs are really important. Partnering with existing networks that are at hospitals and universities and other systems that are already in place and engaging actively in those pipelines is important. For example, working with the women in law groups that our attorneys come from in their law schools—that would be a good thing and doing the same thing with undergraduate programs and high school programs.

**Q: How would you create provisions for annual bonuses, as a way to incentivize focus on and improve diversity?**

**A:** I think the bonus process should be holistic. It shouldn't just be built on billable targets. It should take into consideration citizenship, diversity efforts—all those things should be part of the holistic process.

**Q: Are you saying that billable targets should include hours spent on these other initiatives or just to see that people are involved?**

**A:** The billable target is what it is, that's just the situation. But I think those extra efforts should be taken into consideration so even if an attorney didn't hit their billable target but they were close and they did a lot of work on diversity and inclusion and mentoring, then they should still be eligible for the bonus and get the bonus because they contributed in a lot of other important ways.

**Q: And if you do end up at a client or in-house, are you going to use your power to exert influence?**

**A:** Absolutely. I'll tell my in-house colleagues to staff teams that are diverse and teams that are led by women partners and to not work with firms that don't make diversity a priority.

**Q: Will you also develop Certification programs like the Mansfield Principle?**

**A:** Yes.

**Q: Do you have any ideas of any global and local outreach program would you design?**

**A:** No.

**Q: So, in regards to the MeToo movement, how is the MeToo movement shaping norms of masculinity?**

**A:** I don't know.

**Q: Men mentoring women can make a large impact. However, after the MeToo movement, some men have definitely become more cautious. Is that something you fear? Do you fear a backlash?**

**A:** You should only fear backlash if you do something that deserves backlash. It is important for men to be aware of the gender dynamics and power dynamics in a mentoring relationship, especially if they are more the more senior person and I think we can all do a better job of being cognizant of these actions that make people uncomfortable, but I think in general men shouldn't withdraw or disengage because of the MeToo movement. They should use it as an opportunity to reexamine our own behavior and think about practices that we might all engage in and normalize that aren't acceptable and should change.

**Q: I agree. It's so interesting. I actually did research about the Me Too movement for Davis Polk's governance group—for this memo I had to write and in my research—I learned that for a lot of men who did mentor women, now, they are afraid to take women out on business trips or even have one on one mentorship or take women up as mentees, or they are even afraid of closing the door when they are talking with women because they are afraid of the rumors that can possibly start.**

**A:** I think that if you have a culture that is pretty strict about setting boundaries or setting what is appropriate, then hopefully it becomes it becomes less of a concern.

**Q: As an ally, how can you play an integral role in constructing these equalizing policies and constructing care as a policy issue?**

**A:** I think having strong parental leave that is not gendered is a good first step and also having active programs that encourage women to reenter the workforce after engaging in the child care process.

**Q: How can we normalize that childcare shouldn't be only for women? Like if a man wanted to take care of his child while his wife worked, there might be stigma that is attached to that.**

**A:** I think it is a very individual dynamic for every couple. Also, just sharing more experiences about things that are normal. I think it would be very normal for a male partner to share that on Saturday, he took his kid to baseball practice. We wouldn't think that was weird, but we might think it was strange if he said that he put his kids to sleep or if he said he was doing the dishes and didn't take a phone call because of that. So, I think just sharing those examples and having people have good practices around this--taking an equal load or burden and sharing about that—and being active about that is important.

**Q: As an ally who might one day be in a decision-making role, how will you help prevent retaliation and unequal treatment upon coming back upon parental leave or even non-parental leave? I have heard that people who are coming back—from anything that might keep them away for some period of time—have a hard time integrating and might not get placed on good assignments.**

**A:** We should treat them like anyone else. We wouldn't treat anyone who left for a clerkship any differently if they came back. Why should we treat anyone else who leaves for any other reason differently? It comes down to a management role and making sure that people are given assignments that they want and opportunities that staff them are ones that build their skillset and engage in the skills that they have.

**Q: Do you think it might be different in term of clerkships versus parental care in that a partner might view you leaving for a clerkship as you are building useful skills in that year off and you are coming back more valuable whereas someone who might be leaving to be a parent, when they come back, their skills might be seen as rusty?**

**A:** Maybe that is true but any new matter that you are starting, you are going to have a learning curve and someone who's already been at the firm or in practice for a while will have less of a curve so just being clear and explicit. I don't know how you would codify it in policy or anything but maybe just being intentional about how you are staffing people who are returning.

**Q: How will you send out the message that work family policies are important to *both* men and women and it is not just women who are the ones caring for family members?**

**A:** This is just men being active and talking more about family care and caregiving. Especially since we wouldn't think it was strange that male partners took time off to take care of his elderly parents and we would applaud that. And in the same way, we should applaud a man taking time to care for his kids.

**Q: So, for people who are coming back from taking care of their kids or parents, how will you address challenges that they—both female and male—face upon returning to the office?**

**A:** One thing is checking in with them early and seeing if they have any concerns. And then being aware of the issue, just being clear that they should be staffed at a level that is appropriate for where they are in their career.

**Q: What are your thoughts on onramping, which is working flexible hours and getting full pay, and guardrails, where they have predictable hours, to help those returning?**

**A:** I think these are all good ideas. I support that.

**Q: Do you think it is practical? Biglaw is notorious for being unpredictable. Do you think there are ways for this to happen?**

**A:** As long you're clear about it, as long as you tell your team, it would be the same as any other associate or any other attorney who has limited availability for something. Your team would just have to staff around it and I think that is fine and you can do that.

**Q: So, finding support from your other team members to maintain that flexibility?**

**A:** First, it is the firm saying this is flexibility that we're building into our onramping programs and this is important to us and being clear with the team. It's both the attorney that has to communicate it and let the team know that they have this limited flexibility or this limited bandwidth, like "I will be online from this hour to this hour" and it is also up to the people managing the team who set the work allocation appropriately and avoid setting conference calls or meetings when not everyone is available.

**Q: Supportive work-family policies have become increasingly more common. However, research shows that men's responses to these policies are shaped less by their own personal beliefs, and by their perceptions of what is accepted and expected by their male peers.**

**What are your views on work-family policies, such as parent leave, flex time, and part-time work?**

**A:** Personally, I think they are all great and that anyone should take advantage of them if they need it. It shouldn't just be limited to women. That's one way to destigmatize it. Also, if you notice that you have a colleague that is taking advantage of these policies, verbalizing that it is a good thing and showing your support for it in front of other men is important too.

**Q: Do you think you would be someone who takes advantage?**

**A:** Yeah, definitely. I think if I was in a situation where I wanted the flexibility, if it was available to me, why not?

**Q: So, on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being not likely and 5 being very likely, how likely would it be for you to request and participate in work-family policies if your family situation made that need applicable?**

**A:** Yeah, a 5.

**Q: How likely do you think your male peers would request & participate in one of the company's work-family policies if their family situation made that need applicable?**

**A:** 2 to 3.

**Q: How much of your decision to participate in the work-family policies influenced by your perception of what is accepted and expected by leadership and management and your male peers?**

**A:** Very little because I don't care what they think.

**Q: I know that you are leaving for your clerkship but if...**

**A:** If I were on partner track or if I were really trying to advance my career, I would care much more about what firm leadership thought of it and the cultural expectations around it.

**Q: Do you think if your family situation really called for it and your firm leadership really cared, do you think you will still request it or no?**

**A:** I would really have to weigh whether this was the type of firm I would want to stay at. It would lead to me leaving the firm. But, if I was really set on becoming partner and firm leadership really frowned on taking advantage of the policy, I don't think I would be a 5 anymore, I would be at a 2 or a 3, just like what I perceive other males to be. And part of the problem is that we have a narrative in the profession about sacrifice and this idea that you have to give up everything and it is acceptable to bill 3000 hours or 2500 hours.

**Q: Yeah, people like to brag about how much they work.**



**A:** People brag about it. People normalize it. People glorify it. And I think that is a really toxic environment.

**Q:** Right. I know. I've heard that people come back from the weekend and say, "Guess how much I worked this weekend" or people set their emails to send at 2AM even though they are actually sleeping.

**A:** Yep.

**Q:** On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being not comfortable and 5 being very comfortable, how comfortable do you feel in your ability to fully be yourself at your firm?

**A:** I would say 4.

**Q:** So, the "man box" refers to a set of beliefs, communicated by parents, families, the media, peers, and other members of society, that place pressure on men to act a certain way. These pressures tell men to be self-sufficient, to act tough, to be physically attractive in a certain way, to stick to rigid gender roles, to be heterosexual, to not cry or show emotion, and to use aggression to resolve conflicts. How much do these descriptions relate to something that you have experienced?

**A:** Like how I see myself or how I see other men?

**Q:** Either.

**A:** I think that is stupid.

**Q:** How have you been impacted? Do you feel like these are certain expectations placed on you?

**A:** I think that they are there, but I try not to be beholden to them and try to break free from them because it's a lot of toxic masculinity. I think it's important to show that men can be empathetic and being empathetic with your clients and showing emotion can be an asset. One of the partners that I was talking to recently was telling us how one of his clients was facing a criminal indictment and he was emotional talking about the case and his client and we *don't* look at that as weakness, we look at that and say, "Wow, he's empathizing with his client and doing everything he can to serve his client's interest." I think it is important to show that everyone is a human being and human beings feel emotion.

**Q:** What role does cultural differences, whether regional, ethnic, religious, class, if any, play in your attitudes towards masculinity and allyship?

**A:** I don't know if it's cultural so much as it's familial for me because my parents were very accepting and didn't put those types of pressures on me so I think that's sort of where it came from and not broader cultural forces.

**Q: In terms of gender norms and media portrayals, when you see men and women paired together on television, in movies, or other media platforms, what tends to be their relationship?**

**A:** Probably romantic.

**Q: How often do you see women in leadership roles on television?**

**A:** I think you do see it more, but I question how often it is women of color. It is often white women.

**Q: The next question was going to be about women of color. You rarely see them.**

**A:** Almost never, yeah.

**Q: Does the way you see women in positions of power influence your view of women leaders?**

**A:** Yeah, absolutely. I think that why it's important to have diversity at the top of any leadership chain because the more you see it and the more active it is, it normalizes it and shows different leadership styles too.

**Q: Has the way you have seen women in positions of power on television influenced your actions or decisions to be an ally for women in your professional life?**

**A:** I don't think so.

**Q: Do you fear allyship or resulting backlash based on how the media portrayal of women?**

**A:** I don't fear backlash. I don't think so.

### **Interview #43**

**Q: Do you consider yourself to be an ally for women? How so?**

**A:** Yes. I support the women in my life in their personal and professional endeavors by being a friend and offering help when they need it. I support political and social organizations that use their resources to empower women. I stand behind women when they voice their opinions about important issues that affect them.

**Q: What is proactive allyship? How do you behave when women or other members of minority groups are not in the room?**

**A:** I think that proactive allyship is serving as an ally in ways that don't require women to point out a problem or ask for help in the first place. Being a proactive ally is addressing a problem before that problem further negatively affects the lives of women. Proactive allyship involves a sense of responsibility for using your power or authority to defend the rights of minority groups whose voices may otherwise go unheard or not listened to. I behave as if they were in the room and empathize with their perspective to respond appropriately.

**Q: Do you notice exclusion every day? Do you notice who are not there? Are you proactive?**

**A:** I think I was able to notice a lot more prior to the pandemic and virtual meetings, but I frequently notice exclusion and dynamics that work to privilege the in-group. I am not as proactive as I probably could be, but I consciously attempt to include those I see being excluded.

**Q: Are there times when you have or will privilege some women over others?**

**A:** I will privilege a group of women on a subject when the issues they are speaking to directly impact them much more than another group of women (i.e. black women, LGBTQ+ women).

**Q: Has the way you have seen women in positions of power on television influenced your actions or decisions to be an ally for women in your professional life?**

**A:** Yes, primarily by virtue of women in power drawing attention to women's issues that men have ignored.

**Q: How is the #MeToo movement shaping the norms of masculinity?**

**A:** It is sending a signal that misogyny and sexual harassment are unacceptable norms of masculinity within society. It is shifting the definition of what is "masculine" from asserting power over women, to acknowledging and defending the rights of women to exist without being violated. It is placing more value on self-aware, rather than self-aggrandizing, masculinity.

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1- not influenced, 5-very likely to influence), how much of your decisions to participate in work-family policies is influenced by your perception of what is accepted and expected by leadership/ management and your male peers?**

**A:** I think my answer to this question is best captured by separating male peers from management. Male peers at 1, not influencing my decisions, and leadership/management around 3.

**Q: What role does cultural difference (regional, ethnic, religious, class) if any, play in your attitudes to masculinity and allyship?**

**A:** I consider myself an intersectional feminist, so I would say that cultural differences always play a subtle role in my approach to allyship because cultural differences affect the ways in which people (including myself) see the world receive and process information.

## **Interview #44**

**Q: How do you define allyship?**

**A:** I think ally-ship is a continuous act of solidarity with historically marginalized communities.

**Q: Have you taken concrete steps to serve as an ally to women and/or other marginalized groups? If yes, what do those steps tend to look like?**

**A:** I think I have taken those steps. In my previous position in undergrad, I had the opportunity to serve on the Gender Recognition Task Force, which put UCLA in compliance with California's Gender Recognition Act. But, on a personal level, I think I've also confronted people who've been insulting, or outright sexist.

**Q: Data has shown that when women do speak out, they can be ignored, or have their ideas taken. As an ally, how will you address this?**

**A:** The phrase "take space, make space" seems important here. I think I would want to make sure I'm conscious about how much space I'm taking up as a cis-gender man, and to ensure others are given room to speak and be listened to! I think I could also be more direct about reaffirming and validating folks' opinions who are often not listened to.

**Q: Are you on the board of any student groups? If yes, have you taken any concrete action to promote inclusivity and equality within those groups?**

**A:** No, but I am the class representative for Penn Law's student government, and there I have tried to ensure that our affinity organizations receive adequate funding and support!

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not comfortable, 5-very comfortable) how comfortable do you feel in your ability to fully be yourself at work?**

**A:** 3 (because I'm queer)

**Q: The "man box" refers to a set of beliefs, communicated by parents, families, the media, peers, and other members of society, that place pressure on men to act a certain way. These pressures tell men to be self-sufficient, to act tough, to be physically attractive in a certain way, to stick to rigid gender roles, to be heterosexual, to not cry or show emotion, and to use aggression to resolve conflicts. How much do these descriptions relate to something that you have experienced?**

**A:** As a gay cisgender man, I've certainly experienced the societal "desirability" behind traditionally masculine features, and the shaming of men who don't fit within those confines. I think this box is even more present for queer people, who are constantly subjected to micro-aggressions shaming their femininity or gender non-conformity.

**Q: What role does cultural differences (regional, ethnic, religious, class) if any, play in your attitudes to masculinity and allyship?**

**A:** I think they can have a huge impact on your gender expectations and your ability to be an ally. Being from the South, I definitely saw masculinity be something that was emphasized and looked favorably-upon.

**Q: How is the MeToo movement shaping norms of masculinity?**

**A:** I think MeToo is exposing a lot of long-standing issues surrounding masculinity and its pervasive and harmful/destructive impact on all people. Specially, I think that sexual-assault/rape culture is in some ways founded in toxic masculinity, and this is becoming increasingly exposed.

**Q: How often do you see women in leadership roles on television? Women of color?**

**A:** I think more than in the past, but still pretty rarely (especially for women of color, moreover queer and trans women of color).

**Q: Does the way you see women in positions of power influence your view of women leaders?**

**A:** I think being exposed to women in leadership can deconstruct stereotypes placed on women who are leaders. I've personally grown to view many women in my life as role-models and examples of great leadership.

## **Interview #45**

**Q: How would you help the company start a program to attract a diverse talent pool? (role debiasing)**

**A:** Companies should immediately try to hire slightly more women than men for each round of hires (within a small but acceptable margin of error) for the next ten years. Some of the new female hires should be put in female leadership training programs that will gradually lead to an equal number of male and females in positions of power. Most companies should strive for equal Board, Director, and Manager positions within the next twenty five years. Thus, by hiring more men than women, you increase the bench of female applicants for future positions of power.

**Q: How would you structure a company's core mission on diversity? (CEO)**

**A:** Promotion and evaluation forms should also be more formalized so that evaluations and promotions are based off of explicit traits and achievements, not whether the often male and white evaluator "likes" the applicant or finds other men more "relatable" and a "better fit." Such ambiguous characterizations continue to lead to similar compositions in most places of power within a company.

I would also include in our company's mission statement saying that diversity of experience, character, and thought process is the most important qualification and goal of our company. I would then explicitly state that any person who makes fun, intimidates, or harasses anyone because of their gender, sexual orientation, race, national origin, gender identity, religion or other form of identification will immediately face discipline.

**Q: What kind of global and local outreach program would you design? Examples might be supporting global symposia, leadership excellence for women awards and symposiums? (moving needle)**

**A:** My local and global outreach program would include prioritizing business dealings with similar vendors, partners, or markets if they make specific corporation goals to hire and promote more women and racial minorities. We would also prioritize companies that already have achieved some objective level of gender/racial equality.

With regards to local outreach programs, we would have women internship programs in the summer that allow local women to intern with one of our female professionals and then offer them an entry level position after the summer assuming good performance. We would also hire a local gender's study professor to provide annual reports about the way that our company treats and handles gender in the workplace and whether this disproportionately hurts women.

**Q: Men mentoring women can make a large impact. Do you fear a backlash? (me too)**

**A:** I have no fears for overtly supporting women, especially if they are my colleagues and friends. This is a legitimate fear for some men, however, because they may fear reprisal from

male peers or bosses who prioritize looking out for the “good ole boys” club. I also know male workers who refuse to look for younger female workers for fear of looking like a “creepy old man.”

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not likely at all, 5-very likely), how likely would it be for you to request & participate in work-family policies (i.e. Parental Leave or Flexible Work Arrangement) if your family situation made that need applicable?**

**A:** 5. I think paternity leave would a great option when I become a father during the immediate leadup and birth of my child. I can also help the mother and child get settled in once they come home. I can also stay at home with the child once the mother returns to work after her maternity leave ends. With regards to family leave, I think it would be important for me to take time off of work if I need to take one of my parents, aunts, or uncle to the doctors in case of a family health crisis and other family members cannot take off from work.

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not likely at all, 5-very likely), how likely do you think your male peers would request & participate in one of the company’s work-family policies (i.e. Parental Leave or Flexible Work Arrangement) if their family situation made that need applicable?**

**A:** 4. In all likelihood, my male peers would also likely to be to take advantage of these programs when they have a relevant need such as taking care of their spouse, child, or parent. However, it is also important to consider that some men might consider family leave or rearranging their work schedule merely to take a loved one to the doctor might be an inherent sign of weakness or femineity. Thus, they would not consider such tasks to be their problem.

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not influenced, 5-very likely to influence), how much of your decision to participate in the work-family policies influenced by your perception of what is accepted and expected by leadership/management and your male peers? (work fam)**

**A:** My decision to participate in work-family programs will be 1 (not influenced) by male peer perceptions, but it will be influenced (4) by the perceptions of leadership, specifically male leadership. If needed, I feel very strongly about advocating for myself based upon the given family need at that given moment. However, if there is no such leave policy for men at my company, or I am combatted with the typical “I dealt with a similar situation and I still managed to come to work every day,” my position to advocate for myself would be greatly undermined.

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not comfortable, 5-very comfortable) how comfortable do you feel in your ability to fully be yourself at work? (gender norms)**

**A:** 5. I don’t change my behavior at work based upon gender norms.

**Q: [The “man box” refers to a set of beliefs, communicated by parents, families, the media, peers, and other members of society, that place pressure on men to act a certain way. These pressures tell men to be self-sufficient, to act tough, to be physically attractive in a certain way, to stick to rigid gender roles, to be heterosexual, to not cry or show emotion, and to**



**use aggression to resolve conflicts.] How much do these descriptions relate to something that you have experienced? (gender norms)**

**A:** This is still prevalent in modern culture. I can remember hearing boys being picked on in preschool for playing with Barbie dolls. I can also remember peer students and teachers picking on male students from grades one for six, when they had not gotten a haircut and their hair was below their back shoulders. Derogatory adjectives were also used in high school anytime a male cried or showed emotion after a breakup or emotional moment suggesting that they were “soft” or “woman-like.” However, crying was often excused if a family member had recently died.

**Q: When you see men and women paired together on television, in movies, or other media platforms, what tends to be their relationship? (media)**

**A:** Generally, the relationship focuses the man trying to woo the woman. The woman is portrayed as an object with a substantial amount of power. If the show or movie lasts long enough to show the post-marriage, the woman generally loses any and all power over the man. In scenarios where the woman woos the man, the man never loses power. Finally, when the man and woman are an established couple, the woman generally is portrayed as “good” and “obedient” or “bad” and “evil” depending upon how they serve their men.

## **Interview #46**

**Q: How do you define allyship, and how do you define being an ally?**

**A:** I think allyship encompasses a lot of different things. I think it means friendship, and I think it means support. It means doing things for others that you have the privilege of doing that they don't easily have, and I think being an ally is actively doing all of those things. But I think the most important thing is standing up for those that you're allies with.

**Q: Do you consider yourself to be an ally for women? How so?**

**A:** Absolutely. Obviously, I'm sure I can be better, but generally I think if there's a sense that someone is not getting their chance to talk, their chance to advance, or an equal opportunity, I probably would let them have that opportunity over me. But I also think it's obviously very nuanced because I'm trans, so I might not be in a position to push opportunities towards them as a cis-gendered male would have, because he would naturally have those opportunities, and I might not get them in the first place.

**Q: How do you speak up for women when they are overlooked?**

**A:** First I would try to do it subtly. I remember there was a time when I was on a panel and the male attorney just kept looking at me to answer the questions, and I would pointedly look at the female attorney on the panel. And she would give me a nod, and I would let her speak first, and I would just add on to what she said. I think speaking up is important. I'd like to be subtle about it at first, but obviously if that's not working then I'll say something more bluntly.

**Q: What is proactive allyship? How do you behave when women or other members of minority groups are not in the room?**

**A:** I think I'm lucky to have worked in spaces where everyone is pretty much an ally and is very aware of inclusivity. I guess if there are no minority groups in the room, I would just make sure their views, and what they want people to know, are heard, because again, I have experience with that, being a minority as a trans male.

**Q: How do you or will you open the doors to more participation from women and women of color?**

**A:** I definitely think I will be a big part of recruiting at my law firm. It's not a sense of filling quotas, but I appreciate people who come from minority groups, be it women or women of color, and I see that as an added plus to their resume: an added layer of experience that is going to be valuable. So I think getting women to participate, getting them to apply to my firm, and getting them to positions such as clerkships, encouraging them to do whatever they want, will be one way I can help.

**Q: Do you attribute an idea to a woman who offered it, and do you endorse worthy ideas and ensure the appropriate person is remembered for them?**

**A:** Absolutely. I think one of my biggest pet peeves is when someone doesn't get credit for their work, and I think freeloading is very common. That's something that I'm very aware of, and something I would never want to do.

**Q: Are there times when you have or will privilege some women over others?**

**A:** I think I would privilege those who are most vulnerable, such as women of color, if all things are equal, and that can look like a variety of different things. I think each situation is very nuanced.

**Q: If no formal format exists, how do you (or will) offer peer to peer mentoring? Schedule phone appointments? Find a coffee shop or office with other people around? How do you keep it professional?**

**A:** That's interesting — I guess this is coming off the MeToo movement, where you don't want to be inappropriate. but you also want to offer guidance. I think generally I really enjoy mentorship, and advice-giving and helping others. I think in this case it would be better if I just put myself out there and say, "If anyone wants to talk to me for any reason, here's my phone number and email; let me know." So I think it's on peoples' own prerogative, and if someone approaches me I would help them out no matter what. If my firm had a social event, I would try to go around and speak to people and make sure that my junior associates are doing well, and if they need anything, to point them in the right direction. I think it's a balance of offering help but not being too pushy with it and thus making people feel obligated to accept it, especially if I'm in a higher-ranked position than they are, and they don't want to refuse me because they think I could get them fired or something.

**Q: How would you help the company start a program to attract a diverse talent pool?**

**A:** Fortunately, we already have so many of these pipeline programs, mentorship programs, mock interview programs, so it's all of those things I said, and also making sure that we're reaching out to affinity groups on school campuses, making sure that we have specific programs targeted towards women, for women of color, for first-generation professionals. I think the more events you have for specific groups of people, the more people will feel like they're being seen and welcomed with something made for them. So I think just having more panels, more mentorship opportunities, more exposure, bringing in guest speakers — all of it would be good for recruiting.

**Q: What are your ideas on hiring practices that are clear and transparent? For example, blind résumé evaluations, as in evaluating résumés without names attached in order to reduce potential gender bias.**

**A:** I think that's a great idea. There are so many psychological studies out there that prove that implicit bias is alive and well, and we can never be free of that no matter how conscious we are. So we absolutely should have these types of practices.

**Q: How would you structure the design and layout of the workplace to advance diversity (portraits, art, architecture, iconography etc.)?**

**A:** I think making sure that there is a lot of representation, whether that's inviting speakers and putting on events to celebrate people of minority backgrounds, or buying art from independent women artists. I think there are a lot of options here. Getting women and minorities to have a say in architecture and decoration is also important, because a lot of the time the ones making these kinds of decisions are the managing partners, who tend to be white, cisgendered men. Just having more voices being able to take part in that I think would eventually help the office convert into a better representation of what a more diverse group of people would like to see.

**Q: How will you eliminate gender bias in performance reviews?**

**A:** Something like blind testing I think would work — maybe when a senior associate works with a junior associate and they write a review, there can be a system where the name is taken off the review, or perhaps the questions can be worded in a way that gets rid of implicit bias. Using research about implicit bias that's out there to mold these surveys would be very helpful. Maybe also having women evaluate women would be helpful, but that could also be problematic if there are higher expectations or pressure put on female professionals.

**Q: What are the sexual harassment policies and interactive training you will put in place in the workplace? How will you deal with arbitration clauses in sexual harassment policies? (New York and California have done away with this).**

**A:** Yeah, I was going to say — get rid of [arbitration clauses] ASAP. If you want to sue, you should be able to sue, and nobody should be able to stop you. It's a little bit embarrassing because I think the New York office of my firm is absolutely wonderful, but we did have a case several years back in San Francisco, where a female partner sued our firm to say she wasn't being paid equally. And I one hundred percent stand by her — we need to talk about this kind of stuff and shouldn't pretend we're perfect. And each office has a different culture and I think I've just been very lucky to be in an office where it's very, very liberal and progressive and as equitable as possible.

**Q: What do you think of options for telecommuting?**

**A:** I think in the Covid-era, with work from home, this is something that we're already doing. I think generally women are held to a higher standard of dress and makeup and all of that when they go to the office. I'm sure that this is also true over Zoom, where a woman has to look more put-together and a guy could get away with just a collared shirt. So maybe a solution would be to implement a dress code like everyday business casual, or something like that, but unfortunately I think bias will still exist. If I were in charge and one of my junior associates showed up dressed like me, I would do my best to remember that there should be no issue with that.

**Q: What clear and transparent rules will you put in place for appointment to committees, and leadership opportunities?**

**A:** I'll make it very clear what it takes to get promoted to partner, for example, and what the equity contributions are, and what we expect you to bring in terms of business. I think it's more important to provide opportunities where people can develop business — it's not an old boys' club anymore, where you go to the golf course with five male associates, and they're the ones who are going to take over this old partner's book of business when he retires. We'll have ladies going out to these events too, and being invited to client dinners. You know for sure that when I'm pitching to clients, I'll say [to a junior female associate], "Clear your schedule, you're coming out with me to see these clients," and they'll develop a relationship with these clients too. It's about sharing as much of the wealth as possible.

**Q: What is the corporate culture that elevates both male and female employees through appropriate symbols and non-stereotypical leadership roles?**

**A:** That's a huge question. I guess the most common idea is: as many women and minorities in positions of power as cis-gendered white men. I imagine a corporate culture that really celebrates diversity; I would want a law firm to celebrate Diwali for example, and I'd want a law firm to celebrate the Harvest Moon Festival, and Chinese New Year — all of these things, in an appropriate and respectful way. To say things like, "Today is a special day in a given culture, and so we have special foods from certain restaurants that specialize in this kind of food." I think that's the best way [to promote diversity in culture].

**Q: Will you put in place a program on male allies and sponsors?**

**A:** I mean, I would, but I don't know how helpful or harmful something like that would be. I don't want it to turn into a frat group. If someone wants to be an ally to women, absolutely they should be allowed in on events but it would be more helpful to have more exposure and training on implicit biases and how to be a better ally. I don't think we need an ally group of "bros"; we need an exposure of "bros" to allyship.

**Q: What about a program to counter stereotypes?**

**A:** Again, it's so interesting because the psychology shows that implicit bias trainings don't necessarily help that much, but at the same time for people who haven't had exposure to stereotyping, to all of these ideas, I think that's definitely the foot in the door. I think it's just going to take a generational shift to see more women in power, to see more women doing everything that society said they couldn't, and for people to get used to seeing that, and I think that's how you overturn stereotypes in your head. So you know for the time being, I think trainings and pointing out where you're being biased — all of that is necessary, but I really think we're going to see a shift in maybe like, five or ten years, when more women have an opportunity to break the glass ceiling.

**Q: How will you structure the diversity committee and its reporting structure?**

**A:** Definitely I would have a greater majority of diverse candidates and folks on the committee, and I would have the people in charge be diverse people. I probably wouldn't have just one person in charge but multiple people. It's kind of weird having a "chief" diversity officer — I get

that you need a leader, but isn't the point of diversity to have as many opinions and views as possible? So I would try to have as many diverse people as possible and anyone who wanted to join can, like a town hall sort of thing. Members will be elected to committees. I don't necessarily think it's a good thing to just go out and hire diversity consultants. I think if you're trying to make a firm reflective of its culture and its people, you have to get the people within the firm onto the committee, so there's less bureaucracy and there's fewer outside people managing the people who are there. I think if I was in charge, I would probably want to just talk to everyone. I don't want to have to go through layers of middlemen to reach whatever initiatives are being put out. So overall — much more emphasis on a balanced and free-flowing town hall. If that's not efficient, I'm sure we can find ways to expedite the process through technology.

**Q: What work/life balance policies through flexible work policies, support systems are available?**

**A:** Winston has the award-winning, longest, fully-paid paternity and maternity leave of five months. No other firm has that. Some other firms have, I think, a maternity leave policy of two weeks unpaid — so you give birth and you're back in the office fourteen days later. You're literally typing out documents while giving birth. So I really do think our firm tries to put its best foot forward in regards to gender equity and diversity inclusion. We have so many events geared towards any sort of affinity group out there. That's one huge reason why I chose Winston, because of its commitment to these things.

**Q: Does the CEO and company take on the role of advocate of female employment within the wider community through raising awareness, launching initiatives and, in general, acting as ambassadors of gender empowerment?**

**A:** I don't know the CEO very well, but I do know the managing partner of the New York office of our firm very well, and he's one hundred percent supportive, and really tries to give every opportunity to minority groups and really tries to educate himself on how to do always do better. And I think this is reflected in the New York office's entire firm culture of being a very, very diverse place that provides allyship to women — there's a mentality that women can do anything. For example, the partners promoted this year: I think the vast majority were women. We're redecorating our office and we're putting breast-pumping rooms on the floors. We also have gender-neutral restrooms. I think our architecture and infrastructure really reflect our commitment to these minority groups.

**Q: Does the company create partnerships with external partners and the broader community on gender empowerment?**

**A:** One hundred percent. In fact, I think not only gender empowerment, but empowerment for all kinds of minorities. I know this is just a women empowerment class, but for example, all of the first-year associates had our start dates pushed back until next year but in the interim we were all very encouraged to seek pro bono placements that our firm set up for us, because of our commitment to pro bono and because of our commitment to improving and empowering communities which don't have the opportunities we have. We have so many partnerships, and

everyone does so much pro bono. We are encouraged to do pro bono, and our pro bono hours are added to our billable hours to increase our bonus. It's pretty cool.

**Q: What gender equality programs or conferences is the firm engaged in?**

**A:** I frankly can't tell you the names or anything, but I know we have three different mentoring programs. You get a junior, a midlevel, and a senior associate, and you also get a partner mentor. There are events basically every hour in regards to diversity or affinity groups. We actually have a diversity group retreat in the next three days, and hundreds of lawyers are attending this online Zoom retreat. I can probably tell you more once I start, but that's what I know.

**Q: How would you collaborate with organizations across industries on research and data backed initiatives that could help generate new ideas and strategies?**

**A:** I think that science is often underutilized in the legal profession, and as a scientist myself I'm a huge proponent of looking at the data, looking at correlation and causation, to figure out the root causes of a problem. If my law firm is suffering from a lack of women in the upper echelons, we can probably know that somewhere along the line they're either being pushed out or they're leaving because the culture is too bad, or they're facing repercussions. I think hiring consultants and data analytics teams to see this and provide solutions, and then actively doing the work in implementing those solutions, is definitely a partnership I would love to do. In general, I'm a very big proponent of data-backed problem-solving.

**Q: How would you create processes and incentives for those in the firm/ company to serve as a mentor for women in the community, particularly those seeking to engage in industries that have historically been difficult for women to penetrate?**

**A:** I would definitely have all the senior partners take minority associates under their wing. Of course, there'd be a lot of trouble if they don't want to, which is why it's also going to take a lot of training and a lot of adjustment of their mental attitudes. But really, you have to have people who are the most powerful advocate for those who are the most vulnerable.

**Q: How would you create provisions for annual bonuses, as a way to incentivize focus on and improve diversity?**

**A:** I would make opportunities like diversity events, and recruiting and mentorship events — I'd make all of that stuff billable. The big problem is that you have all of these diverse candidates coming in and they're usually the ones picked out to do diverse recruiting at OCI and they're the ones doing the panels and they're the ones doing the talks, but all of that is firm citizenship work that's not being counted in your hours towards a bonus. So I think it's about making sure that all of these initiatives that are taking them away from their work are being added towards what they're being paid.

**Q: How will you create external pressures from clients to improve together? “When companies like Microsoft make it clear that they factor diversity and inclusion in their hiring efforts, and will reward performance, it changes the way firms approach the work**

**and the issue. it reinforces and accelerates our own work and makes it clear that there's a business case for diversity and inclusion."**

**A:** I mean, definitely whatever Microsoft was doing to make them more diverse, to make them hire a strong class, I would follow their example. If they have a way to get people onboard, I'm down for that. I think also within the firm, if we're working with a Microsoft team, and they want to make sure they're working with a diverse pool, I'll staff in accordance with that. It is a little bit of cherry-picking, like, "Okay, this Asian associate hasn't worked on a lot of deals compared with other people, let them have this opportunity." A lot of the time I think people shy away from quotas, and shy away from labeling based on ethnicity, but I think at a certain point that's just how the world works. If you want to have diverse people, it's about giving as many opportunities as equally across the board as you can, because you're assuming that when you hire them in that everyone is capable of doing the work.

**Q: How will you develop Certification programs like the Mansfield Principle which calls for 30 percent women in leadership?**

**A:** The Mansfield principle I think has a troubled history and a lot of trouble being implemented. I took a diversity and inclusion seminar last year, so that's how I heard of it. On the subject of quotas, I think in certain instances they're necessary. I've seen partners after OCI sit down and they're like, "Okay, let's take this guy because he's LGBTQ, and let's take this girl because she's part of APALSA." It just happens, and I guess in a way it's moving towards creating a more diverse class.

**Q: How is the MeToo movement shaping norms of masculinity?**

**A:** I think there are two different groups of men which may be affected. The first group is now like, "Oh, now I can't talk to any woman behind closed doors because I'll get accused," and they're very bitter about this. The second group is like, "We can't talk about this enough, let's get this out there." I don't know if this is the real reason why, but my firm is transitioning to all-glass offices, which is pretty and aesthetic, but also now women don't have to feel scared that she'll get into a male partner's office and he'll ask her for something highly inappropriate. In regards to the MeToo movement, depending on how a male attorney deals with it, you'll be able to see the type of allyship that he'll provide.

**Q: Men mentoring women can make a large impact. Do you fear a backlash?**

**A:** No. I think as long as everyone is comfortable, why not?

**Q: I guess this is in response to the idea of some men being afraid that they'll be falsely accused of inappropriate behavior, and so will refuse to mentor women at all.**

**A:** I think the men who believe that probably are not allies to begin with. Isn't the rate of fake sexual assault accusations an incredibly low percentage? If you're truly an ally, I don't think that will deter you at all; in fact, I think it would encourage additional mentorship. I think mentorship is actually vital for long-term success — you need to find a partner or someone high-ranking to



have your back and advocate for you, whether it's talking about your partnership prospects, talking about promotion, or talking about which work products you can get, so I think it's especially valuable having these older male allies advocate for women in places that women can't reach yet.

**Q: As an ally, how can you transform the social value attached to child-care, including the role of both parents in caregiving equally?**

**A:** I think my firm's paternity and maternity leave reflects that: a dad leaving is as important as a mom leaving. And it's actually true: in my time as a summer associate, two of my friends became fathers and they took the full five months and there were no repercussions. One of them actually just got promoted to partner, so clearly that wasn't something that was like, "Oh you did this? You're out of the firm." I think obviously in general childcare has always been relegated to women and obviously we're now changing — is it changing fast enough? Are stereotypes changing? It's still going to take a lot of work but I'm just happy that in my generation, [the workload] is viewed much more equally.

**Q: As an ally who will be in a decision-making role, how will you help prevent retaliation and unequal treatment upon parental leave?**

**A:** For women? Or men?

**Q: For both.**

**A:** I mean, obviously if I'm in a position to hire and fire, I hope I would have close enough relationships with my junior associates that if they felt like they were being penalized, they can come to me and I can do something about it, whether that's talking to whoever is penalizing them or something else. Anything I can do in my power I would do to help.

**Q: How will you address challenges that care givers (both female and male) face upon returning to the office?**

**A:** I don't know if you've heard this story, the famous [name of firm] partner story, where this [firm] partner, who's a woman, said, "[Firm] really gave me a lot of fire and brimstone. When I had a baby, I had a huge book of business at [firm], and I'd just made partner. And then I went to go take my maternity leave and have my baby. When I came back, all of the other partners had stolen all of my clients. But you know what? That's fine, because I rebuilt my book of business; [firm] taught me how to hustle." And I'm like, what are you trying to teach people with this story? That your firm is a horrible place to work? That people are sharks and will backstab you? Yes, she was very impressive and all, but that's just fundamentally incorrect. So I think to get people integrated back into the firm, we need to make sure that they're staffed on projects, and make sure that their clients, in their absence, are being taken care of but also making sure that these clients are given back to the original people when they return. We need to make sure that they're back in the loop and as integrated as possible.

**Q: How do you feel about Flexhours or Agile Working Options, ranging from flexible hours to work from home to remote working?**

**A:** I think that should be encouraged as much as possible. I mean, there was a study that came out in the finance industry, describing how bankers are now seventy percent more efficient working from home than before. I think one thing that's not talked about though, is eighty percent worktime. It's often a program used by women who have children: they still want to work but they want to work for eighty percent of the time for eighty percent of the pay. But usually what happens is, they work just as much, but for less money. I personally know one associate who tried this, but then she decided to just go back to full-time and get the full pay. I think it's really important to track hours and make sure that you're not being overbilled. At the same time though, this is a "eat what you kill" profession.

**Q: What are your perceptions on non-linear leadership tracks that take into consideration women with families?**

**A:** It's not common at all. I don't know of any. I think there should be. I think just because a woman took five months off, doesn't mean she's incapable of making partner that year and that she should be relegated to the class level below her. I mean look, if I were in power, I would take all of this into consideration when I'm deciding who's going to be partner. I think we need people who are in those positions to understand that [this process] is unfairly prejudicial towards certain groups.

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not likely at all, 5-very likely), how likely would it be for you to request and participate in work-family policies (i.e. Parental Leave or Flexible Work Arrangement) if your family situation made that need applicable?**

**A:** At my firm, a 4, but at a different firm maybe a 1. Obviously, my firm has shown a huge commitment, and I've seen people participate in these leave policies with no repercussions. However, if I'm going to leave and I think that my clients will all be stolen by the time I get back, I'm not going to leave, or I'll just switch firms.

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not likely at all, 5-very likely), how likely do you think your male peers would request and participate in one of the company's work-family policies (i.e. Parental Leave or Flexible Work Arrangement) if their family situation made that need applicable?**

**A:** I think the same answer as mine: depending on the firm. Who wouldn't want a five-month break that's fully paid?

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not influenced, 5-very likely to influence), how much of your decision to participate in the work-family policies influenced by your perception of what is accepted and expected by leadership/management and your male peers?**

**A:** One hundred percent. If it's not acceptable, I'm not going to do it. My male peers I probably wouldn't care about if leadership was fine with it — I'd just be like, "You guys are dumb." And they'd probably feel the same way.

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not comfortable, 5-very comfortable) how comfortable do you feel in your ability to fully be yourself at work?**

**A:** I would say like a 4. I mean, obviously I understand they're my colleagues, so I wouldn't go crazy at work and I wouldn't let them follow my personal social media accounts. In terms of personality, Winston is a personality firm: I've found some of my best friends from work from my summer [associate position]. I'm very comfortable around them.

**Q: The "man box" refers to a set of beliefs, communicated by parents, families, the media, peers, and other members of society, that place pressure on men to act a certain way. These pressures tell men to be self-sufficient, to act tough, to be physically attractive in a certain way, to stick to rigid gender roles, to be heterosexual, to not cry or show emotion, and to use aggression to resolve conflicts. How much do these descriptions relate to something that you have experienced?**

**A:** I mean, a thousand percent. You can imagine how, as a trans guy, you're listing all of my insecurities, and I think especially growing up, when I was surrounded by boys, I was scared of all of them because I thought I could never be as aggressive or as manly as all of them. But I think the more I grow, the more I age and have more experiences where I'm shown the contrary of that, that I'm just as much of a man as someone like Michael Phelps — I've come to embrace my own definition of masculinity and what it means to be a man. And for me, I'm doing the work of dismantling the colonization in my head. But I can see how, for someone who doesn't have to do the work, for someone who is naturally like that, they might never break out of the box.

**Q: What role do cultural differences (regional, ethnic, religious, class) if any, play in your attitudes to masculinity and allyship?**

**A:** I think in Chinese culture, it's very patriarchal, it's very masculine, it's the idea that women should go be nurses while men go be doctors, women become paralegals and men become lawyers. So again, I think I'm doing my work in accepting what I'm going to do for myself, accepting that whatever my wife or partner or significant other wants to do, she will do the hell out of it and I'm not going to give a damn. Obviously, culture plays a big role but we all have to realize that it may not be a healthy thing.

**Q: When you see men and women paired together on television, in movies, or other media platforms, what tends to be their relationship?**

**A:** Always romantic, and that's one of my biggest pet peeves. It's obviously frustrating, but I think it's getting rarer in media to see a male protagonist with a female love interest who's not also badass or kickass. It's getting more common to see just a female protagonist without a

boyfriend. Like in the Disney movies, like *Frozen* or *Moana* or *Brave* so far. But even in *Frozen* you have Anna's boyfriend. So we're heading there but this is like the advent of something new.

**Q: How often do you see women in leadership roles on television? Women of color?**

A: Obviously not very often but again, getting more and more often. Like you have Jessica Pearson in *Suits*, Olivia Pope in *Scandal*, Annalise Keating in *How to Get Away with Murder*, all the doctors in *Grey's Anatomy*. So yeah — getting there but still a long way to go.

**Q: Does the way you see women in positions of power influence your view of women leaders?**

A: Sure — we're a product of nature and nurture, and by nurture I've been groomed to see men in positions of power, but the whole country cried and sank to its knees when Kamala Harris became the first Southeast Asian and Black VP. I'm excited to see this generation shape the babies being born now.

**Q: Has the way you have seen women in positions of power on television influenced your actions or decisions to be an ally for women in your professional life?**

A: I mean if anything, it's just proven more and more that women can be just as good as men and better than men in any sort of capacity, and I want to help anyone who wants to be anything, regardless if they're a man or a woman or non-binary, to get to where they need to be.

**Q: Do you fear a lack of ally-ship or resulting backlash based on how the media portrays women?**

A: Obviously if you're in the middle of say, Kentucky, you're going to face backlash; that's just the sad fact, because people are less liberal there. But I hope that I'm the type of person that even if I face backlash, I'll still do the right thing.

## **Interview #47**

**Q: How do you define allyship, and how do you define being an ally?**

**A:** For me, allyship centrally is about being in a place where you are supportive of women in a way that doesn't overshadow them, so it's about finding the best way to accomplish whatever their goal is without taking credit or without being too overbearing in terms of your approach and your suggestions. It's about combining being helpful and being hidden.

**Q: Do you consider yourself to be an ally for women? How so?**

**A:** Yes, I think the way that I see it is that it's not necessarily that much of a conscious effort. I think there is a little bit of consciousness in terms of whenever I'm talking with a woman mentee, there's certain amount of trying to understand where they're coming and trying to understand how that section of their identity impacts what they want to do. But outside of that level of cognizance, the rest of it is just being supportive in whatever sort of way the person wants me to be, or alternatively, if I see some sort of opportunity or I see some way of providing opportunities to them, just making sure that those opportunities are available to them.

**Q: How do you speak up for women when they are overlooked?**

**A:** I tend to do it in a more public setting. I think the most prominent example of this is when I was at Accenture, and we had an annual meeting, and the current CEO of Accenture — she wasn't the CEO of the whole company at that time, just of North America — came to speak to us and was touting the progress the company had made in terms of promoting women leadership. They had recently sent out an email saying that twenty-five percent of all the new managing directors were women. So I posed the question on the public forum of, "Why should we be proud of that? Why shouldn't we be aiming for fifty percent?" I think that's probably more my style, where in group settings I like to be a public advocate to reach a point of equality.

**Q: What is proactive allyship? How do you behave when women or other members of minority groups are not in the room?**

**A:** To the extent that women come up when they're not in the room, it's about making sure that they are communicated about in a way that's respectful and in a way that's promoting their interests. If there are misogynistic comments or there are comments about a woman that's not relevant to the job that they're doing or something along those lines, I think it makes sense for allies to step in and make it clear that this type of communication is not appropriate or acceptable behavior, and to draw attention to the fact that it denigrates women.

**Q: How do you or will you open the doors to more participation from women and women of color?**

**A:** I think it's one of those things where, when I happen to be in a leadership position or when I happen to be in a position of influence, it's about providing opportunities based on the position I have. So one good example of this, which I anticipate continuing, is when I was running

APALSA, and we were talking about the new leadership board and the new set of people who were going to come in, we were very actively soliciting and trying to promote the strongest candidates and those included mostly women. So I think it's a combination of making sure those opportunities are available, but also making sure that we're supportive of women seeking those opportunities, and that at the very least we're putting their applications forward. In many instances, without a bit of encouragement or support, we might not get those applications.

**Q: Do you attribute an idea to a woman who offered it, and do you endorse worthy ideas and ensure the appropriate person is remembered for them?**

A: Sure. I mean, I think that's just kind of good management or leadership regardless of race or gender. I think it's something people should be cognizant about just because oftentimes women don't get credit for ideas they put forward. So for me, it's one of those things where I give credit to people where it's due and when they put forward great ideas, regardless of gender or race. But I also think it's important to make everyone aware that this should be the right practice, so that it's not just the odd individual doing this, and that everyone is on the same page. That way, to the extent there are biases, they can be mitigated.

**Q: Are there times when you have or will privilege some women over others?**

A: I would say that it's about combining competence with awareness of the value that people with diverse outlooks bring. So, when I'm thinking about who should get a certain opportunity or who should be encouraged to get those opportunities, it's kind of a holistic evaluation of who's qualified for that opportunity and what sort of unique experience or insight they might be able to bring. So depending on the role, and depending on the situation, I could see myself supporting say, women of color in specific instances, or women with disabilities. I think everyone comes with a different background, so depending on the role or the opportunity that is being considered, I would want to promote the person who could do the job well and could do it in a way that brings unique perspectives that may not be thought about or favored by other people.

**Q: If no formal format exists, how do you (or will) offer peer to peer mentoring? Schedule phone appointments? Find a coffee shop or office with other people around? How do you keep it professional?**

A: I think in terms of peer-to-peer support, my door, virtual or otherwise, is always open to folks who I've lead in organizations, folks I've had classes with, or folks I've worked with. To the extent I'm able, I of course want to offer feedback or opportunities to chat that are open to everyone, especially women, and I think that is probably the approach I'd take. In terms of keeping it professional, I don't think that's a concern — it's one of those things that, for me at least, it's fairly straightforward because most of the time you're just talking about work or academics, which are fairly safe topics.

**Q: How would you help the company start a program to attract a diverse talent pool?**

A: It's one of those things where, especially if you're in a private organization, it's very helpful to tailor advertising specifically to diverse candidates, to say, "This is something we appreciate

and want,” and to advertise it in that manner, and also to get an understanding of what a supportive environment looks like. So, when designing advertising or when designing mentorship programs, and when designing evaluations for promotions, if the concern is that we want more women, then we should be talking with women about what the best way to do this is. If it’s about certain racial minorities, then the focus should be on talking with those racial minorities, and then using that as a starting point to building the programs that you want.

**Q: What are your ideas on hiring practices that are clear and transparent? For example, blind résumé evaluations, as in evaluating résumés without names attached in order to reduce potential gender bias.**

**A:** I’m supportive. I don’t really see any reason to evaluate based on characteristics that are not relevant to the job you’re hiring for. I think with interviews it’s a little bit more difficult but with the initial screening, there’s no reason to have indications of gender or race if that would lead to people prioritize whiteness or maleness. I think it’s gets more interesting if you’re trying to solicit more female and minority candidates. Then it might be helpful to have that demographic information to identify those candidates, but as a general matter, race-blind and gender-blind evaluations are a good idea.

**Q: How would you structure the design and layout of the workplace to advance diversity (portraits, art, architecture, iconography etc.)?**

**A:** That requires fairly extensive thought. I think you can focus on putting in art from diverse cultures and stocking kitchen spaces with spices that people are familiar with in their cultures. For example, you’d probably want a cumin shaker for South Asian employees or maybe soy sauce for East Asians. Perhaps you’d want to have culturally appropriate art or tableware. The other thing is, there are a number of studies that say that women operate better at higher average temperatures than men, so making sure that workplaces are appropriately heated can also play a role. Also perhaps being cognizant of certain holidays, and having paid parental leave for both men and women. I think it’s about creating a workspace that celebrates different cultures and ensures that everyone is comfortable.

**Q: How will you eliminate gender bias in performance reviews?**

**A:** That’s one of the things where, especially if the purpose is reviewing someone’s work and not for recruiting, race-blind and gender-blind evaluations become especially helpful. However, in terms of interpersonal evaluations, and evaluating characteristics that are not about purely deliverable work products, it becomes a matter of understanding the biases that people have and training them to recognize those, and to work to mitigate them, and being proactive about enforcing the goal of evaluating based on competence and nothing else.

**Q: What are the sexual harassment policies and interactive training you will put in place in the workplace? How will you deal with arbitration clauses in sexual harassment policies? (New York and California have done away with this).**

**A:** In terms of sexual harassment policies, it's one of those things that should be zero-tolerance, but you should also define what sexual harassment is. That probably requires some thought in terms of gathering people together and understanding their perspectives on what counts as sexual harassment, and also providing examples as well. As with any sort of disciplinary system, you'd want a structure based on levels of severity. Like, okay there's a violation at this level — what's the reprimand? If there's a violation at this next level — what's the reprimand? Being clear with that process and structure is important so that everyone is on the same page of knowing what are acceptable and unacceptable behaviors and what happens if you violate these rules. In terms of arbitration clauses, I haven't thought too much about them. It seems like some people are supportive and some people are not. My understanding of the main concern is that it prevents people from talking publicly about sexual harassment in the workforce. I don't know, I think it becomes one of those things where you have to balance what is essentially good business practice with what is good for the public and what's good for the industry in general. I probably wouldn't demand that people go through arbitration but to the extent that it's available as an alternative form of dispute resolution, I don't necessarily have a problem with it.

**Q: What do you think of options for telecommuting?**

**A:** If you're talking about the legal profession, right now everyone is remote and seems to be doing fine. To the extent that people are productive when they work from home, I don't see any problem with people working remotely.

**Q: What clear and transparent rules will you put in place for appointment to committees, and leadership opportunities?**

**A:** I don't know that there necessarily needs to be rules about appointments to committees or leadership opportunities. In my ideal world, everyone is evaluated based on how competent they are and what their abilities are like without concern for characteristics that are irrelevant to the job at hand. I mean, I'd want everyone to be cognizant of the biases that they may potentially have, but I mean — was it Europe or the UK, where they have some mandate in terms of like, fifty percent of government officials need to be women. I think a policy like that is probably too extreme because it focuses on pure numbers instead of the peoples' qualifications. So, you could actually have more women than fifty percent who are qualified, and you could have less — so my focus would be on qualifications and less on specific rules about percentages.

**Q: Will you put in place a program on male allies and sponsors?**

**A:** It would depend on what such a program entailed. The issue that I have with this is that it seems to put men in a de facto superior position. So if you have a new associate or employee and you're like, "Here is your new male ally", it seems odd to me. I don't know you could design such a program in a way that wasn't insulting to one person or another. I think there should be a lot of discussion on what it means to be a good ally, and probably investing in a culture and training that reflects that, but I don't know that I would design a program that paired people off based on that.

**Q: What about a program to counter stereotypes?**



**A:** Sure, I imagine that this is one of those things that would be helpful with training regimes: being able to identify certain stereotypes and explaining why they're harmful and unacceptable. I think it could be done yearly, with maybe a week of training and with a process such as laying out the concerns of people from diverse backgrounds, and addressing how to spot and mitigate them. You'd probably want to couch it in a way that was not patronizing, but it would be one of those things where you'd want to clearly communicate that this is something that's valued in a firm or organization, and that that's why we have these mandatory trainings.

**Q: How will you structure the diversity committee and its reporting structure?**

**A:** When you're trying to build a diversity committee, you have to be very specific about picking people from different backgrounds. So it's about finding those people specifically and bringing them together on the committee. In terms of leadership structure, it would be just like a normal selection of leadership — either voting, or application-based. I don't know that I would put in any sort of rigid format where there are rotations or anything like that. I think you would want to promote the people who are the most qualified, and then see whether they're hitting the metrics you want them to hit after you've set specific goals. If they hit those metrics, great and if not, perhaps someone else is better suited for that role.

**Q: Does the company create partnerships with external partners and the broader community on gender empowerment? You can answer this in context of your post-graduation clerkship.**

**A:** Within the parameters of my clerkship, I would say that I'm working for a judge who is very cognizant of being a woman in the workplace. She's been very successful at navigating that, and she makes an effort to work with other people in promoting women and minorities in the workplace, but I don't know if there are more specific programs that she implements.

**Q: Is women's empowerment a part of corporate social responsibility efforts?**

**A:** Sure. I think equality of opportunity should be the central concern of a corporation and to the extent that means empowering women and minorities, that makes a lot of sense. I also think the ultimate goal should be that everyone is evaluated based on the relevant qualifications for the job and what the desirable outcomes are. Most times, a person's race and gender are not relevant in those cases.

**Q: How would you collaborate with organizations across industries on research and data backed initiatives that could help generate new ideas and strategies?**

**A:** I think that it comes down to information exchange. It's a combination of making sure that people share both accurate information about their experiences and the opportunities that they offer. In the context of a law firm or government agency, it means that when you're partnering with other people, you want to work with them to design programs that will promote women and minorities, and also actively working with organizations where this sort of goal is part of their

DNA. I think those are the two big buckets: information sharing, and being selective with your partnerships or working with your partners to build the mentality that these are desirable goals.

**Q: How would you create processes and incentives for those in the firm/ company to serve as a mentor for women in the community, particularly those seeking to engage in industries that have historically been difficult for women to penetrate?**

A: That becomes one of those areas where you ask if there are any mentors who are willing to promote these sorts of initiatives, and seeking those people out. At that point, it's something you have to specifically say, "Hey, we're trying to break the glass ceiling and get women into these arenas; who is willing to provide insight that will be helpful?" That would be the way I would go about doing that.

**Q: How would you create provisions for annual bonuses, as a way to incentivize focus on and improve diversity?**

A: Sure. I think it's one of those things that is desirable to the extent that you can design specific metrics [to award such bonuses], or even just a more general democratic voting process to determine who did the best job for empowering women and other minorities. I definitely think that this could be a useful part of the payment structure.

**Q: How will you develop Certification programs like the Mansfield Principle which calls for 30 percent women in leadership?**

A: Maybe it's a little naive to say, but in an organization I lead, I'd hope it wouldn't have to be that explicit. I'd hope that [an equal ratio of men and women in leadership] would be one of those things that just naturally occurred based on peoples' qualifications and abilities. So I think that I wouldn't necessarily put something in place that was a mandate, but I might do something along the lines of making sure that every year we evaluate the number of people we've promoted, and then breaking that down in terms of the percentage of men, women, and minorities. Then we can ask if that's reflective of our company and what we want our leadership to look like. Then to the extent there are disparities, to then actively try to mitigate those, to try and reflect on how we have this problem, and how we can fix this problem, and encourage people to apply to these opportunities. To the extent that this eventually requires us to say, "We need to promote more women or minorities," then that can be a conversation but I don't think it should be the starting point.

**Q: How is the MeToo movement shaping norms of masculinity?**

A: I think it's probably helping people to be more cognizant of what are and are not appropriate behaviors in the workplace. I think on balance, it's a positive development and I'm hopeful that it will continue to generate conversations on how to make the workplace a place that is safe for women.

**Q: Men mentoring women can make a large impact. Do you fear a backlash?**

**A:** Yeah, I think there's a little bit of conflict in terms of that, but I also feel like you could just design programs where people meet in public spaces or put in place pair-offs, like two male mentors and two female mentees. I think there are fairly simple ways to make it work while addressing everyone's concerns about making sure that women are mentored, and also avoiding any concerns about accusations.

**Q: As an ally, how can you transform the social value attached to child-care, including the role of both parents in caregiving equally?**

**A:** I talked a little bit about this earlier, but I think it's one of those things where you need to have generous leave policies, and you need to make sure that people get paid leave for pregnancies and childcare, and you need to make sure that it's embedded in the culture that these practices are welcomed. You also need to make sure that it's available so that both women and men can take time off and also get paid for the childcare that they do.

**Q: How will you address challenges that care givers (both female and male) face upon returning to the office?**

**A:** I think it's about making sure that when people come back, that they are put in the position they were in previously. I think it's about designing the workplace to accommodate having children and to provide structural support for that in terms of organizing vendors for childcare and whatnot, and providing those opportunities to new parents to take more of the burden off their plate. It's also about making everyone more aware — there are definitely biases regarding parental leave, so it's about making it clear that when someone was away and comes back, that they are still as competent as they were before, and so they should stay on the same track to leadership.

**Q: How do you feel about Flexhours or Agile Working Options, ranging from flexible hours to work from home to remote working?**

**A:** I think that's all fine. As long as people are being productive and doing what they're supposed to, I don't see any issues with any of that.

**Q: What are your perceptions on non-linear leadership tracks that take into consideration women with families?**

**A:** I think I would be supportive of the idea that someone who leaves gets to come back to the position they were in before. It makes sense for someone to continue on the same path that they were on prior to something like maternity leave or parental leave.

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not likely at all, 5-very likely), how likely would it be for you to request and participate in work-family policies (i.e. Parental Leave or Flexible Work Arrangement) if your family situation made that need applicable?**

**A:** 5. I'm perfectly happy to take part in childcare activities. In fact, I anticipate that I will be doing more of that than my wife, not to disparage her abilities or anything. It just tends to be the way our relationship has worked so far.

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not likely at all, 5-very likely), how likely do you think your male peers would request and participate in one of the company's work-family policies (i.e. Parental Leave or Flexible Work Arrangement) if their family situation made that need applicable?**

**A:** Are you talking about my friends specifically, or my law school peers in general?

**Q: Let's say in general.**

**A:** Probably like a 2. I think that, having interacted with a number of men in my class, most of them are very career-focused and would prioritize that, and would probably ascribe at least somewhat to traditional gender roles. Maybe I'm being ungenerous to them, but that seems to be the gist that I get so far from interacting with them.

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not influenced, 5-very likely to influence), how much of your decision to participate in the work-family policies influenced by your perception of what is accepted and expected by leadership/management and your male peers?**

**A:** I mean, maybe there's some influence, but I feel like at that point the priority should be the child and so, whatever's in the child's best interest takes precedent over other peoples' concerns.

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not comfortable, 5-very comfortable) how comfortable do you feel in your ability to fully be yourself at work?**

**A:** I mean, probably a 3 to a 4. I feel like I am fairly comfortable being myself and expressing that.

**Q: The "man box" refers to a set of beliefs, communicated by parents, families, the media, peers, and other members of society, that place pressure on men to act a certain way. These pressures tell men to be self-sufficient, to act tough, to be physically attractive in a certain way, to stick to rigid gender roles, to be heterosexual, to not cry or show emotion, and to use aggression to resolve conflicts. How much do these descriptions relate to something that you have experienced?**

**A:** I can understand [these descriptions] from a theoretical perspective, but I myself have not particular cared about what people think about me if it's not relevant to the job that I'm in, so it doesn't affect me that much. I guess maybe I'm more affected when I'm with other guys and they act in hypermasculine ways. Then it might be something I'll push back on, but in terms of my own personal work, it doesn't affect me.

**Q: What role do cultural differences (regional, ethnic, religious, class) if any, play in your attitudes to masculinity and allyship?**

**A:** I mean, I don't know that it actually does. Being an Asian man — does that change how I see myself as an ally? I mean, maybe I feel more willing to help Asian women, but not really. I think I make a conscious effort when I'm seeking out mentees or trying to help others to put my focus on making things better for them in the most effective way possible. I'm not necessarily thinking about what race they are, or at least it's not something that limits who I would mentor. To the extent that they consider it relevant to their work or to the extent that it will better support them, I would consider it more, but most of the time, it doesn't really come up.

**Q: When you see men and women paired together on television, in movies, or other media platforms, what tends to be their relationship?**

**A:** It highly depends on what I'm watching. If I think about the things I've been watching recently, like *Star Trek Discovery*, these shows are fairly equal in terms of men and women in leadership positions and showing them working together, without being overly concerned about the gender dynamics. However with something like *Game of Thrones*, it's very much sort of your medieval-times perspective on men and women — men are supposed to be macho and be warriors and women are supposed to bear children and that sort of thing. I think it just highly depends on what the media is that I'm watching.

**Q: How often do you see women in leadership roles on television? Women of color?**

**A:** Again, I don't watch that much TV, but of the shows that I do watch, *Star Trek Discovery* has women of color in leadership roles fairly often. Of course, they have white men in those roles more often, but overall they do a pretty good job of in terms of that. In *Game of Thrones*, it's mostly men in leadership positions, but I think that's just part of the storyline.

**Q: Does the way you see women in positions of power influence your view of women leaders?**

**A:** No. I watch TV for entertainment. I don't watch it for information on how I should act in real life, unless it's particularly compelling, which doesn't really apply because with most of the TV I'm watching, I'm not watching to learn something. I'm watching to shut my brain off after a long day.

**Q: Has the way you have seen women in positions of power on television influenced your actions or decisions to be an ally for women in your professional life?**

**A:** Maybe. I mean, if media made fun of allyship, I could see it having negative effects, but outside of that I don't think so. I guess media is important in terms of communicating what is acceptable and what isn't when it comes to cultural norms, and so to the extent that they're communicating that it's a cultural norm to be a mentor to women, that would be helpful; to the extent that they're portraying it as a negative thing, that could have repercussions in how people view allyship.

## **Interview #48**

**Q: How do you define allyship? Ally?**

**A:** Allyship and allies, in my mind, are people who understand the inequity that exists in our world today and have the courage to stand up for and speak out for those who are not in a position to do so or do not have the voice/power to do so. I think being an ally can include small everyday activity, too, like being conscious of the differences of one's life situation and those around them and taking steps to better understand and educate others.

**Q: Have they taken concrete steps to serve as an ally to women and/or other marginalized groups? What do those steps tend to look like?**

**A:** I think the concrete steps I have taken have been more on an individual level – I was raised to always treat everyone kindly and respectfully regardless of who they are. More recently in life I feel that I have started to be exposed to a lot more and have opened up to listening more and seeing the differences that exist in the world, and it has led to a lot of discussions with people over the years about what can be done and what needs to be done going forward both on an individual and on a much larger scale.

**Q: Are you on the board for any student groups? Have you taken any concrete action to promote inclusivity and equality within those groups?**

**A:** I am not on the board of any groups. Within groups that I am involved in, however, as stated above I am open and receptive to everyone's ideas and contributions and I actively try to be aware of my own position and how I can make a difference, even if small.

**Q: Do you notice exclusion every day? Do you notice who are not there? Are you proactive?**

**A:** Yes, especially in a zoom class where you can see everyone in the class. It is easy to see who is and is not there/the general makeup of the class.

**Q: Data has shown that when women do speak out, they can be ignored, or have their ideas taken. As an ally, how will you address this?**

**A:** Active listening, being respectful in general, responding substantively to ideas offered so that others can see that their ideas are worth doing something about (so leading by example) and not simply hearing and casting aside.

**Q: Do you attribute an idea to a woman who offered it, and you endorse worthy ideas and ensure the appropriate person is remembered for them?**

**A:** If someone offers an idea, they are absolutely the person who gets the credit for it. Even in my everyday conversations, anything I offer that I heard from someone else I am sure to give credit for.

**Q: How is the MeToo movement shaping norms of masculinity?**

**A:** I think it is having a positive effect. I think it is making our society take a deeper look into what the stereotypical norms of masculinity are, how those are pressed upon so many people at a young age, and how that ultimately results in a lot of bad actions down the road that ruin lives of victims. Norms of masculinity seem to carry this sense of entitlement and power, and the movement is exposing the impact that has on people. I think there is a lot of power in the movement that is bringing to light things that 1. Should have never happened in the first place and 2. Should have been brought to light before now.

**Q: What are your views on work-family policies, such as parent leave, flex time, and part-time work?**

**A:** I think the prompt given above is partially true for me – there is certainly pressure to work more (I haven't even started working yet). However, I don't believe that that is necessarily the right thing to do. Taking time for family, and policies that allow that, I believe are critical both for the family members working and those they are attending to.

**Q: What is your view on the message that work family policies are important to men and women aren't the only ones caring for family members?**

**A:** I agree that the policies are important for men, too, and that men play a role in caring for family as well.

**Q: The “man box” refers to a set of beliefs, communicated by parents, families, the media, peers, and other members of society, that place pressure on men to act a certain way. These pressures tell men to be self-sufficient, to act tough, to be physically attractive in a certain way, to stick to rigid gender roles, to be heterosexual, to not cry or show emotion, and to use aggression to resolve conflicts. How much do these descriptions relate to something that you have experienced?**

**A:** I think these are pushed very hard from an early age through media/tv and peers. I can fortunately say that my parents did not force upon me a dialogue about what a ‘man’ is or is not like, but other outside influences certainly presented the beliefs described in the prompt.

**Q: What role does cultural differences (regional, ethnic, religious, class) if any, play in your attitudes to masculinity and allyship?**

**A:** I think cultural differences definitely impact my thoughts on masculinity, since traditional roles of men and women in different cultures can vary so much. Coupling that with the changes that are going on in our society today, I think I am able to gain a lot from more cultural exposure regarding my attitudes here. Being more knowledgeable can only help make more of a difference.

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not comfortable, 5-very comfortable) how comfortable do you feel in your ability to fully be yourself at work?**

**A:** Since I don't work yet, I will respond with school – 4

**Q: When you see men and women paired together on television, in movies, or other media platforms, what tends to be their relationship?**

**A:** As I touched on in an earlier answer, tv/movies/media definitely pushed the 'man box' ideas described in the previous prompt.

**Q: How often do you see women in leadership roles on television? Women of color?**

**A:** I think it is becoming more common, however, there is still a long way to go. I do not watch a lot of new tv shows (or even a wide variety of shows in general) so my data on this is limited.

**Q: Does the way you see women in positions of power influence your view of women leaders?**

**A:** I think yes, in a positive way. Seeing women in position of power says a lot to me about the organization and how they are not bent on having male dominated leadership, and I have a lot of respect for women leaders because a lot of times the path to their position was much more difficult and they are often surrounded by men who may see them differently than how they should, simply because they are women in leadership positions.

**Q: Do you fear ally-ship or resulting backlash based on how the media portrayal of women?**

**A:** I do not fear allyship or backlash, no.



## **Interview #49**

**Q: How do you define allyship? Ally?**

**A:** To advocate for the rights of marginalized group which I am not a part of.

**Q: Have they taken concrete steps to serve as an ally to women and/or other marginalized groups? What do those steps tend to look like?**

**A:** I think it starts with identifying problems (e.g. discrimination, being left out of decisionmaking, etc.) where I didn't notice them before. Once it is recognized, a minimum step is to make sure I am not contributing to the systems that exclude others. Then, I hope I stand up to these systems, although I could certainly be better at that.

**Q: Are you on the board for any student groups? Have you taken any concrete action to promote inclusivity and equality within those groups?**

**A:** I am not on a student group board, but I agree in the importance of inclusive decisionmaking and governance.

**Q: Do you notice exclusion every day? Do you notice who are not there? Are you proactive?**

**A:** I notice exclusion very often, and in ways I did not notice it a few years ago. I am not as proactive as I wish I was.

**Q: Data has shown that when women do speak out, they can be ignored, or have their ideas taken. As an ally, how will you address this?**

**A:** I think a first step is to make sure that I myself am giving everyone's idea's equal attention, and to constantly police by own biases. When I notice ideas being ignored on the basis of gender, I think the best approach is to express support for that idea, and ensure it doing so, I give credit to the person.

**Q: Do you attribute an idea to a woman who offered it, and you endorse worthy ideas and ensure the appropriate person is remembered for them?**

**A:** Yes, that approach can get around single incidents of dismissing ideas, even if it doesn't remedy the broader problem.

**Q: How is the MeToo movement shaping norms of masculinity?**

**A:** It brought men to face the issue of sexual assault in a way they hadn't before. Before, for men, sexual assault was a problem we were aware of, but mainly through statistics and studies. It wasn't something we typically experienced personally. And, I think it was something that we rarely heard personal story about, because it was considered a taboo topic. Today, it's not, or at least less so. So, I think men today understand 1) the scope of the problem of sexual assault, 2)

our ability to shape norms of behavior of our male peers, and 3) how to support survivors in more meaningful ways.

**Q: What are your views on work-family policies, such as parent leave, flex time, and part-time work?**

A: I support any policy that makes it easy to work and have children. The existing barriers to having both a career and a family lead to opportunity gaps across gender, race, and class.

**Q: What is your view on the message that work family policies are important to men and women aren't the only ones caring for family members?**

A: Work family policies should be available to men. Families should be able to choose how to divide child-care and working responsibilities; they should be decided by society norms.

**Q: The “man box” refers to a set of beliefs, communicated by parents, families, the media, peers, and other members of society, that place pressure on men to act a certain way. These pressures tell men to be self-sufficient, to act tough, to be physically attractive in a certain way, to stick to rigid gender roles, to be heterosexual, to not cry or show emotion, and to use aggression to resolve conflicts. How much do these descriptions relate to something that you have experienced?**

A: Personally, I don't think I feel that pressure, but 1) it's difficult to evaluate how you are affected by your own experiences and 2) I think a some of those descriptions describe me. I certainly agree there are men who fully embody those descriptors in a way that is very unhealthy, especially the use of aggression to resolve conflicts.

**Q: What role does cultural differences (regional, ethnic, religious, class) if any, play in your attitudes to masculinity and allyship?**

A: I think being able to understand those cultural differences, especially at an earlier age, helps men understand differences of experience that result from gender. In general, diversity leads to more accepting and understanding individuals.

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not comfortable, 5-very comfortable) how comfortable do you feel in your ability to fully be yourself at work?**

A: 4.

**Q: When you see men and women paired together on television, in movies, or other media platforms, what tends to be their relationship?**

A: That relationship tends to be sexual, even if its subtle. It is interesting to see which films can pass the Bechdel test.

**Q: How often do you see women in leadership roles on television? Women of color?**

**A:** They are there, including woman of color, and they are there more so than they were 10 years ago. But, they are not proportionally in leadership roles.

**Q: Does the way you see women in positions of power influence your view of women leaders?**

**A:** Yes and no. No, because it doesn't seem unusual for women to break those barriers and enter positions of power previously denied to them. But, that statement is just one in the abstract, and there is a difference in actually experiencing women succeeding in those positions. Gov. Whitmer is a good experience, showing a distinct approach to tackling the COVID pandemic.

**Q: Do you fear ally-ship or resulting backlash based on how the media portrayal of women?**

**A:** Maybe, but I think any backlash is fringe minority view. While there might be outbursts in specific moments of cultural conflict, in time, those views fade into the minority, as women continue to break additional barriers.

## **Interview #50**

**Q: How do you define allyship? Ally?**

**A:** Not just being able to understand what the demographic group is experiencing, but also taking positive steps that that group itself considers positive.

**Q: Do you consider yourself to be an ally for women? How so?**

**A:** I'm a big believer that words matter. I think you always want to catch your communication in not even gender neutral terms but in terms that put women first. I will always put a hypothetical as a female instead of a male. The other thing is to be conscious of stereotypes. For example in the legal profession still to this day there is a stereotype of female lawyers being overly aggressive or being unbending in negotiating. This comes from the sense that women have to be "bitchy" in order to compete in a male dominated profession. I think you always have to be on guard against that stereotype. Just because your dealing with an aggressive attorney that happens to be female, I try to remain aware of the fact that they are just being aggressive not being aggressive because they are a women.

**Q: How do you speak up for women when they are overlooked?**

**A:** I'm not sure that I do. But for example, if I am appearing before a panel or a board and I have the opportunity to choose which questions to answer first, I suppose I sometimes answer the female questioners before the male but it's not often that I have that opportunity to choose, I answer as they are presented to me. It isn't my personal experience that I see women being overlooked that often in my practice. The managing partner at my firm is a woman and everyone recognizes her authority and yields to it, not the other way around.

**Q: Do you notice exclusion every day? Do you notice who are not there? Are you proactive? Marc Benioff, ED of Salesforce noticed exclusion and corrected it.**

**A:** I don't notice it every day. Our firm is fairly egalitarian in terms of advancement. I will note that most if not all of our support staff is female so you do notice that at the support level it is all women, but it is also the case we have a large number of women in the firm. I do recognize that we are not a racially diverse firm, but in terms of gender we are. The nature of representing developers is an overwhelmingly male dominated field. I do notice that my clients are overwhelmingly male but I think that is because of the nature of the work that I do, but in the law firm itself women are fairly represented.

**Q: Do you attribute an idea to a woman who offered it, and you endorse worthy ideas and ensure the appropriate person is remembered for them?**

**A:** Yes, without question. I make no distinction whatsoever between who offers an idea.

**Q: Are there times when you have or will privilege some women over others?**

A: No.

**Q: What are your ideas on hiring practices that are clear and transparent? blind résumé evaluation. evaluate résumés without names attached in order to reduce potential gender bias.**

A: I have been one at the people at my firm who advocates trying to identify more diverse candidates, but once we have candidates I'm not sure how we would. As much as I am a believer in the value of diversity I'm also more of a believer in hiring the most competent and meritorious person. Despite my desire to have more diversity, I would not give up competence in the name of diversity.

**Q: How will you eliminate gender bias eliminated in performance reviews?**

A: I can't say I'm naive enough to believe it doesn't exist in performance reviews, but me personally, I'm always looking at the merit. I don't know if I have an answer to this question.

**Q: Does the CEO and company take on the role of advocate of female employment within the wider community through raising awareness, launching initiatives and, in general, acting as ambassadors of gender empowerment?**

A: Our managing partner is a women. So from setting an example perspective I think having a women in a leadership position sets a good example. Having a well-regarded firm have a women in a leadership position. I'm not sure what else we do that serves a community ambassadorship role but if leading by example is an answer to the question then have a strong female presence in the leadership of our firm is important. She is the best managing partner we have had in the years I have been there. But I would also say that if she were a man, the fact that she happens to be a women, I know it's naive of me to say so, but I think of it in a post gender perspective. It doesn't matter so much to me that she is a women, it matters that she is competent.

**Q: What gender equality programs or conferences is the firm engaged in?**

A: None that I'm aware of.

**Q: How would the Firm/company promote work outside of their organizations to advance gender justice and diversity?**

A: We do encourage community involvement and to serve on boards and committees in the community. We don't suggest certain organizations to people, we tell them to choose what they are interested in. A firm of our size, we have to make strategic decisions about maternity leave and how long we can afford for people to be out for maternity leave. We practice what I hope to be industry wide practice, we don't make any decisions about hiring or not hiring based on gender. But when we are encouraging people to volunteer their time in the community we don't make any recommendations in that regard we just tell them to do what is most interesting to them.

**Q: How is the MeToo movement shaping norms of masculinity?**

A: I'm thinking back to conversation I have had about antisemitism and I often say I don't know that I have been a victim of antisemitism because maybe I don't "look" Jewish. I'm going to apply the same naivete here. I'm not aware that I have ever done anything that would rise to the MeToo movement in my own personal behavior, at least I certainly hope not, and I'm not sure that I have really seen it. But I can tell you if it were to happen at our firm the person who perpetrated it wouldn't be at the firm for very long. I feel like maybe I have blinders on in the same way I do for antisemitism. I don't know that I have ever actually witnessed it.

**Q: How will you address challenges that care givers (both female and male) face upon returning to the office?**

A: This is a major issue. And it's a major issue because in the legal profession, at least 20 years ago, law school doesn't really prepare you for the practice of law. So almost everything that you learn about being a lawyer you learn in your first years of your actual work. The reason I say that is to illustrate that an enormous amount of investment goes into developing young lawyers at a firm. If your first job out of law school is several hundred thousand a year, your law firm is essentially paying you several hundred thousand a year to learn so if they are able to get a small fraction of that from the clients, that's a lot. I say all of this as background because it is a reality that there are firms out there where the law firms just can't afford to invest in educating young lawyers only to have the people say ok I'm going to go start a family now. So it is a very real issue. Of course, the well positioned strategically smart law firm will know having a diversity of gender in the law firm is important in the workforce, but it's a real tension where you are investing hundreds of thousands into someone that could say they are going to go start a family and it is the reality that it falls more heavily on women than men. I'm not sure I have an answer, rather an acknowledgment that it is a very real issue.

**Q: Supportive work-family policies have become increasingly more common. However, research shows that men's responses to these policies are shaped less by their own personal beliefs, and by their perceptions of what is accepted and expected by their male peers. What are your views on work-family policies, such as parent leave, flex time, and part time work?**

A: I think that goes back to my last answer about law firm being a business and at the end of the day they need to make money. From my own personal experience, I left a position at a large Philadelphia law firm because when my daughter was going to be born I knew I wasn't going to be happy giving up being a father just so I could build a career at a big law firm. I'm generally supportive of work place policies that encourage family time but again maybe I'm naive here but I guess that you don't necessarily need to have it in a policy. If you're a professional you know what professional responsibility is. They know they can leave early for their daughters softball game but then they might have to work later. Go take all the family time you need but also remember the client has work that needs to get done. And again especially at salaries of several hundred thousand dollars a year I don't think it's unreasonable to have lawyers service the clients. Certainly family time is important but each individual needs to find the balance between the two. I also think that as we get further and further away from the crop of the lawyers that

came up in the 50 and 60s and the idea of a male associate leaving the office at 6 at night to leave for family those partners would be like what are you doing, where are you going. Now several decades on from that, the older partners now were coming up in the 80s and 90s so they came up in a culture that was family oriented or at least moving towards that. With time you see a culture shift.

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not likely at all, 5-very likely), how likely would it be for you to request & participate in work-family policies (i.e. Parental Leave or Flexible Work Arrangement) if your family situation made that need applicable?**

A: 5. My family situation did make it applicable. Between my daughters mother and myself I have had an extraordinary close relationship with my daughter, sometimes to the detriment of work. But I have always made sure to carve out time to make sure the relationship with my daughter is paramount. Sometimes that means staying up until 2 am doing work but I always want to strike a balance in favor of family time as opposed to work time. I left a very large law firm in Philadelphia to work in Chester county when I knew that would have career long ramifications for me. But after all these years I would make the move again if I was given the choice.

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not likely at all, 5-very likely), how likely do you think your male peers would request & participate in one of the company's work-family policies (i.e. Parental Leave or Flexible Work Arrangement) if their family situation made that need applicable?**

A: For my firm, given the males at my firm, the older male people not much at all the younger men, definitely I think they have the same attitude that I do. The older men, a generation where it would not be unusual for them to say they would see their kids on vacation, that was a thing for them. Now thinking of my firm its incredibly common to call someone and catch them on their cell and you will hear kids in the back of the car because they are driving their kids to a soccer game. I don't think it's geographical thing, big or small law firm thing, I think it's a generational thing. If you are talking about lawyers that are 50 and younger they would definitely would favor these policies. Older lawyers, 60 and above, much less likely.

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not comfortable, 5-very comfortable) how comfortable do you feel in your ability to fully be yourself at work?**

A: 5

**Q: The "man box" refers to a set of beliefs, communicated by parents, families, the media, peers, and other members of society, that place pressure on men to act a certain way. These pressures tell men to be self-sufficient, to act tough, to be physically attractive in a certain way, to stick to rigid gender roles, to be heterosexual, to not cry or show emotion, and to use aggression to resolve conflicts. How much do these descriptions relate to something that you have experienced? What role does cultural differences (regional, ethnic, religious, class) if any, play in your attitudes to masculinity and allyship?**

A: Me personally, none at all. As a matter of fact my manner of practicing law is to try to find compromise and to cut a deal whenever I possibly can. I am constantly looking for ways to avoid escalation of conflicts, which can have negative business ramifications because the more conflict the better the billings look like. But I find that this is a generational thing and I do think that female lawyers are perceived as more aggressive, maybe because they feel they have to in what could be considered a male dominated world, but I constantly seek compromise and avoid aggression at all costs, sometimes to my own detriment. Sometimes clients don't think I'm being aggressive enough.

**Q: When you see men and women paired together on television, in movies, or other media platforms, what tends to be their relationship?**

A: If it's newly produced material then a lot more equality. I think that depends entirely on when the material was produced.

**Q: How often do you see women in leadership roles on television? Women of color?**

A: Not very often I'm afraid.

**Q: Does the way you see women in positions of power influence your view of women leaders?**

A: No. For me it's, I'm constantly looking at the merits of the individual and not at their group identity. Again that might be naive for a white middle age man, but I believe in individual merit not group membership.

**Q: Has the way you have seen women in positions of power on television influenced your actions or decisions to be an ally for women in your professional life?**

A: No, I am an ally for women in my professional life for several women's. I am a meritocrat at heart. Merit is what matters. How I see women in the media will not change my perception of an individual in the real world. It's also good business. Why wouldn't you want to work with the best possibly person regardless of their gender. As a father of a girl, I don't need to look to culture for my cues as to what is good for women in society I just need to look at my daughter and her own interests.

**Q: Do you fear ally-ship or resulting backlash based on how the media portrayal of women?**

A: Not at all. I have the privilege of living and working in an extremely progressive environment in the Philadelphia region and again my client base is overwhelmingly male dominated and a lot of the work that happens in my line of work is happening at construction sites where there can be misogynistic attitudes, but where I am in the chain of construction, at a professional level, I don't perceive misogyny at my level of the process.



## **Interview #51**

### **Q: How do you define allyship?**

**A:** I think allyship is standing with others in the way that they want to be supported. It is knowing that people know how to advocate and speak for themselves and finding a way to stand alongside them and support them in the way they want to be supported.

### **Q: How do you help amplify women's voices, not competing with them for influence or for the sake of showcasing what an admirable feminist you are?**

**A:** For one example, rather than sharing out your own ideas on a topic, you can share the ideas and voices of women who have already spoken on said topic. It is important that, as a male ally, you are not taking over the narrative or taking women's ideas and voices as your own. As a male ally, you need to recognize and give credit to the original voice; you need to prioritize listening rather than speaking, if you don't know and understand to the best of your ability what others are saying, then you cannot help amplify women's voices in a productive way.

### **Q: How do you or will you open the doors to more participation from women and women of color?**

**A:** I think first step is to be aware of who has the voice and the space in whatever circle you're working with. Recognizing where you have a voice and a space in those areas is key. From there, you can work to find a way to use that space to explicitly call on how the space empowers your voice and excludes others and work to fix any discrepancy you find/fight for a more equal space. Depending on the circumstance, your role and how the space functions, you need to choose a tactic for change that will match and fit into your environment and one that will help you find success in creating a more equal work environment. It could be direct or indirect; it could be as simple as asking someone's perspective, or it could be more formal, such as holding a meeting to reflect on how you and the office as a whole are, or are not, meeting essential workplace values like equality.

### **Q: How would you help the company start a program to attract a diverse talent pool?**

**A:** I think the first step is to make sure you are working with a team of younger people particularly of the race, class gender etc. that you are hoping to build a space for. Making sure that your initiative is working from the bottom up rather than the top down. On the back end, it is important to make sure that the firm's culture, language, and how it thinks about and evaluates its own work centers around equity and inclusion.

### **Q: How is the MeToo movement shaping norms of masculinity?**

**A:** I feel like the biggest thing for shaping norms of masculinity is putting men on notice. I know that seems like a small thing, but this is step one in a long battle for equality. That being said, mere notice is not nearly enough on its own; action needs to accompany this awareness in the long run to see positive change. In my experience, there are different reactions to the MeToo

movement and different effects it has on masculinity based on different individual persons. On one hand, you see people getting mad about the MeToo movement who get upset by the movement or feel they are being scrutinized unnecessarily and will lash out about it with negative responses to the movement. On the other hand, you see a more positive response to the movement with people who are on board and actively trying to monitor their own behavior and who are actively trying to contribute to make positive change to support women and equality. I think the different reactions to the movement reflect differences in people's culture, attitudes, thoughts etc. surround gender. You can't create change until you are aware of these problems, so making people recognize these issues exist is step one. From there, actions need to be made to actively support women in the workplace and beyond.

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not likely at all, 5-very likely), how likely would it be for you to request and participate in work-family policies if your family situation made that need applicable?**

**A:** 5. I will advocate for equal time off for both genders and for more equal workplace policies, gender-based and beyond, and for these conversations to spark structural changes to create more equality.

**Q: How would you create processes and incentives for those in the firm/ company to serve as a mentor for women in the community, particularly those seeking to engage in industries that have historically been difficult for women to penetrate?**

**A:** I would go back to the answer where I spoke about recruitment efforts; just generally speaking, if the goal is to make a space for women, it is important to let women lead these spaces and take control of the narrative of change. It is important as a male ally to not be a man leading the initiative and to let women's voices be heard and to let women lead in these efforts and provide support for them in these efforts, however they see fit.

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not comfortable, 5-very comfortable) how comfortable do you feel in your ability to fully be yourself at work? The "man box" refers to a set of beliefs, communicated by parents, families, the media, peers, and other members of society, that place pressure on men to act a certain way. These pressures tell men to be self-sufficient, to act tough, to be physically attractive in a certain way, to stick to rigid gender roles, to be heterosexual, to not cry or show emotion, and to use aggression to resolve conflicts. How much do these descriptions relate to something that you have experienced?**

**A:** I think very strongly. I feel like I have a lot of trouble being myself in a workplace. I never thought of it in a gender context though; I thought it was everybody that felt this struggle but just on a personal level, I definitely feel that this is something I deal with every day in the workplace environment. I think a part of this is that I am naturally a very indecisive person and tend to be a people pleaser, so I don't find myself comfortably speaking out/being myself in the workplace environment.

**Q: When you see men and women paired together on television, in movies, or other media platforms, what tends to be their relationship?**

A: I think very generally across media, television etc., men and women who are paired together typically have a gender normative and heteronormative relationship. Even if this is not explicit, it seems to be the underlying connotation; either both are thinking about it or one party is perceived as liking the other or visa, versa. Overall, you really don't see much variance from these typical "mainstream" roles and gender norm assumptions.

## **Interview #52**

### **Q: How do you define allyship?**

**A:** Allyship to me means being willing to help. It means being available to help and give others a voice for no benefit to oneself, simply for the sake of helping another/another group. I think it really stems from the idea of treating others the way you would like to be treated; it stems from giving everyone a voice and providing support in any way you can to make sure everyone is treated equally/the way you would like to be treated. This equality is not always seen in day to day life, and especially fails to be reality in law firm environments. With this, it is important that everyone be an ally to those who are treated unequally or to those who are biased against and make sure that they have a voice, and more importantly, that they are heard in a meaningful way. To be an ally, that starts with listening to the issues others face and find ways to work together to try to help balance these inequalities/help solve these issues.

### **Q: How do you help amplify women's voices, not competing with them for influence or for the sake of showcasing what an admirable feminist you are?**

**A:** I think the most important thing to do is to listen. I listen and make sure I try to understand what they are going through, to the best of my ability. I think it's important to not patronize women and fight their battles for them; women can fight for themselves. But when I feel someone isn't listening to them/ they are not getting their message across in a successful way, I do what I can to make their voices feel heard.

### **Q: Data has shown that when women do speak out, they can be ignored, or have their ideas taken. As an ally, how will you address this?**

**A:** Like I stated earlier, it is important not to fight battles for them; women can speak up for themselves. It is important though that, as a male ally, you try to listen and understand to the best of your ability the issues women face and help provide support in ways they see fit. I think for women of color, the same applies but it is important to keep an eye out for prejudice or discrimination and be aware that this may cause a different experience for women of color. It's important to listen and realize every women's story and experience is different, and to make sure everyone is heard and feels they're supported in the way they need and see fit.

### **Q: What are your ideas on hiring practices that are clear and transparent? Blind résumé evaluation? Résumés without names attached in order to reduce potential gender bias?**

**A:** I think it is important to have clear hiring practices and guidelines/structure. But I think this is a double-edged sword. On one side, while these strict hiring structures are clear, structurally, people who are systematically oppressed may be adversely affected. For example, women of color who don't have the same opportunities or are biased against in other ways through systematic oppression can be adversely affected. So, although it could be a good idea in practice, there could be adverse effects on women and people of color in the sense that these systems tend to systemically favor white men and those with privileged backgrounds. It is important to test this in the hiring practice and create guidelines and policies that directly combat any instances of

unfair bias in the hiring practice. Nameless evaluation is not necessarily the answer: biases are inherent by the people reading them, so a white male reading it, even if blind, may prefer someone who perceivably speaks like them/is perceived to be 'like' them. This can then really adversely affect the hiring process by leaving women and people of color disproportionately negatively affected.

**Q: How is the MeToo movement shaping norms of masculinity?**

**A:** In my personal experience, I have witnessed a couple different effects that the MeToo Movement has had on masculinity. Some people are shaped in a positive way: they take the movement as an opportunity to learn and try to understand what women have been facing. In other circumstances though, it emphasizes the toxic masculinity in people who already show this. They see the movement and make jokes about it, and this can have a really negative effect on people listening to this negativity around the movement; the movement is not something to joke or talk lightly about, and sometimes the backlash men show to the movement through these jokes or comments can have a really detrimental effect on those listening. In the short run, in my experience, the MeToo movement has had an effect on amplifying these biases/stereotypes and has prompted some to be more "masculine", "macho", "toxic", "aggressive" and more passive. But in the long run, the MeToo movement will hopefully promote a generation coming up more understanding, aware, and positive for women.

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not likely at all, 5-very likely), how likely would it be for you to request and participate in work-family policies if your family situation made that need applicable?**

**A:** 5. I would feel very comfortable requesting work-family policies. I think this is a major issue especially in firms; biases associated with motherhood/fatherhood are evident and really detrimental to workplace equality, for example like assuming new parents returning to the workplace cannot handle the same workload as before/as their other non-parental coworkers. It is important that firms have policies in place that help combat these biases, for example like having a system of fair work assignment. That being said, I think it is important for everyone to speak up so that these issues to come to the forefront of the office's discussions and policies to promote equality in the workplace are discussed and acted on. It is important to advocate for more fair policies to be structurally put in place at work to help make positive change.

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not comfortable, 5-very comfortable) how comfortable do you feel in your ability to fully be yourself at work? The "man box" refers to a set of beliefs, communicated by parents, families, the media, peers, and other members of society, that place pressure on men to act a certain way. These pressures tell men to be self-sufficient, to act tough, to be physically attractive in a certain way, to stick to rigid gender roles, to be heterosexual, to not cry or show emotion, and to use aggression to resolve conflicts. How much do these descriptions relate to something that you have experienced?**

**A:** 3. I think there are times when people make jokes/comments that I find inappropriate or don't agree with and I don't say anything because I don't want them to dislike me (or perceive me as a "stick in the mud"). As much as I like to say I will say something, this is not always the case; it is

not always easy to stand up and correct someone for their inappropriate comments, but it is something I am working on being more aware of and working on standing up and saying something to address these comments.

**Q: When you see men and women paired together on television, in movies, or other media platforms, what tends to be their relationship?**

**A:** There's been a positive trend of seeing more strong, independent women in media which has a positive effect on how women are perceived, but it's still not enough. Though there has been some positive change, there is still a lot of media, movies etc. that portray women in the "damsel in distress" role and in desperate need of a man's saving. This can have a detrimental effect on the way women view themselves and how young women set goals/role models for themselves. So, in conclusion, though I think there has been some positive change in this area, a lot more needs to be done to show more women in strong roles and succeeding independent of a man's help.

### **Interview #53**

#### **Q: How do you define allyship? Ally?**

**A:** Is it something you have to actively work to do (like being *anti-racist*)? Or is it enough to just not be a part of the problem? Moving toward allyship as “just not oppressing women” is no longer enough to be considered an ally, because there’s a recognized need to proactively work to dismantle examples of patriarchy around you, call out ways in which you’re directly benefiting from that system, and work to create spaces where those levers of traditional privilege and power do less damage to the women in those environments. This obviously takes different forms depending on the situation you find yourself in, but are goals and values that everyone should have.

#### **Q: How do you help amplify women’s voices, not competing with them for influence or for the sake of showcasing what an admirable feminist you are?**

**A:** This is a close line to walk -- standing up for women’s voices vs. speaking over them -- important to ask yourself honestly about your motives. If it’s because you see an example of oppressing and silencing of women occurring and you want to speak out against it or stop it from happening, you’re probably good. If it feels performative, like it’s coming from a place of self-interest, and done more for the sake of showing the other people in the room (women or men) where you stand on the issue, but ultimately involves actually speaking over, or instead of, women on an issue they’re more well-versed about, you should probably pass. This is something that is seen a lot during in-class discussions, when there is an urge for many to participate, not only to express your issues to classmates, but also to impress a professor, regardless of your genuine connection to the issue. It is one thing if everyone gets a chance to speak or if you are saying something unique to you, but if you are taking the place of another, who may make the same point, but from a more connected position, you are truthfully making a weaker point, regardless of its accuracy.

#### **Q: What is proactive allyship? How do you behave when women or other members of minority groups are not in the room?**

**A:** One of the reasons feminism *needs* men is because women are not (cannot and should not have to be) in every room where patriarchy and misogyny are at work. In order to completely combat these systems of oppression, they have to be snuffed out in every environment in which they prevail. And that includes a lot of male-dominated spaces. In a college fraternity for example or on a sports team, it’s not enough to just not sexually assault/harass a woman at a party or confront one of your “brothers” when they’re trying to. It’s calling them out on the sexist and demeaning comments they make while watching a movie (calling the female character a “slut” because she’s doing something that other characters like James Bond for instance are *lorded* for), talking about their mother/sister/significant other, or in how they discuss a past hook-up. And this isn’t because the people talking about women this way are evil, but rather because they’ve been socialized to view women this way or think that the majority of men do, and unless someone they see as an equal (i.e. a man) repeatedly calls them out for that fucked up world view, there won’t be enough of a resistance to change it.

**Q: Data has shown that when women do speak out, they can be ignored, or have their ideas taken. As an ally, how will you address this?**

**A:** Being attentive to women in the room (board room, classroom, office space, etc.) is key. Noticing when a woman says something quietly, or goes to say something but doesn't, and using your "more-respected" (by the fellow men) voice to call attention to the fact that she said or was going to say something can make all the difference. This is different than repeating the thing the woman said in a louder, more commanding voice (i.e. speaking for her). Even if you give her credit for the idea, it'll have been your voice that said it and likely gets remembered and given credit. Also, by making the woman in the room be the one to articulate the idea, you normalize and socialize the other men in the room to get used to listening and hearing good ideas from women, as opposed to validating their already-instilled tendencies to prefer listening to ideas from men.

**Q: How have you put a woman/women on center stage? How would you do it?**

**A:** I think in general this has less to do with big gestures and more about a consistent habit of doing this more regularly, even if on a smaller scale. For example, last week I was asked to be on a panel to discuss final exams with 1Ls and instead, I suggested it be someone who I thought was better prepared than I, who happened to be a woman of color. This was not necessarily my intention or reason for substituting myself out, but I think when done regularly it has a great effect. And realizing that I, whether as a result of my character or race and gender, was not the most qualified for a task just because the opportunity presented itself, is a good starting step.

**Q: How is the MeToo movement shaping norms of masculinity?**

**A:** One important piece of taking down patriarchal and oppressive treatment of women is narrowing the false divide created by gender norms. The archetype of masculinity that encourages the oppression of women also narrows the range of emotions, expressions, and behaviors available to men. By forcing men to confront the privilege inherent in not having to, for example, fear for their safety from sexual assault in the workplace, it also makes them confront the ways in which they may have artificially limited their behavior or view of "manliness" to conform to that work environment. Making a safer work environment for women means making a more accepting and diverse environment for men. Both parties end up getting to be in a more comfortable and authentic working environment as a result.

**Q: As an ally, how can you transform the social value attached to child-care including the role of both parents in caregiving equally?**

**A:** The inequity in society's view of childcare is built into the system. From expectations placed on women vs. men as children, to the actual amount of paid leave/care/insurance coverage allocated to women and men following a child's birth, to comments and societal expectations placed on women and men as mothers and fathers while raising their child. To stand in opposition to the fundamental structure and assumptions of that system is very difficult, and takes far more than the efforts of just an individual. However, each individual man can play an



important role in shifting the dynamic of that system in his own family/relationships. At its core, the current child-care model places upon women the *presumption* that caregiving is far more her responsibility than her male partner's. Even if the end result is the same, the crucial question is the degree of *genuine choice* afforded the women in deciding whether or not she *wants* to take on that role (or the larger portion of that role). This also means listening to her and finding ways to compromise when the answer is she wants a smaller portion of that role (i.e. < 100%) than society deems appropriate or essential. One man choosing to take on a larger role in parenting than society typically expects of men may not change the system at large (it won't increase the paid leave afforded him by his job or alter work insurance coverage from his partner), but it changes the dynamic within his own family, which in turn raises those children with a reformed understanding of what expectations may be placed on parents. Cumulatively, this influences the larger societal change.

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not likely at all, 5-very likely), how likely would it be for you to request & participate in work-family policies (i.e. Parental Leave or Flexible Work Arrangement) if your family situation made that need applicable?**

**A:** 5; This may be a simplified answer, or even naive at this point in my life, but I started babysitting at the age of 10 and regularly volunteered at my daycare/preschool through high school, despite being the only male friend of mine doing anything of the sort (babysitting or at a preschool) and I don't intend to stop taking care of children when it is one of my own. Obviously, this is not something everyone feels they can control at their place of work, but I was in a position to shop around firms so I could get a better sense of the culture when it comes to understanding these family obligations, and ultimately found a place where I believe my choices will be accepted.

**Q: How often do you see women in leadership roles on television? Women of color?**

**A:** Quite regularly, but with that said, I think I tend to watch a number of shows that many might consider geared towards families or more specifically women, so while it's not a strange occurrence for me, I acknowledge that it is probably less present in television writ large. But I also wouldn't say I hide my opinions about television shows, so the more people that are open to watch what may be deemed a more progressive show in this case, the more of those shows that will be made. And ultimately, the more normal it will become to see women generally, and women of color more specifically, in these roles both on-screen and in real life.

## **Interview #54**

**Q: Thank you so much for taking the time to talk with me. As the managing partner at a U.S. global law firm in Beijing, China, I wonder if you have noticed any obstacles that women might face in the legal profession in China?**

**A:** Sure, my pleasure. I have been at my current firm for seven years and we have been very proud of our identity of being a completely women-friendly law firm. Actually, we have been awarded the top 100 women employers in the United States consistently for a number of years already. I'm extremely proud of my firm but certainly there are still many obstacles that women face in the legal profession. Statistically speaking, there are certainly more male partners in law firms in China and some of them might want to take advantage of the entry-level female lawyers and paralegals. But I am glad that today if any instance of sexual harassment is being exposed, that would be devastating for that male partner's career. Clients would not want to work with him, and he will be required to leave the firm. The problem is that there are still many instances of sexual harassment in the workplace that remain unreported. The result is that some male partners are not being punished for what they have done, and they might have the incentive to do it again. Also, if you look at tier two or tier three Chinese domestic law firms, explicit gender discrimination still exists for the recruitment of entry level associate or trainees. Sometimes they just explicitly list the gender requirement in their job descriptions. During the recruitment process, for example, they would say they only want a male lawyer. This is totally gender discrimination and is certainly not allowed pursuant to my standards. I would not say it's a predominant situation here in China, but I did encounter some circumstances like such.

**Q: Do you think the law firm's preference for male lawyers is in part because women are more likely to choose to major in law in China compared to men?**

**A:** Yes, that is just the reality. I graduated from a top Chinese law school which produces the most law graduates in China and more than half of my classmates are female students. I'm not saying I'm biased against male students, but I do think biologically women are stronger in logics and linguistic capabilities. I would say women are born lawyer candidates just from my professional perspective. There are indeed more female students in a typical law school in China which is a good thing because women are good at it and it doesn't make any sense to make law a male dominated profession. Generally, I think there is no legitimate basis to discriminate against female lawyers. From some employers' perspective, they might think it is not convenient to send female lawyers to do business trips when there's a court hearing in some other cities or you want somebody to meet with the clients in other cities. That's just not true. I've been seeing quite a lot female lawyers either at partner level or associate level travel as frequent as male lawyers to attend court hearing and to meet clients. Women are equally able to take on business trips as long as the firms provides sufficient accommodations for both sexes.

**Q: During your work, have you encountered situations where the clients exhibit gender bias and how did you or will you respond to that?**

**A:** I rarely encountered situations where our clients express or exhibit gender bias. Our clients generally don't care about the gender of the lawyer. They only care whether the lawyers could do

the job, whether they can offer good legal advice and whether they can deliver a beautiful lawyerly writing. So, as long as the lawyer could do the job, the client does not have a strong tendency leaning toward one gender over the other. But, of course, there are still some circumstances where clients might exhibit gender bias. In both China and the U.S., during my work, I have seen situations where the clients may from time to time make some inappropriate jokes about women during dinner events. I will correct them but in a subtle and gentle manner. You do not want to escalate the situation by directly confronting them at the scene, but you have to show that you do not agree with them. You need to show that you do not feel comfortable that they are belittling or criticizing women in a way that is absolutely inappropriate and discriminatory. I think it's our duty to correct them but of course you have to consider how to balance the relationship with the clients. You might want to correct them later on or talk to them one on one. You can also say something like "Come on, they are actually smarter than us, you know" to subtly correct them. You have to really evaluate the situations and make the proper moves.

**Q: What do you think is the specific challenge that the Chinese legal industry faces on the way to gender equality?**

**A:** There is still a large discrepancy between the top tier law firms and lower tier law firms in the advancement of gender equality in China. In the lower tier law firms, there is usually a lack of gender equality policies and there are more instances of explicit gender discrimination. The gender policies in top tier law firms in contrast are generally modeled after those in the U.S. or other developed countries and are more robust. I think there should be more communication and cooperation between the top tier law firms and the lower tier law firms in terms of advancing gender equality. However, I would say that the gender equality situation in China is way better than many of our Asian neighbors. China has gone a long way in the past 70 years. In the entire 2000 years of the Chinese feudal society, women were never treated equally. But now women are protected by the law to be treated equally as men. After the cultural revolution, China literally rebuilt its legal system from zero in just 40 years. It's just simply a miracle to think about how quickly the Chinese legal system has grown. I think as the Chinese legal system advances to a new level of modernization, we will see a further improvement in gender equality in the Chinese society.

**Q: Now, from a more personally level, do you consider yourself to be an ally for women? How so?**

**A:** I'm absolutely an ally for women. I am happy to grow up in a family which has achieved gender equality for generations. My grandma, my mom and also my wife are all really successful women who I look up to. Therefore, being an ally for women is sort of a no-brainer for me. I am also a big fan of Justice Ginsburg who is a fighter for women's rights. I'm proud that I had a chance to appear in front of the Supreme Court to submit a brief and also audited a number of hearings. For me, feminism is a hallmark of our modern moral system. It's certainly the trend for the entire human being. You will be completely silly and against the trend of the history to not to be an ally for women. As an ally for women, I treat every woman in my life equally and I will correct the inappropriateness when I see them. It is my responsibility as the managing partner to cultivate a women-friendly working environment and to make sure there is zero tolerance for

gender discrimination and sexual harassment in the workplace. I received regular training from the firm in terms of improving gender diversity and I am just personally interested in learning more about this topic. I talked to some feminist lawyers and legal professional leaders to learn about how they carry out certain initiatives to achieve gender equality. Certainly, it's an ongoing learning process for me to be an even more qualified and capable ally for women. I think that's a lifelong journey that every one of us has to carry on but it's certainly worth fighting. Women have so much to contribute to this world. I truly believe that if you're an ally for women then you are an ally for men and for the entire human beings. It is as simple as that.

**Q: What are you doing to offer mentoring for female colleagues and advocating for their rights?**

**A:** I constantly offer mentoring for female colleagues, especially for junior level associates and paralegals. For example, I gave an important presentation task for a female paralegal who is a little shy in terms of speaking in a public setting and sometimes she struggles with her English pronunciation. We set up a special session to help her prepare for the presentation. I helped her with the script, recorded her presentation and corrected her pronunciation sentence by sentence. That's how I think we should help female colleagues to prevail and to advance professionally. I did that not because she's a woman but because she is in our team and there are things that I could do to help her. You do not need to give female lawyers extra help because they are equally capable as male lawyers. However, you need to make sure that female lawyers feel comfortable to ask for help and you are always ready to offer help whenever you can.

**Q: Men mentoring women can make a large impact. How would you encourage other male colleagues to become allies for female colleagues?**

**A:** I think women lawyers are equally intelligent and hardworking as men lawyers. However, in reality, unfortunately, there are still more men in the leadership positions and women need men to understand and support them especially in situations where the women might feel uncomfortable to confront the wrongdoer or where their voices tend to be ignored. For example, if men have identified instances that women have not been treated equally or have identified sexual harassment, they need to do something to correct the wrongdoers and not leave the women alone to deal with the situation. If you find that a female lawyer has not received any sufficient mentoring just because she's a woman, you have to do something to address this issue to make sure that sufficient mentoring and time efforts are being spent on her to help her excel. Therefore, yes, I encourage other male colleagues to also be allies for women. But I would not directly ask them to do so which in my view is awkward and not that effective. I would first make sure that myself as the partner is doing the correct things as an ally for women. I would also strive to cultivate a firm culture that lawyers from both sexes are given equal opportunities and lawyers are always there to support each other.

**Q: As the managing partner, are there times when you put a woman on center stage or trusted a female lawyer with an important assignment?**

**A:** Yeah, all the time, actually all the time. I always give women lawyers the opportunity to speak at an event, deliver a keynote speech and to give talks on legal topics internally with other

offices. For example, we have a conference Zoom meeting between Beijing, Shanghai, and Hong Kong offices every Monday morning. I constantly request women lawyers to be on stage and to present to the whole group. I always trust our female lawyers to proceed with important assignments no matter it is a litigation or transactional work. We have lots of talented women lawyers at the firm who run very important deals for the firm. I have just received an email from a female partner in our Shanghai office. She serves as the lead counsel on a number of high-profile M&A deals. I work with her a lot and she is truly amazing. As a law firm, we put lawyers on the center stage and trust the lawyers with important task no matter they are men or women. It's a merit-based workplace and we only care if the lawyer has the capability of executing that particular type of tasks or assignments.

**Q: Data has shown that when women do speak out, they can be ignored, or have their ideas taken. As an ally, how will you address this?**

**A:** In law firms located in smaller cities in China where the culture is still more conservative, you might have encountered a situation where women are just constantly being ignored or their ideas being taken. But at my workplace and from what I've seen, this does not happen frequently. To prevent this from happening, I always make sure everyone in the team has an opportunity to speak at the meeting and I actively endorse people's great ideas. I also always stress that listening is very important and disallow frequent interruptions. To be honest, I think this kind of situation does not happen too often in the legal profession. Many top clients we serve are women and I've been seeing quite a lot female partners doing exceptionally well in the legal market. I constantly attended all sorts of partner events and have met with a lot of managing partners and founding partners of law firms. Many of them are female and you certainly cannot ignore them who are like superstars in the industry. I think the beauty of being lawyer is that it is a merit-based profession. You can come from a relatively humble family but if you are smart, hardworking and ambitious, you can be a good lawyer. One thing that I like about practicing in a law firm is that it is a very simple environment. You've gotten a group of super smart and excellent people to begin with so you will have less opportunities of dealing with nasty people that do not respect women.

**Q: What training programs do your firm has in place to promote gender equality? Do you find them to be effective?**

**A:** We have a number of programs helping female lawyers to advance in their career path. And of course, we have all kinds of discipline programs to prevent any sexual harassment or inappropriate conducts from happening at our workplace. That's why we are ranked one of the top 100 workplace for women in the U.S. We have either live training events or web-based trainings. I think we're pretty good at that. We are also a pretty open minded and less bureaucratic law firm. We have diversity partners. If anyone within the firm spots any issue, she or he is certainly welcome to report the issue or escalate the issue to the partners in charge of this. We have a robust system in place to make sure that we address any issue raised by the employees. However, there is no way to accurately evaluate the effectiveness of the programs. There's no way to attribute the final positive outcome to one particular event or program. Therefore, in the future, we need to gather more feedback from our lawyers for places for potential improvements. But I have to say that we constantly advance female partners to

important management roles. We have female lawyers on management committee which is basically the top managerial and policy-making organ within our firm. We also constantly have female practice group leaders and female managing partners across various offices. Women really thrive in our workplace and I guess that the different programs certainly help in a way to create a more inclusive culture.

**Q: What are your ideas on hiring practices that are unbiased, clear and transparent?**

**A:** In the hiring process, we care more about whether the candidate is capable. The legendary Peter Drucker in his book *The Effective Executive* clearly categorizes lawyers as knowledge-based workers. In my view, for all knowledge-based workers, it doesn't matter you're a man or woman. When I interview a female candidate, I don't ask those silly inappropriate question like "Oh now you're approaching 30, are you going to get married soon?" or "When do you plan to get pregnant?" Those are totally inappropriate, and they are none of your business. Our recruiting policy also forbids people from asking this type of questions during the interview process. At the same time, we are always willing to answer female candidates' questions regarding our family policy or work environment. I think these are very legit questions and they are important factors in evaluating a law firm. We make sure that we deliver the right message to the candidates that we offer great family policies, and we have a very inclusive culture. If we have a chance to talk to the headhunters or talk to law students at school, we always stress that we're proud of being a women-friendly law firm and we will continue to do our best to ensure a great unbiased workplace for our female colleagues.

**Q: Women are especially burden by family responsibilities, what do you think are the policies that a law firm can adopt to help women navigate the challenge?**

**A:** Our firm offers a pretty good maternity leave program though I'm not an expert on this. From what I can tell for lawyers who take the maternity leave are doing pretty well. If it is truly the case that we need somebody to help with some urgent projects, we are always able to hire a contract-based attorney or start the recruiting process early so that we can fill the vacancy. We're not going to interfere with women colleagues' maternity leave schedule and will give the female lawyers the freedom to choose what they want to do in that situation. They can either choose to take some time off the work or they may also want some billable hours and choose to work from home. The experience of COVID proves that remote working is a very feasible and indeed really efficient way of working. Women are also welcomed to return back to the office earlier than required. It is completely their call and they will not be prejudiced by their decision one way or the other.

**Q: What's your idea on non-linear partner track to help women better balance between family and work?**

**A:** We accept the non-linear partner track. I think maternity leave should not pose any problem for being a partner. We have some very successful female partners at our firm who have like four babies in the course of 6 or 10 years. I don't think that becomes an issue for them to advance professionally. Of course, you know if you take let's say a six-month maternity leave, your billable hours will go down. However, since we use a pro rata approach in performance review,

taking maternity leave and only working for half of the year will not affect the evaluation of the performance of that female lawyer. The policy itself is very women friendly. But of course, if it is truly the case that the woman is the main childcare giver in the family, then it might potentially impact that particular female lawyer's career. This is first of all a family's choice but for law firm, what we can do is that we offer equal opportunities for women lawyer who take the maternity leave. We make sure that woman lawyers at our firm can advance professionally and at the same do not need to sacrifice their time with the family. We also offer more flexibility in work schedule and extra family leave to woman who is the main child caregiver at home.

**Q: Does the company create partnerships with external partners and the broader community on gender empowerment?**

**A:** Our law firm has all sorts of partnerships with outside organizations and we are pretty active in the community sharing experience for being a woman-friendly firm. We also try to learn some helpful experiences from our peer law firms, and from other multinational companies. We certainly constantly look into how we can further improve our policies to ensure better protection for women's rights. We will continue to stay in touch with other professionals and community to make sure that we continue to empower female lawyers and help them grow.

**Q: Since you have worked at the firm's New York office in the past, I wonder whether the law firm faces different challenges in promoting gender equality in China and the U.S.?**

**A:** In terms of general policy, there is not much difference, because we're one firm. But in terms of some specific policies, there are certainly some nuanced differences because we have to adapt to different law and judicial system in the two countries. From a higher level, in the U.S., because of the political correctness, on the face of the issues you will see more appearances of gender equality. However, just because there are increasing number of female associates in a U.S. law firm does not necessarily indicate improvement in gender equality. You still don't know whether women are actually being respected in the workplace. Therefore, to a certain sense, gender inequality might be more easily gone unnoticed in the U.S. under the appearance of gender equality due to political correctness. The challenge of the U.S. office in my opinion is how to go beyond just achieving numerical goal and how to actually empower women in the workplace. On the other hand, the prevailing problem of the gender policies in Chinese law firm is that they tend to be too generalized. There usually lacks a specific system to implement the policies. Also due to the culture in China, women might be less willing or feel ashamed to report instances of sexual harassment or inappropriate behaviors to the firm. How to make sure the policies are being implemented and to encourage female lawyers to take advantage of the policies are two future goals for our Beijing office in promoting gender equality.

## **Interview #55**

**Q: Do you consider yourself to be an ally for women? How so?**

A: Yes, I would. For me, it's less about "marching in streets" type activism. And more so about seeking to elevate women as a result of leadership and influential positions that I hold. I think I actively participate in seeking out historical and current bias.

**Q: What is proactive allyship? How do you behave when women or other members of minority groups are not in the room?**

A: Proactive Allyship is two parts, with the second part being implied. First, how you're acting when members of that group aren't in the room. Second, consistently being mindful of and creating opportunities for the material outcomes and opportunities for women. It's not just about agreeing with people; it's about the choices you make and resources that you allocate.

As an example, I'm in a venture capital group at Wharton. I'm 1 of the cub's 5 leaders. We're recruiting and our top finalists were all women, and historically the group and industry is heavily male dominated. I was the one in the group who brought up the idea to accept all women to the group, a complete reversal of what we've seen in past years. This is an example of not just talking about support but using your voice to make a material impact on the lives of women. They've all shown tremendous commitment to what we're trying to do.

**Q: Do you notice exclusion every day? Do you notice who are not there? Are you proactive?**

A: I notice exclusion on social media. I haven't been around people in person recently. I wouldn't say that I speak up on social media all the time, but I definitely notice it.

**Q: Are there times when you have or will privilege some women over others?**

A: Yes, my girlfriend's opinions are at the top of the ladder. I'd rather be comfortable at home than create issues there. I will privilege my sisters' and mother's views over things.

**Q: Has the way you have seen women in positions of power on television influenced your actions or decisions to be an ally for women in your professional life?**

A: Yes, definitely. In two ways: 1) Seeing how the head of state in New Zealand has successfully led her country (just one of numerous examples) evidences that women are both talented contributors and leaders. 2) Kamala Harris signals that mere representation is not enough. It's necessary to contemplate their values.

Regarding fictional television. I've been forced to see that I'm not always the target audience. For example, a lot of Issa Rae's projects, like *Awkward Black Girl*. Not all of it is for me even if it happens to be Black. Moreover, fictional TV has also highlighted "prop-ish" representation. You can put a woman in a lead role but if a man is writing it her character can fall flat (relying on



physical appearance to get ahead, for example). This further reminds me that representation is not sufficient; it has to be substantive.

**Q: How is the #MeToo movement shaping the norms of masculinity?**

**A:** I don't know if it has. What I've noticed is a disconnect in what happens in broad celebrity/national picture of things and what happens to actual men on the ground and off social media. A vast number of men weren't taking away the lessons of "let's listen to women and empower them." Instead, many saw the movement as 1) an assault on men and 2) a movement for white women and 3) something that existed on social media and not real life. It turned into damage control as opposed to actual learning.

I insist on a nuance between the effects of #MeToo and the effects of social media more broadly. What we're considering sexual assault used to simply be how we engaged with women. Social media has allowed women a platform to say they don't like that; they don't like it in groups. Even before the movement, these narratives were beginning to be shared over social media.

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1- not influenced, 5-very likely to influence), how much of your decisions to participate in work-family policies is influenced by your perception of what is accepted and expected by leadership/ management and your male peers?**

**A:** Ideally, I would go into a work place where it doesn't matter and I can take as much as I need. 2.5 or a 3. If I'm in a work situation where I can't be promoted if I take paternity leave or that's the culture, that would have some influence but wouldn't be the determinative outcome.

**Q: What role does cultural difference (regional, ethnic, religious, class) if any, play in your attitudes to masculinity and allyship?**

**A:** I have a lot of friends from the South who have moved to the north whose opinion are probably still over determined by their upbringing. I feel more aware of the ways masculinity can look across the country.

## **Interview #56**

### **Q: How do you define allyship? Ally?**

**A:** Allyship is to be of help to the people in need. A male ally should show up and help solve the problem when a female is in a dilemma. In the workplace, women are facing implicit bias, sexual discrimination in terms of promotion and work-life balance, etc. These are the occasions where men have to stand up and speak up for them whenever they're unable to speak up for themselves.

### **Q: Do you consider yourself to be an ally for women? How so?**

**A:** Yes. I worked for a year and a half at a bank and I'm perfectly aware of the sexual discrimination issues that are prevalent in the workplace. Especially in the male-dominated industry. As a male I feel the responsibility to stand behind those who are less privileged by offering as much help as I can.

For example, when male coworkers make sexually discriminatory comments on female coworkers, I will tell them that the kind of joke is inappropriate and remind them to be respectful. That's what I can do as a junior person, although I don't have much power over what they say.

### **Q: How do you speak up for women when they are overlooked?**

**A:** It's not fair if a person is overlooked in the workplace simply because of her gender. If that happens, I will raise the concern to my superior and advocate for her.

### **Q: How do you help amplify women's voices, not competing with them for influence or for the sake of showcasing what an admirable feminist you are?**

**A:** If a woman and I are both interviewing for the same position, I would remind the interviewers that they should look at the working ability, not gender. I would suggest that they do not favor me over the other because they expect women to get married and take care of the children in the future. I certainly don't want gender to be my sole quality that helps me get the position.

I know sometimes people advocate for women because the company policies or the political correctness mandate them to do the right thing. But as a man, I believe women's rights are just as important as men's rights, because we are all oppressed by patriarchy.

### **Q: How do you bolster and draw attention to women's voices, and the voices of women of color?**

**A:** I think we should be mindful of woman's presence to start with. If I'm the leader of the group, I will actively solicit opinions from our female participants. If they're not speaking too much or if they are afraid of expressing their opinions in front of everybody. I will probably ask them to speak up.

**Q: How do you behave when women or other members of minority groups are not in the room?**

**A:** I respect everyone's opinion, not mute anyone just because they disagree with me. In the workplace, if women or other members of minority groups are not in the room, I will suggest the participants to put ourselves in their shoes or reach out to them after the session. But I think the most important thing is to get their presence in the room.

**Q: Do you notice exclusion every day? Do you notice who are not there? Are you proactive?**

**A:** The law school is arguably a liberal place, therefore I don't see exclusion everyday. But there are some conservative student groups that are exclusive to the members of minority groups. I think I'm proactive.

**Q: How do you or will you open the doors to more participation from women and women of color?**

**A:** I'm the managing editor of Asian Law Review. We are actively promoting the diversity in the recruitment process. We make sure that there are male and female editors, and we pair them up so that they can share different perspectives and work out the best solution that takes everyone's concern into account. We also welcome people of all colors to join us.

**Q: Data has shown that when women do speak out, they can be ignored, or have their ideas taken. As an ally, how will you address this?**

**A:** If that happens, the decision-making process needs to be corrected. We should start with the top, get the executive team a formal training program to raise their awareness. We should show them the data and inform them of the major issue that is harmful to the value, reputation, and everything of the firm.

**Q: Do you attribute an idea to a woman who offered it, and you endorse worthy ideas and ensure the appropriate person is remembered for them?**

**A:** Yes.

**Q: How do you make sure women, especially women of color literally take seats at the table rather than standing on the sidelines?**

**A:** We should ensure an equal and fair promotion channel so that women can get what they deserve, just as much as men.

**Q: Are there times when you have or will privilege some women over others?**

**A:** Yes. Firstly, I privilege some women for the same reason I privilege some people over others. Because they are more capable, sociable, better educated and thus more likable. But there are

occasions where I couldn't help judging people by irrelevant factors like appearance and the way they talk. I'm trying to resist those temptations.

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not comfortable, 5-very comfortable) how comfortable do you feel in your ability to fully be yourself at work/school?**

**The “man box” refers to a set of beliefs, communicated by parents, families, the media, peers, and other members of society, that place pressure on men to act a certain way. These pressures tell men to be self-sufficient, to act tough, to be physically attractive in a certain way, to stick to rigid gender roles, to be heterosexual, to not cry or show emotion, and to use aggression to resolve conflicts. How much do these descriptions relate to something that you have experienced?**

**A:** 4. All the descriptions relate to my experience. In Chinese society, men are the breadwinners of the family. Without a car, a house, and a high education degree, it's difficult for a man to find a date. While women are considered to belong to their husbands' family, men are expected to take on most of the burden of their own family. When I feel defeated, I can't express my emotions because that's a sign of weakness. I must act tough.

**Q: What role does cultural differences (regional, ethnic, religious, class) if any, play in your attitudes to masculinity and allyship?**

**A:** Chinese culture influenced me to a very large extent even after I spent nearly a decade in the States.

**Q: How often do you see women in leadership roles on television? Women of color?**

**A:** Rarely. The only woman in leadership I saw is the managing partner in the TV show Suits.

**Q: Does the way you see women in positions of power influence your view of women leaders?**

**A:** Yes. The department head in my previous workplace is a woman. She has exacerbated my implicit bias of women in leadership position. She is really tough. She acts like a man and shows her coldness to exhibit her power.

**Q: Do you fear ally-ship or resulting backlash based on how the media portrayal of women?**

**A:** No. Advocating for equal treatment for men and women is the right thing to do. For example, when a woman cheats on her spouse, people slut-shame her. Men are rarely criticized that way. Although I don't advocate for cheating, I do think they deserve equal treatment.

## **Interview #57**

**Q: How do you define allyship? Ally?**

**A:** An ally should be supportive of the feminist movement, acknowledging that gender discrimination widely exists, and refuse to do harmful things to the movement. They should constantly reflect on stereotypes, objectification, and other discriminatory practices against women. For example, when an ally becomes a leader in the workplace, they shouldn't make any decision based on gender of the applicants in the recruitment process.

**Q: Do you consider yourself to be an ally for women? How so?**

**A:** Yes. I support the feminist movement by acknowledging gender discrimination, staying angry with it and criticizing it.

**Q: How do you speak up for women when they are overlooked?**

**A:** I speak up when I notice it. For example, I'm irritated by the fact that companies blatantly favor men over women. I express my concern about it on social media sometimes, but I probably won't report it to the authority because I don't think that would make a difference.

**Q: How do you help amplify women's voices, not competing with them for influence or for the sake of showcasing what an admirable feminist you are?**

**A:** I think male allies are rare and I don't always see them speaking up for women. So I never considered that.

**Q: How do you behave when women or other members of minority groups are not in the room?**

**A:** In an all-men leadership, it's common to overlook women. If women are not in the room and the decision will eventually affect them, I'll probably reach out to them and ask for their opinions after the meeting. Also, when a leadership council is solely composed of men, I tend to question the selection process. For example, I'm a member of the Law Review. I notice that the heads of the Law Review are all men these years. I personally consider that a major issue.

**Q: Do you notice exclusion every day? Do you notice who are not there? Are you proactive?**

**A:** Yes. I'm proactive by encouraging women to participate.

**Q: How do you or will you open the doors to more participation from women and women of color?**

**A:** As a junior person, I'm reluctant to work in teams that favor men over women. On occasions where I'm the leader, I will first look at the working abilities of the candidates instead of gender, and then promote diversity in the team.

**Q: Data has shown that when women do speak out, they can be ignored, or have their ideas taken. As an ally, how will you address this?**

**A:** I will raise my concern to the superior whenever that happens.

**Q: Do you attribute an idea to a woman who offered it, and you endorse worthy ideas and ensure the appropriate person is remembered for them?**

**A:** Yes.

**Q: Are there times when you have or will privilege some women over others?**

**A:** Yes. Firstly, I do prefer women who are more capable. Secondly, I value some women's ideas more than others if the issue at hand is specifically relevant to them.

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not comfortable, 5-very comfortable) how comfortable do you feel in your ability to fully be yourself at work/school?**

The “man box” refers to a set of beliefs, communicated by parents, families, the media, peers, and other members of society, that place pressure on men to act a certain way. These pressures tell men to be self-sufficient, to act tough, to be physically attractive in a certain way, to stick to rigid gender roles, to be heterosexual, to not cry or show emotion, and to use aggression to resolve conflicts. How much do these descriptions relate to something that you have experienced?

**A:** Between 3 and 4. I'm usually pretty comfortable fully be myself. But that's mostly because I tend to self-select a gender-friendly environment at work and school. I do feel strong pressure of masculinity from my family however. For instance, my mom worries that I may not find a date as a feminist because that's not masculine.

**Q: What role does cultural differences (regional, ethnic, religious, class) if any, play in your attitudes to masculinity and allyship?**

**A:** My attitudes are mainly affected by region and class. Firstly, I grew up in the part of China where gender discrimination is not as severe as other places. I was influenced by the general belief in gender equality. Meanwhile, different regional backgrounds of my parents inspired to me reflect on stereotypes against women. Secondly, my access to high education and abundant online resources enabled me to think critically and adjust my perspective, instead of blindly following the authority.

**Q: How often do you see women in leadership roles on television? Women of color?**

**A:** Rarely.

**Q: Does the way you see women in positions of power influence your view of women leaders?**

**A:** When I was interning at a law firm, all of my three superiors are women. I used to think that women leaders are always struggling with balancing their family life and work. But I never saw them with family life. I'm not sure if their spouse took care of the family instead or they managed to do that themselves after work. But that did change my stereotype of women in leadership.

**Q: Do you fear ally-ship or resulting backlash based on how the media portrayal of women?**

**A:** No.

## **Interview #58**

**Q: I guess to start off, how would you define ally ship? And do you consider yourself to be an ally?**

**A:** I would say, you know, I don't know that I have the best definition. And here's how I think about it is one kind of being in solidarity with women in the workplace that predict presuming your question is about the workplace, but on a site specific way, being in solidarity with women and women's interests in the workplace. Some of some of those issues, I think, are some of the issues as it relates to composition in the workplace are fairly obvious when it comes to questions of upward mobility, workplace culture. And some of those aren't as obvious and require solidarity with the issues that women articulate as being important in the workplace. So I would say everything about it in those ways in terms of being in solidarity with women in terms of the kind of obvious, obvious garden variety issues as they relate to gender in the workplace. So you have recruiting, retention, hiring, mentoring, workplace culture, and then some of the things that tend to be a little bit more kind of workplace specific. So in the context of academia, for example, you know, one of the things that that are one of the things that are coming up, that's been coming up the past year, really, since COVID, is how, how the pandemic, and we've talked about this with some of the research we were doing over the summer, but being in a pandemic has made it trickier in terms of being productive at work and managing that with family responsibilities, and what that means for women professors in terms of production, and scholarship and specifically, their ability to be able to work in the ways that they normally have. And so you can imagine solidarity in that context looking like, you know, to the extent that the law school was considering certain kinds of candidates for entry level hire in the lateral hiring, making sure that those challenges play a role in the consideration, and that people aren't kind of glossing over a it. This really, this past year, is something different for women academics. And so long story short, I would say kind of solidarity with kind of some of the typical issues as they relate to women in the workplace, as well as seeing the things that tend to be a little bit more site specific is what I think about when I try to be a ally.

**Q: As you know, you're a professor, and you have the ability to pick the kind of material that your students are reading in class and who's writing that material, and whether that material is written by women. And so I guess I was wondering, how have you maybe in the past bolstered or drawn attention to women's voices, and specifically the voices of women of color and kind of help them gain access to a larger audience through your students? And do you think that is specifically a responsibility that you need to take on when you're in a position to do that? What were your thoughts in the past when you did make decisions like that to include those kinds of voices?**

**A:** So I mean, it's, I think, integral to the work that I do in part because I was trained primarily by women of color, and some white women as well. And so, you know, what it looks like for me is, I think of it in the teaching context. It looks like you're asking like what kinds of materials that I'm using, so the criminal law case book that I use, is written by two women of color, and it's the only criminal law case book that is written by women of color and that was you know a specific choice. In part because they're attentive to questions of intersectionality, that the other casebooks aren't. And so, you know, just in the context of the casebook that I use, I think that it's important



and has allowed me to kind of address some of the same questions as they tied to race, class and gender, but also gender specifically. And so there were a couple of points in the semester where we talked about gender as a specific, discrete issue in criminal law. So I would say a byproduct of my training has made it so that I tried to center women's voices in my teaching, you know, but also my scholarship. And so, that's also a byproduct of the training. But also, I think that sometimes that centering is not even as explicit or intentional, as I imagined it to be. Part of it is just that the work that I'm citing the excellent work that I'm citing and has been produced by women, specifically women of color. And so, you know, part of it is like, actually organic, but part of it is as someone who got a PhD in African American Studies, and as always thinking about intersectionality makes it so that with much of the work that I'm producing, they're always these these questions in the back of my head, conceptually, as a matter of citation, that's important to me, like in terms of like, who I'm actually citing, in that, and again, that plays a role and, and my research agenda. I write about lawyers and stratification and the education and the legal profession. So I'm always kind of thinking about, okay, I work in this space that is I think the last time I saw it is around 85%, white, and that has been, you know, predominantly male for some time. So, I'm always asking, you know how is race, class, gender, sexuality, and age coming into play. How are these things playing a role in whatever I'm writing about? So some of it comes up in my scholarship, but also comes up in my teaching.

**Q: Do you think you're unique amongst your colleagues in having these considerations and concerns? Or do you feel that there's a culture that promotes this kind of thinking?**

**A:** Oh, well, I certainly wouldn't say I'm unique. In that, you know, one of my mentors since college was Dorothy Roberts also Regina Austin, Anita Allen's on the faculty. And so these are three important black women who've been writing about issues of gender, race and class for really the last two decades. So I certainly wouldn't say I'm unique in that regard, in my work, in my teaching, and thinking about these things as well as benefiting from their perspectives. So I would say that kind of as a general matter, I think that the law school has this Women in Business Law initiative, run by Professor Fisch and Professor Pullman. I don't know, the private law side of legal education very well, but my sense is that it's certainly I think, the only program of its type at peer institutions, and one of the few more generally, and so that's one of the I think the exciting things about the law school is that we have two really important corporate law scholars that are really attentive to questions of gender, and corporate law and then business law. I think, I'm sad to say that one of the unfortunate realities is that, you know, there is also in legal education, you know, it's very, it can be very white, male dominated, and not all of those people are attentive to how questions of gender play a role in whatever they're teaching or think that it's irrelevant or additive. And so in that regard, you know, I'm not in every one classroom so I can't speak to what's happening specifically, but what we know from much the scholarship on legal education, and here I'm thinking about Lani Guinier's book, "Becoming Gentlemen", which is about legal education at the University of Pennsylvania more than 20 years ago and work that has built on it is that legal education can be very hostile when it comes to questions of gender, and inequitable. And so not knowing what's happening in people's specific classes, but knowing what the literature about legal education says about gender, race and class. My sense is that there is some uniqueness there, and that the kind of status quo is less sensitive to these issues.

**Q: I guess then could we talk more about your female mentors and how they've kind of influenced you? Have you always considered gender in your research, or was that something that came about because you had these women of color as your mentors? Or was it just something that you were always preoccupied with, and always kind of wanted to see how it blended in with, race and other factors?**

**A:** Sure. So I can't say that it has always been part of my research agenda. But I think part of that was just a byproduct of me not knowing what my research agenda was, as a young scholar. I think what really made questions of gender I think more central to the work that I do is first, again, the the area in which I received my PhD in African American Studies, I think, you know, I mean, it is possible, but it's very difficult to graduate from a Ph. D. program in African American Studies and be completely oblivious to questions of gender, I think, in part because it's so central to the field. And so I think part of it is just tied to the training, like gonna have to read Kim Crenshaw, and Dorothy Vipers and Cheryl Harris, and, you know, important people who have written about race, specifically intersectionality. And more generally. So I think part of it is, you know, as I kind of came into being as a scholar, I recognize the kind of unavoidable nature of some of the intersection of questions as they related to the things that I was writing about. So I think part of that is just tied to the training. But I do think that part of it is tied to the people who played a role in my scholarly development. And that overlaps with what I first described, because some some of those people who were actually mentors also worked on issues tied to race, class and gender. So I think part of it is that and I think part of that is just kind of, you know, really recognizing the important work that black women, women of color, white women have played in terms of thinking about questions of power and inequality, as it relates to my work. And so, you know, I would say certainly wasn't like, an initial feature of the things that drew me into academia, I think I was kind of primarily concerned about race and class. And then I think, by product of my training, by product of who I worked with, by product of who I worked with, and what they worked on. Questions of gender just became central to what I was doing, what I was researching and writing about, but also part of what I imagined to be kind of like a practice of being an academic like, not just like gender as important, conceptually, but gender being important politically in the relationships that I have with colleagues, mentors, students, etc.

**Q: And so I guess moving a little bit away from the academic side and talking more about kind of the workplace side of being a professor. We've been talking a lot in our class and we also talked about this a lot this summer, in terms of a lot of the challenges that women seem to face is not getting the same lenience towards regarding family obligations or not having workplace policies that don't seem to factor in the fact that, you know, women are also mothers and wives and kind of have this kind of double obligation once they go home unlike their husbands might have. And so I guess I wanted to talk specifically, because I know that being a professor there's a lot more flexibility with your schedule and time, but I wanted to know if you felt that there were any workplace policies in place that you think should be maybe reformed or if you'd have heard anything from your colleagues either positive or negative regarding kind of the the work family policies that Penn Law has, and what whether kind of like, what your views are specifically on work family policies, which apparently flex time part time work and why you think that like, because apparently 90% of big law firms have workplace policies in place, but only 6% of the lawyers actually take**

**them. So I don't really know what those percentages are for law school. But I would love to know, like more insight into kind of that aspect of your your profession.**

**A:** I don't know that I have a good answer for that, in part because I don't have the best sense of what the policies are at the law school. One because I haven't availed myself of them and two no one has told me about availing themselves of certain kinds of policies. I can speak to probably better to big law, like flex time is one of those things that is always a possibility at law firms. But, you know, from my understanding of how it's often actualized, it ends up being women who use flex time, but are still expected to do certain kinds of work. So someone might have an arrangement where they're doing 60% flex time, but there's still an expectation that they have, in terms of quantity more than that, or, you know, in some places, the idea that, you know, flex time is really for people who are not serious about wanting to become a partner or wanting to advance in a firm, and which makes it so that people don't take advantage of that opportunity. I know it's a big problem in big law, and in the context of academia. And one thing that I do know, that's happening on a university wide level is they've made it so that junior faculty members, junior faculty members can extend their tenure clock a year because of COVID. And I don't know whether that decision was animated specifically about concerns about gender and scholarly productivity, or just concerns about the pandemic more generally, my guess is that it's a mix of both. But that strikes me as one kind of policy that kind of stands out. But it's particular to junior faculty, and I'm not sure, you know, in terms of how to deal with it in the context of these really unequal burdens of gender. What that looks like on the tenure side, in part because I'm not tenured. I guess then moving away from work family policies, are there any specific policies that Penn Law has introduced in the wake of the of the racial unrest of this summer? Has there been more of a commitment to having more diverse hiring practices, or maybe a diversity inclusion taskforce or anything like that? Because in class we've been talking a lot more on the business side, we've been talking to CEOs and people who have kind of the ability to influence hiring practices and kind of what they've been doing, and they've been pointing to things like blind resumes and having racial quotas of in terms of diversity on like the board or the C suite or whatnot. And I guess I was interested to see what that would look like, again, in an academic setting. I know what the university has said to us in terms of kind of upping their commitment, but I don't know if that has translated to any actionable steps internally. Yeah, you know, I'm not sure. I mean, I certainly think that the commitment is there. And I think you can see it in the kinds of hiring that the law school has made the past couple of years. And so last year, Adria Wang was hired, the year before I was hired, and Professor Karen Tani, the year before that, Professor Sarin, in the year before that, Professor, Black Hawk, and so in terms of the hiring that's taking place at the law school, I think we're doing a better job than the many of our peer institutions in terms of hires of color. You know, there's a separate question of whether, you know, that is sufficient, and people will, people with reasonable minds can disagree. Some people will say, it's great, it's better than what other places have been doing. And some people say, No, legal academia is fairly homogenous. And so there's still more work to do. But I think their commitment is certainly there based on the kinds of hiring practices that the law school has had over the past few years. And, you know, and it's still unclear, because it's still early in the in the school year, but some of the candidates that the law school has been interested in for this year. I know there's been some hiring on the staff level, and now there was a person hired for the, um, who does access to justice work, who I haven't met yet, but who was attentive to kind of questions of race and access to justice and technology.

**Q: I had another question. I was just thinking about the law school and how with law professors in general, there seems to be really high retention rate in keeping these, like female professors and professors of color, unlike in big law, where, you know, there's a significant drop out and drop off rate after kind of three to five years. You don't see a lot of women progressing to higher levels of management, whether that be partner, equity partner, whatever. I guess my question for you is, why do you think that specifically with law professors, it seems that there's a higher retention rate with women and also women of color?**

**A:** Yeah, I think part of that is just tied to the nature of the work. Working in a law firm is very taxing work. And the attrition rates are just generally high. It's not a profession, where people are designed to be associates. Everyone doesn't make it to partner, and many people don't even make it to senior associates. I think part of that is just structural. Where as you know, as law schools, I think, particularly, you know, top 50 law schools, you know, if you go by the US News rankings, which is problematic on its own terms, but I think most law schools want to tenure their people, you know, they want to tenure the people that they hire. And they look at hiring entry level people as essentially a kind of like, a commitment to a long term commitment to a scholar in presuming that this scholarship and the teaching is satisfactory. It's kind of assumed that they'll get this kind of assume that they'll get tenure, whereas I think in big law, you know, people have to prove themselves in, there's just there's a kind of competitive, predetermine fixed fix is probably too strong, but, you know, predetermined amount of people who can become partner and part of it is that, you know, being a partner is about, about generating revenue for the firm, and ways that are different than, you know, producing good scholarship. So I think that really plays a role. Part of it is just structurally determined in terms of who becomes who's expected to how many people are expected to become partner vis a vis, how many people are expected to make tenure, like, right now there are four, I think there are four junior faculty members, me Professor Black Hawk, Professor Sarin, and Professor Wang. And none of our tenure cases are in relationship to each other, like the school wants us all to get tenure. Okay. Whereas at a law firm, the idea is like, well, only two of those people can become partner, or one of those people who couldn't put in this, I think part of it is just structurally different. I think part of it is the work, you know, people working, you know, 80,90, 100, 110 hour weeks. Um, and that's hard to sustain unless you have the long term interest in the work. Whereas in academia, some people work just as much like I have a 90 hour weeks. Now, part of that is discretionary. It's because I want to do the work or, you know, as opposed to a client breathing down, breathing down my neck. And so I think that plays a role too. And, you know, I think with women, and particularly, given how family responsibilities are oftentimes divvied up unfairly divvied on women. And so it makes it harder to manage that in a big law context than I think in the context of a high education with is a little bit more flexibility with one's schedule, particularly post tenure. And so you oftentimes have situations where women, racial minorities or women of color are getting grossly underpaid compared to their colleagues and they would not know. Yeah, again, public institutions, public institutions. The salaries up are publicly available. They're oftentimes rationalizations for after the fact rationalizations made for these pay differences. So this person published two articles this year versus your one, or Yeah, this person's article was published in this journal versus your article published in that journal. Or, you know, and this is actually relevant to questions of gender and legal education. When people are being considered by other schools, oftentimes they do a

visit. And, and so, um, if, let's say, someone at Penn is being recruited by Duke University, and Duke says, We want to hire you, they'll say, Okay, well, can you come teach a class at Duke for a semester, or teach two classes, so it can get a sense of what your teaching is, like, get a sense of how you interact with students and faculty. And that's harder for for women to do than for men. Yeah. So what ends up happening is that men oftentimes get more opportunities to visit visiting opportunities. And that means one of two things, either they visit and go to the other schools, or those visits are sometimes used as opportunities to get pay increases. So Duke might say, We'll pay you x more money than your current institution. Um, and let's say \$10,000, more on the scholar will say, go to the golden pen and say, oh, Dukes offer me \$10,000 more, and Penn says we'll match it. And the scholar decides to stay. But now they're making \$10,000 more than their women colleagues. Off the fact of having been extended a visit that they were able to do, because they can pick up and leave in ways that their women colleagues might not have been able to.

**Q: I think that's really interesting. I guess I'm understanding that there are more wrinkles, to being a female professor than I realized. I guess I always assumed that this is the most ideal profession for a woman in law just because of the flexibility of afforded that you just don't really seem to find elsewhere. In my mind, I always ranked it as like, professors top then maybe like General Counsel for depending on how big of a company it is. And then big law as the worst in terms of work life balance, at least. This conversation has definitely been eye-opening.**

## **Interview #59**

**Q: How do you define allyship? What is an ally?**

**A:** Allyship to me sounds like the word we use in the formal context. So, to me, it refers to my relationship with women in the working context. Like working together as a team towards the same objective. To me, it generally applies to relationships in work place, to support women in work place.

**Q: From your work experience, have you witnessed any discrimination against women? It could be explicit or implicit.**

**A:** In my limited experience- I have only done two internships, I have not noticed any discriminations, either implicit or explicit against women. I can imagine there being such discriminations, but from my limited personal work, I have not witnessed any discrimination against women, at least not on the surface. Although, I can imagine that certain implicit discrimination can be hard to observe and may take a longer time to notice.

**Q: Data has shown that, when women do speak up, they often get ignored or have their ideas taken. As an ally, how would you address that?**

**A:** I agree, and I definitely can see that happen. I guess to support women in this situation, it is important for me to tell the person who took away my female colleagues' opinions that the female colleagues' opinions are important and that if they did not realize that action is a form of a discrimination, they should know that. I think in those situations, most likely, especially in law firms, are implicit discrimination. So people who express such behaviors would not realize that they are discriminating women on their own. Thus it is important to remind them and it is also important for me to understand what my female colleagues' concerns are and not to substitute their judgments and their feelings with my own.

**Q: Thank you and I think that is a really great answer. My next question is related to that. If no formal format exists, how do you (or will) offer peer to peer mentoring? Schedule phone appointments? find a coffee shop or office with other people around? How do you keep it professional?**

**A:** I guess for me I am less concerned about the negative connotations of taking a female associate out to lunch as a partner. I can see why partners would worry about this because this could create a very bad image for themselves of using their positional power to do things that are not appropriate and can constitute discrimination. As a peer, I don't have that positional power, so I will have less concern with doing this kind of mentoring and conversation in a less formal setting like a coffee shop. I think as long as my female colleague is comfortable with the settings it is fine.

**Q: What if you are a partner though. Because a lot of the mentorship stem from this kind of informal exchanges between an associate and a partner? How is it fair that a partner can take a young male associate out to lunch and build a relationship that would be beneficial**

**to his career development while the females are deprived of such opportunities? How would you address this?**

**A:** I don't think that is still not the partner's fault. If he can only mentor in the specific places like restaurants and coffee shops instead of in the office. I think that combines with the male-dominant culture of the law firms is still discriminative. Even though he sort of eliminated the possible locations for him to commit inappropriate conducts, still it eliminates the opportunities for female associates to connect and use him as a resource. So actually, it is his fault. That tells me that the male partners need to do more than just avoiding any inappropriate behaviors and create the impression that they are doing something inappropriate. They need to proactively try to figure out how to deal with systematic problem and can't just ignore it.

**Q: The next question also puts you in a leadership position. What are your ideas on hiring practices that are clear and transparent? blind résumé evaluation. evaluate résumés without names attached in order to reduce potential gender bias.**

**A:** I think this is a good idea. If you don't know the gender of the candidate, you can't discriminate against them. Another thing I guess it's for the callback interviews, it is a good idea to have an equal number of male and female or ideally LGBTQ individuals in the group, instead of a group of all-male interviewers. That's what I would do. I think that is also the direction a lot of firms are heading.

**Q: What roles and criteria would you create for promotions?**

**A:** I won't change the standards. I think it is important to put a diverse group of people on the committee deciding who to promote. This might help getting rid of potential biases of a certain group of people. I don't think the firms are using anything like the affirmative action policies. So I don't think that will be quite practical, but it is definitely possible to put a more diverse pool of people on the committee.

**Q: I am glad that you mentioned committees, because it ties in quite well with the next question. What clear and transparent rules will you put in place for appointment to committees, leadership opportunities?**

**A:** I think it also depends on the firms. Considering that the system works against minorities and women, it might be helpful to figure out how the system works and what kind of opportunities are not available to females and minorities, like the one you just mentioned of having an informal coffee chat with a male partner. That might not be available to a lot of the black, Asian or female associates. If I were to design a policy, I would have put anything related to those opportunities as a standard. That's an example.

**Q: On a broader scope, how will you structure a company/firm's core mission on diversity?**

**A:** I think the general mission is to achieve a diverse workforce as quickly as possible. More specifically, maybe we should set a goal of, for example, achieving a certain percentage of a specific group for partners in a specific period of time. I think the firms are doing somewhat

better than before but they are improving too slowly. I think it is important to set the goal also in terms of the time this process would take.

**Q: I agree. If you are a CEO or a managing partner at a law firm What work/life balance policies through flexible work policies, support systems are available?**

A: I think the paternity and maternity leaves are very important. I think it is too hard for me to suggest other work/life balance policy. In this industry, I don't think it is very practical to talk too much about work/life balance other than the things we must have like maternity and paternity leaves.

**Q: I am wondering what your thoughts are on the mandatory paternity leaves? Like firms would require the fathers to take the same amount of leaves as the mothers would.**

A: It can be hard to implement but I think it is a good idea. I can see a lot of people blaming it as a socialist-like policy because it sort of forces you to do something. I think it is a good idea because it forces the male parent to take responsibilities. But I am not sure whether this is the best way to do it. I think if you have a voluntary paternity leave, many guys will take it.

**Q: You don't think guys would not want to take the voluntary paternity leaves because it may jeopardize their opportunities to get partnerships early?**

A: I can see that as a possibility and I am just not sure whether doing it in a mandatory manner will be a good idea. I support the policy from a fundamental standpoint about gender equality, but still. For example, women still face other inconveniences comparing to males, you can't just impose inconveniences on male to make them leave. I can see what the policy can make sense, but still I feel it's a little weird and I don't think the policy would ever be approved in the U.S.

**Q: You mentioned that women face many inconveniences that men would not face and it would not be fair or realistic to impose a required leave policy in certain situations. I think most people would agree that caring family members should be a shared responsibility for both genders. If you are in a leadership position, how will you send out the message that work family policies are important to men and women and women aren't the only ones caring for family members?**

A: I think that is more on the application side. I think for policy making, it might be a good idea to make the paternity leave and maternity leave as easy as possible. Maybe give them more compensation since they do forgo some opportunities from not being able to work. It's hard because the law firm culture is sometimes toxic and maybe fundamentally you can only change the culture to solve the problem and that may not be possible. I guess providing more education by mandating all the lawyers to attend certain workshops to raise awareness. To make the leaves as easy as possible. To make their transition back to the workforce as easy as possible, like to alleviate their worries about this kind of transition.

**Q: you mentioned to make the transitioning back as easy as possible. How will you address challenges that care givers (both female and male) face upon**



**returning to the office?**

**A:** I feel like this questions is not for me. I have not thought of this kind of questions up to this point of my life. I am questioning my ability to emphasize with that group of people.

**Q: That's ok, and we can move on to some other questions. On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not comfortable, 5-very comfortable) how comfortable do you feel in your ability to fully be yourself at work? The "man box" refers to a set of beliefs, communicated by parents, families, the media, peers, and other members of society, that place pressure on men to act a certain way. These pressures tell men to be self-sufficient, to act tough, to be physically attractive in a certain way, to stick to rigid gender roles, to be heterosexual, to not cry or show emotion, and to use aggression to resolve conflicts. How much do these descriptions relate to something that you have experienced?**

**A:** I don't think the description you just gave applies to me. If I feel like I can't act like myself in workplace is because work place is formal or because I am kind of an introvert and sometimes I have to speak when the inner me does not want to speak. I don't think I tend to act aggressively or in any manners that you just described. But I can see those can be applied to older white guys and I think it is very different now.

**Q: That's fair, and the next set of questions ask about gender norms and media portrayal. When you see men and women paired together on television, in movies, or other media platforms, what tends to be their relationship?**

**A:** I see where the question is going. But I just want to say that I think the stereotypes of the discrimination about gender is more implicit at least here in the states among the well-educated people. They are all aware of what they should or should not do but a lot of the males still think that they are superior than their female colleagues and sometimes the sense of superiority is not part of their awareness and there can be subconscious stereotypes build in from their childhood cause they were taught to behave in a specific way since they were a child. I think that is the more prominent issues and those thing are hard to describe like how a male act around a female. Like a male gaze, that is hard to describe unless the male stares at the female for an hour. There are also even more subtle things like the body languages or how you talk to each other, like the tone. I don't think this question captures that. Of course in the old style Hollywood movies, females are always below the male roles. They only appear in the romantic section of the movie and only their looks are important. I think there are still discrimination and stereotypes in the movies and TV shows, but it is less prevalent than before. It may be more prevalent in Chinese TV shows than here.

**Q: Since you noticed that nowadays in pop culture females have more representation. How often do you see women in leadership roles on TV? Women of color?**

**A:** I see that more often in recent years when I start to watch TV shows. In the early 2000s not so much, but recently more often. Women of color, also more often now that I think of it but they can still do better. The number of famous black female actresses is much smaller than the number of their white counterparts.

**Q: I agree and so are Asian and Latino actresses. You mentioned about implicit biases multiple times. Could you give some examples? Have you ever encountered a situation in your daily life that someone was having implicit bias? What would you do if you see someone having such biases and acting in a discriminative way towards women?**

**A:** The older generation has a lot of implicit biases. Like my parents and my family members. For example, some of them think a girl should not work as hard as a boy and they should just stay close to their parents. Obviously, they don't think their daughters are not as good as some random boys, but they still think in this way. Otherwise, mostly I think some guys just stop respecting females when they become too drunk and I have seen plenty of those. This tells me that they still have the biases buried deep within and they all come out when the guys lose control and sort of just say whatever they want and otherwise it is really hard to describe. Mostly it is a feeling. You can feel if a person is respecting others even without anything that shows the intention.

**Q: Thank you so much for sharing with me your insights and your candid response. Most importantly, thanks for being an ally.**

**A:** You are welcome, and I hope this helps.

## **Interview #60**

**Q: Thank you so much for joining for this interview. This is for my Women, Law and leadership class. Please stop me if you have any questions or do not understand my question. I think I am going to start by asking you what your definition for allyship is?**

**A:** Thanks Fan. I am glad to be here. I am really interested to see what projects from a law school class look like. I think allyship to me means that to support people being discriminated. In this case, supporting women when they are treated unfairly. I guess, in a sense, stand up for them and stand by them when they are being discriminated or treated unfairly.

**Q: I like your definition for allyship. I think support is definitely the core of allyship. So, I am curious if you consider yourself an ally?**

**A:** hmm. I feel like this is a quite tricky question. I know you are not trying to trick me but I just..... I think I would like to think that I am an ally. So.. Like... if I see a girl being treated badly or harassed by someone on the street, I definitely would defend her. I just don't know what the extend of the allyship is, you know? Like I think there is the concept like implicit biases and gender stereotypes. I mean, to the extend that I recognize them and I see the biases and stereotypes playing out, I would like to think that I would support the women. But I don't know if I would be able to recognize those every single time and I don't if I am comfortable to speak up in certain situations. I guess, like I think I am an ally but objectively I am not sure.

**Q: Thank you so much for this thoughtful answer. I think your humbleness shine through and the fact that you realized that you may not be aware of certain biases is quite inspiring. Thank you for being so candid. I think it is important that we stay humble and know that there are limits to what we know and always want to learn more. Since you mentioned speaking up for women as a form of supporting them, I am wondering if you could share with us how would you speak up for women when they are overlooked?**

**A** I would definitely speak up for them. Wait...I am not sure if I can be so definite. I think it's important to let women speak when they have opinions that they would like to contribute. Honestly, it's important to hear anyone out when they have something to say. I think...I feel like it may be difficult though, in some situations. Like if my boss is the one talking over or not letting my female colleague speak, I guess, I mean I would really love to speak up for her and I personally would not do the same. But especially if I am in a group meeting with a lot of my colleagues, I.....I feel like this is going to make me look bad, but I personally would not feel comfortable to speak up against my boss or even someone who has more seniority you know. I mean, if I have a chance to speak, I may try to cue the female colleague being overlooked and give her the chance to speak, but I don't know if I am comfortable, in my current position, to speak up against someone more senior than I am. I feel bad saying thang.....but I just want to be as honest I can.

**Q: I completely understand. In an ideal world people may be able to speak up for each other and not having any repercussion. I think the fact that you are willing to give some of your time back to the female colleague is a really smart way to show your support. This**

**reminded me of the press conference at White House, when Trump cut off a female reporter's question, another reporter essentially said that she would yield her time to the reporter who did not get to speak up. As a man, you are thinking about doing the same thing, and I am very inspired by that. I am wondering if you have seen any exclusions in your life or work?**

**A:** As you know, coding is not a field with a lot of women represented. I have worked in groups with no women at all. I don't know if this would count as exclusion. I think you define exclusion as a phenomenon, then I guess yes, there is a general lack of women engineers represented in coding or other STEM field. If you define it as someone deliberately trying to exclude women, I don't think I have seen much of that. To the extent that I have female colleagues in the same group, I don't think I have observed any exclusion professionally. They get treated the same as us when assigning projects and reviewing performance, to my knowledge. Exclusion is kind of vague word I think. I mean I have male colleagues who are married or are in committed relationships who would not hang out, you know like grabbing lunch or going to happy hours after work, with female colleagues alone. I mean I think it is reasonable, and they do not treat female colleagues any different at work. So I don't know if you would call that exclusion per se.

**Q: Interesting. I definitely agree that there could be more female engineers and scientists and I have always been curious as to why females are so underrepresented in STEM fields. Gender is only one axis of difference. There are also diversity in terms of races and it is interesting to me that Asian is often referred to as over-represented in the field In your experience going to engineering school and working as a software engineer, are there times when you have or will privilege some women over others?**

**A:** I have never thought about this question. Have I? I guess no, or at least not consciously. Will I? I don't think so no. I mean I think as a coder, my job is to code efficiently and debug accurately. So when I think of people I want to work with, I honestly have never considered anything other than can they solve the problem with me. So to me technical knowledge is more important. I mean privilege some women over others? I guess as an Asian, I sometimes feel more comfortable working with an Asian colleague, male or female. Who doesn't want someone to get boba with after a tiring coding session, I mean. But I don't know, I can see that sometimes stereotypes can subconsciously make people privilege some women over others. I guess in my limited experience, I don't see that happen much.

**Q: Yeah, I think sometime implicit bias is really hard to notice and you have to really pause and take a hard look at the interaction. I am wondering in your field, If no formal format exists, how do you (or will) offer peer to peer mentoring? Schedule phone appointments? find a coffee shop or office with other people around? How do you keep it professional?**

**A:** Oh mentoring. I do have a few mentees who just joined the company. I have had female mentees as well. I think I organized grabbing lunch or coffee with my mentors. For the first few times, I kind of ask all my mentees to come together so no one would feel left out and it would be less awkward than one-on-one meeting with a stranger. I would make it abundantly clear that "hey if you need me, I am here. I don't want to pressure you to socialize with me or be my mentee, but if you ever need anything, I am here". I don't know, I think after that I sort of wait

for them to come to me and would organize group events with the mentees periodically if they are interested. I don't really like happy hours to be honest, since a lot of my colleagues have family and many don't drink. I would always pick places that are public, and kind would easily fit lunch hour. I would be sure to let them know that I am easy to reach. That's just what I had done in the past.

**Q: I think that's a very professional way of handling mentorship. The next few questions sort of put you in a leadership role and ask about what you would do in certain situations. To start off, how would you help the company start a program to attract a diverse talent pool.**

**A:** This is a tough question. I don't often see a specific diverse hiring program in tech companies per se. But I think out HR has a general idea of the directions they want to go. For example, they would want to keep the gender ratio close to 1:1 and they would try not to hire overwhelmingly for one college. But I don't know though what kind of policy I would put in place. To be honest, I don't even know if the current plan at my company is the most effective. I feel like I have friends who are very qualified, smart and great at coding got rejected because they are males or they are from a certain school that's already heavily represented. On the other hand, I sometimes feel like some of the people being hired can barely finish the coding assignments effectively and may require additional help. I mean I do think having a diverse workforce is really important, and I support diversity hiring policies, but I just don't know if having a quota-like program would do anyone good. I am a software engineer, so I have to code and debug efficiently. I would want to have a team that can help me do that. I think maybe for other non-technical positions from the company, such diverse hiring policy would be a better fit. I guess it's also different in law, medicine, social work and other industries where you are facing directly with a diverse population and serving them. In that sense, having a diverse workforce is highly relevant and important. I feel like with STEM field, having diverse hiring policy is not a very effective strategy. I would personally suggest that my company take out a certain percentage of profits/revenue to invest in programs that would promote a diverse pool of children or students to study STEM majors. I think although it would take a while to see the effects of such programs, it would be a long term and more sustainable solution.

**Q: Interesting. Thank you for the thoughtful answer and being so candid! I am wondering if you could talk about telecommuting at tech firms and how you think that helps with the culture and inclusivity of the company?**

**A:** Yeah. It's really common to work from home even before the whole Covid thing. I think it helps both men and women when we have family things to take care of. I know my colleagues with children would take advantage of the work from home option to take care of the kids when they are sick. Also, some guys I know would choose to work from home when their wives are pregnant or just give birth to the children. It's a great option, I would say and provide people with flexibility to deal with this thing called life, you know. I think also with Covid, since we have these policy established long ago, the transition is rather seamless. I would say though, I miss all the free food and being able to just ask your cube-mate a question with a tap on the shoulder. I can also see this being harder for the new hires. I feel like they do not have the

opportunities to build the connection and find mentors before they go virtual. Anyways, having the option to working remote is definitely beneficial.

**Q: I agree and I think it also make women feel less guilty for taking advantages of working from home when they have to if it is a very common place practice. Can you tell me more about work/life balance policies through flexible work policies, support systems are available at your company or other tech companies?**

**A:** As we talked about before, there is the work from home policy. I think we have gym and meal service on site, which is pretty nice. I know we have family leave policy for pregnancy and child care, but I don't know the details of those since I don't have a family now. Generally though, tech companies have similar work from home policy and some sort of wellness programs on site.

**Q: Yeah. I think I have heard about the dining service and gym from some of these tech companies. Could you tell me if there are any gender equality programs or conferences you company is involved in?**

**A:** I don't know if I have been part of this. I don't think there is a formal program in the company to promote the gender equality other than the kind of implicit hiring policy that ensure somewhat of a gender balance among new hires. Maybe they are involved in this kind of programs or conferences, but I don't know for sure and I don't think I have ever received any information on that.

**Q: I understand. How do you think the firm/company could promote work outside of their organization to advance gender justice and diversity?**

**A:** I think one of the ways a company can do this is by having a program that would encourage girls to study STEM from a young age and sort of change the gender stereotypes at a young age. I think maybe by having some programs or internships that allow high school or college girls in STEM major to experience the tech company's culture would also be helpful. Maybe some sort of scholarship or fellowship program for women in STEM.

**Q: I think the programs you describe can be useful tools to advocate for gender equality in tech field. I would also like to ask you some questions about allyship and masculine gender norms. On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not comfortable, 5-very comfortable) how comfortable do you feel in your ability to fully be yourself at work?**

**The “man box” refers to a set of beliefs, communicated by parents, families, the media, peers, and other members of society, that place pressure on men to act a certain way. These pressures tell men to be self-sufficient, to act tough, to be physically attractive in a certain way, to stick to rigid gender roles, to be heterosexual, to not cry or show emotion, and to use aggression to resolve conflicts. Have you experienced anything like this?**

**A:** That's a lot to unpack. I think I would say that I am pretty comfortable to fully be myself at work. I can see the man box having an impact on things. I think sometimes there is a different set of expectations for men than for women. I am not saying one is necessarily higher than the

other. It's just different and I think there could be benefits to have the same set of expectations for both genders. But I think recently they speak of the concept of toxic masculinity quite often and in a way it is changing the society's perception of masculinity. I think for our generation, it is different. I think I am comfortable showing my emotions when necessary. I don't feel the pressure to act tough as my father's generation may face. I think I want to be self-sufficient but it is not because I feel pressured to be self-sufficient as a man. I just want to be self-sufficient because it is something important for every human being in my opinion.

**Q: Interesting and I agree on the self-sufficient part. Being self-sufficient or independent is an important aspect of adulthood. When you see men and women paired together on television, in movies, or other media platforms, what tends to be their relationship?**

A: They are couples most likely. Or if it's a family show maybe brothers and sisters.

**Q: What about women in leadership roles on television?**

A: There are definitely more women in the leadership roles. I recently watched the Crown. There are two prominent female leaders in the latest season: the Queen and Margaret Thatcher. It's very interesting to see how they work with the male-dominant political field. I remember in one scene the Queen asked Thatcher why she would not pick female leaders for her Cabinet, and Thatcher said that women are not fit for high ranked leadership positions because they are too emotional. I remember thinking well that is ironic.

**Q: I watched that recently as well! I remember that and I was like that's not a smart line to say sitting opposite to the Queen and it's just bizarre that she would say that as the first female prime minister of the U.K. Does the way you see women in positions of power influence your view of women leaders? I honestly don't know if Thatcher here is a good example...**

A: Haha. I mean I agree and I think at that time, she seemed to have to separate her identity as a woman and a political leader. Like she distinguished herself from other women and was sure that she was not as emotional as "other women" but at the same time, you can see her struggling in her episode where her son went missing. The constant struggle of her role as a prime minister and her role as a mother kind of clashed in that sense. I think maybe today the story is different, but back then it definitely showcased the extra struggles and challenges women in leadership roles face.

**Q: I totally agree! I think the show captured her duality really well. On the one hand she is this model wife/mother and she would cook and iron the clothes. On the other hand she is a prime minister, and you can see her trying to separate the two, but it sometimes things just clashed in a strange way. One such scene is when she cooked, out of canned food, a dinner for some of her cabinet to discuss things over the dinner. Has the way you have seen women in positions of power on television influenced your actions or decisions to be an ally for women in your professional life?**

**A:** I remember that scene as well, and it is really awkward. I think seeing women in leadership and the challenges they face makes me respect them even more and reminds to be compassionate towards them. They may have worked 10 times harder than the males in the position and they deserve to be treated with equal respect and even more.

**Q: I completely agree. Thank you so much for zooming with me and sharing your insights and thank you for being an ally!**

**A:** Thank you for having me. The pleasure is mine.



## **Interview #61**

### **Q: How do you define allyship?**

**A:** I think allyship is creating an environment in which people can bring their whole selves to contribute and not worry about different systematic challenges or ways that they might be viewed differently than other members of a group. It's making sure that everyone has an equal opportunity to express their beliefs and their thoughts and have a chance to back up why they have those beliefs and thoughts without being interrupted or dismissed for any of a variety of reasons. Also, making sure that people that might not traditionally have a voice in a group have that voice and can contribute their ideas.

### **Q: Do you consider yourself to be an ally for women?**

**A:** I try to be. Well, I try to be an ally by doing the same things I just said, making sure that when I'm part of a group where women are underrepresented, they have a chance to voice their thoughts and opinions, that we make time for that so that they're not either intimidated by one group or spoken over and had their ideas lost because they're underrepresented in the group. I think reaching out and trying to make opportunities available to anyone that either haven't been historically available to them or have maybe been construed as male opportunities and making sure that women have the same access to those opportunities in the knowledge of those opportunities so that we can create more of an environment of having that representation, and I think that that representation, getting that first group of women in any environment is really important to opening doors for more women. I think women do a really good job of making sure that they mentor and bring in other women into those spaces. So, making sure that there are male allies that open those doors and bring them in is important in helping set up that whole pipeline.

### **Q: How do you speak up for women when they're overlooked?**

**A:** I think the first one is to make sure that women get credit for their ideas and that if someone else runs with one of those ideas and has success, that you call out where the idea started from and make sure that that credit goes back to the person that came up with it.

### **Q: How do you bolster and draw attention to women's voices, and the voices of women of color?**

**A:** I think also just making time in meetings to ask for voices that haven't been heard in that meeting so that women aren't either intimidated or overlooked or spoken over by the loudest voices in the room, making sure to set aside some time, either in the beginning of the meeting or in the middle of the meeting—try not to do it at the end of the meeting, when people might not pay attention—to just continually ask for those voices. I want those ideas to be heard while the broader plans are still being formed so that they're not ignored because the group is already moving in a different direction.

### **Q: Let's discuss debiasing the workplace.**

**A:** You can't debias a workplace.

**Q: Could you expand on that?**

**A:** I think bias, by definition, is not something that people necessarily can respond to or unlearn. The whole idea around bias in the workplace is that you can't eliminate it.

You need to call it out and make people aware of those biases so that they can consider them when taking actions or making decisions. But I don't think that debiasing is a realistic strategy. It's more about paying attention to unconscious bias and making sure that people are aware of those and then taking steps to eliminate the impact of biases. So, the way that you interview people or the way that you set up your hiring practices or the way that you set up your compensation practices or the way that you set up your promotion practices or anything like that, being aware of unconscious bias and the way that bias impacts decision making and strategizing your operations and your processes as to minimize the impact of bias on outcomes rather than trying to get rid of those biases, because I think efforts to eliminate biases are going to be pretty futile in general.

**Q: How would you help the company start a program to attract a diverse talent pool? What are your ideas on hiring practices that are clear and transparent?**

**A:** I think that any actions that you can take to eliminate conscious or unconscious bias in hiring practices—like removing names from a resume, like not considering or weighting the university that the person went to, using artificial intelligence for the first round of resume screening—any of those things are positives and good ideas.

**Q: How would you structure the design and layout of the workplace to advance diversity?**

**A:** First of all, you have to make sure that it's accessible to people with different abilities and needs, both physical and mental abilities and disabilities. Second, I think I would want to probably give people the freedom to design their own workspace in a way that they're comfortable with and give them the resources to do that.

**Q: How will you eliminate gender bias in performance reviews?**

**A:** I think the biggest one is calibration across management levels based off of a set of accomplishments and responsibilities for the position, without considering individual themselves. So, setting expectations for roles and jobs absent of the individual in them in terms of what different levels of performance would look like so that they can be rated against that, but also making sure that they're introducing some sort of elimination of gender bias in the ways that responsibilities and tasks and projects are distributed. Because if the tasks and the roles and all of that is not distributed equally or fairly amongst genders, then performance reviews are going to mirror that because the people that are making the most impact are the ones that are getting the most exciting or interesting projects. If that stuff is also not being done fairly, then the performance outcomes are likely just going to reflect that. So, you have to go a little bit deeper than that. But on the performance side alone, definitely calibrate for the job responsibilities and

performance and then compare the individual to that set of outcomes rather than comparing that individual to an ambiguous outcome.

**Q: How is the MeToo movement shaping norms of masculinity?**

**A:** I think that the idea that a movement that's about women empowerment and then the question is "how does it shape masculinity" is in itself a very sexist question.

**Q: Could you elaborate on that?**

**A:** The MeToo movement is about women empowerment and giving women a voice that has been silenced and giving women a feeling of being able to speak out against being wronged, and I don't think that that should have anything to do with anyone's ideas of masculinity. Masculinity is—no matter how you want to talk about it—it's a separate issue, and women empowerment shouldn't be compared to masculinity in terms of its impact on masculinity. Female empowerment should be judged on female empowerment and comparing it to masculinity or the impact on masculinity just diminishes it. I think sets it back and says that in some way, women's actions need to be compared to men's actions or men's norms.

**Q: Supportive work/family policies have become increasingly more common. However, research shows that men's responses to these policies are shaped by their own personal beliefs and shaped by their perceptions of what is accepted and expected by their male peers. What are your views on work family policies such as parental leave, flex time, and part time work?**

**A:** I think that those things are a positive. I think that they allow companies that have generous packages and generous policies for those things to attract and retain top talent, diverse talent and attracting and retaining diverse talent and top talent is important to the long term success of the company. I think it's not any different than the company wanting to pay employees well or having good health insurance or any other benefits that allow them to attract and retain top talent.

**Q: What are your perceptions of nonlinear leadership tracks that take into consideration women with families?**

**A:** Non-linear leadership tracks in general are positive, and I think that the senior leadership tracks should be done away with, with or without their impact on women and families. I also think that there is a little bit of a bias inherent in the question in that women are the only ones that need to worry about their families when fathers, mothers, and non-binary people are all raising families. And I think that that should be a part of any career trajectory anyway. I think that leaders and business leaders that want to lead organizations that have diverse talent pools, talent pools that include parents or caregivers or any individuals with personal non-work related time commitments, need to know how people are dealing with those and understand that. The people that are most qualified to do that are people that have been parents and done that themselves.

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not likely at all, 5-very likely), how likely would it be for you to**

**request & participate in work-family policies (i.e. Parental Leave or Flexible Work Arrangement) if your family situation made that need applicable?**

**A: 5.**

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not likely at all, 5-very likely), how likely do you think your male peers would request & participate in one of the company's work-family policies (i.e. Parental Leave or Flexible Work Arrangement) if their family situation made that need applicable?**

**A: 4.**

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not comfortable, 5-very comfortable) how comfortable do you feel in your ability to fully be yourself at work?**

**A: 5.**

**Q: How often do you see women in leadership roles on television? Women of color?**

**A: Semi-regularly.**

**Q: Does the way you see women in positions of power influence your view of women leaders?**

**A: Yes.**

**Q: Has the way you've seen women in positions of power on television influenced your actions or decisions to be an ally for women in your professional life?**

**A: No.**

**Q: Do you fear allyship or resulting backlash based on how the media portrays women?**

**A: No.**

## **Interview #62**

**Q: Do you consider yourself to be an ally for women? How so?**

**A:** Yes. I do consider myself an ally for women. I believe women should be given the same sets of rights as men. They should be free of any stereotypes or societal expectations and be free to do what they want to do. They should not be forced to do what people think them should do. Also, it is important that women are given the resources to help them succeed. For example, women might need to take some time off from work to give birth or take care of their children. I think the bond between women and their children are something very special. Companies should consider that and give women the time and option to do that. I think women should be put on an equal footing as men. Being an ally is to support that, listen to women, understand their needs, and find ways to help them get there.

**Q: As an ally for women, how do you make sure women literally take seats at the table and join the conversation, rather than standing on the sidelines?**

**A:** I think it kind of stems from the firm's culture. If the culture is like you're not judging people based on their gender but rather their abilities and what they have done, you give women an environment where they feel safe to voice their opinions and where people will give them attention instead of just ignoring their opinions. From my own experience at law school, in some group projects, whenever a woman voiced her opinions, sometimes the men would just like "Oh, OK" and then they just moved on and like totally disregarded what the woman just said. I think if you just do that constantly, women wouldn't feel safe and they wouldn't even feel comfortable joining the table. I think that's why some women instead of joining the table, chose to stand on the sidelines, or basically find something else to do because they don't feel like being included and they do not really enjoy their experience at the firm. Even though there are ways for them to advance, they might just don't do it because their opinions are not really being valued. So, I think it's about validating each women's comments and actively include them in the conversations. I don't know if there are any companies that actively exclude women from participating at the meetings nowadays, but I think it's just about making women feel safe to takes seat at the table and giving enough credit to their opinions.

**Q: How do you help amplify women's voices when they contribute their ideas, not competing with them for influence or for the sake of showcasing what an admirable feminist you are?**

**A:** I think the key is listening. Men should not force our beliefs onto women. Sometimes what men think women are saying or thinking are vastly different from what women actually want to convey. So, I think the first step to amplify women voices is to take a more passive approach and listen to what they have to say. Even just you know ask really good questions to help them come up with answers and get to know what their true inner needs are, instead of just focusing on the superficial. For example, I think that women should be given more time to take care of their children, but how much time? Right? Like, you know, males might think one year off is enough while from a woman's perspective, it is not enough. It is important to listen to women and understand why one year is not enough. Also, in this way you can know how to better develop a

maternity leave policy. For example, by listening to women's needs, you might find out that it could be very helpful if the firm can sponsor a childcare center in the office. Listening to women is a great way to get to know the real problem that women are facing at the workplace.

**Q: Do you attribute an idea to a woman who offered it, and endorse worthy ideas and ensure the appropriate person is remembered for them?**

**A:** I think this doesn't only apply to women. It should apply to everyone. If it is a man who's giving great ideas, you need to acknowledge him and the same thing obviously goes for women too. Some supervisors never endorse any ideas. They don't attribute ideas to people, and they take ideas for themselves and say something like "Oh, I came up with the ideas by myself." I mean if someone only attributes ideas to men but not women, then he is just sexist. I don't know how you can really correct sexist people.

**Q: Gender bias can be implicit sometimes and hard to discover. How would you help men realize the importance of gender equality?**

**A:** It is important to build empathy. I think it's about letting men to think that if they were in women's shoes what would they do. Just imagine you are in situations like the women around you, what would you do to protect the interests of those women and improve the work environment. Also, imagine if that's your daughter right there trying to succeed in the workplace, what would you want to change in the company's system or culture to enable her to better achieve her goals without being burdened by unconscious gender bias. I think it's about putting men in women's shoes and just you know building more empathy. That's how you get men to pay attention to the problem of gender discrimination.

**Q: How would you behave when your colleagues exhibit explicit or implicit gender bias?**

**A:** Sometimes, when women or minority groups are not in the room, people might say something inappropriate or make jokes about them even though they do not mean to be offensive. In those situations, I think first of all, you need to take the initiative to explain to people why certain behaviors are not tolerated. Also, I think it's about showing them that you truly care about this and explain to them why you think this is important. Again, like building empathy, tell them that you know if the female employee heard about it, she would not be happy. In the workplace sometimes when you're calling out these behaviors, you might do it in a very joking way. The effect of that just becomes lessened because the other person might think that you're joking and think that you might not really take this seriously. I think it is important to show that you do take it seriously. Rather than attacking the person, you can try to showcase why his/her behavior is inappropriate and could have very negative effects.

**Q: What if it is not the colleagues but the clients who exhibit gender bias, how will you respond to that?**

**A:** I think if it's a client, first you don't want to embarrass the client by confronting the client in front of everyone. Doing so might potentially escalate the situation and makes the women very uncomfortable. However, afterwards like maybe when people are not in the room, you can say

like “Oh hey, I remember when you said about this, my female colleague actually became really upset. I know you don't mean any harm, but I just want to point out that sometimes it can be construed in a way that it's not what you meant. We just want to be mindful of that.” I think it's also good to showcase to the client that the law firm actually cares about cultivating a good work environment that values gender equality and the male colleagues care about how female colleagues feel. Male colleagues should do everything they can to help women lawyers to voice their concerns especially in situations like this that the women might find uncomfortable to confront the client.

**Q: Imagine you were in a leadership position at a law firm, how will you structure the firm's core mission on diversity? How would you create incentivize for various department of the firm to work towards that mission?**

**A:** I think sometimes it's better to have like a quantitative metric in your mission statement. Making a very general mission statement like “We care about diversity” doesn't mean anything. You can include things like the percentage of diverse people we want to have at the partner level and at the associate level. It is important to state a specific goal that you're trying to achieve and a goal that people could actually work towards. Also, it is even better to list ways you can achieve diversity which will help putting those plans into action. Each department may be given certain discretion in setting the goal based on different situations across the departments. I think giving annual bonuses for diversity improvement is a great way to incentivize leaders to do real works to improve diversity since they are rewarded for doing so and they would see the long-term benefit of having more diverse people in the office besides getting the bonuses.

**Q: I want to know more about your thoughts on the specific steps that you would take to achieve that high-level mission on diversity we just talked about. How would you structure the firm's mentorship program for women or minority groups?**

**A:** I would say definitely have a mentorship program for each affinity group. You should take into people's background in matching mentors with mentees. You don't want to match like white privileged man with a black woman who kind of started from the bottom and worked super hard to get here. People with different backgrounds might find difficulty in understanding each other. It is important that mentor and mentee can understand each other so that the mentor can provide the help and advice that are more helpful to the mentee. You should also make sure that you consider multiple factors instead of just focusing on one single factor. For example, maybe the two are both women, but they could be from very different backgrounds with different culture and thus it is not a good match for mentorship relationship.

**Q: If no formal format exists, how will you offer mentoring? Schedule phone appointments? Find a coffee shop or office with other people around? How do you keep it professional?**

**A:** Yeah, that's a great question. I think phone appointments are great, talking at a coffee shop is also great. Those two suggestions are ways to keep it very professional. I don't think you should ever invite women to dinner, but I think grabbing lunch is fine. I think as long as it is within the working hours and you behave professionally, it will be fine. But more importantly, you should

convey to your female colleagues that you're there to help them and listen to their opinions and concerns. Also, culture issue is something I think men should pay more attention to. Something that is appropriate in American culture can be construed in a very inappropriate way in other cultures. For example, in the Muslim culture, sometimes you shouldn't even be in the same room with women alone. Thus, I think men should be conscious of their female colleagues' feelings and ask them for suggestions on what is the best way to provide mentorship. Sometime, maybe you can wait for the women to take charge. I think that's a very safe way to do it. If a woman is comfortable with like grabbing a drink after work, then yeah, I think that's fine, but you should probably not offer it for example.

**Q: How would you attract more women or people from minority groups to the firm?**

**A:** I think nowadays firms are trying to recruit diverse candidates. That's great but I think the problem is diversity retention. A lot of women and women of color don't really feel comfortable being in a work environment where there is no policy or system in place to support them. It is important to gather feedback from female associates to learn about what resources that the law firm is able to offer them to stay at the firm. I think you need to focus on building affinity groups and actually take them very seriously. You can do weekly and monthly check-ins with these groups to see how the firm can improve their policies to support their associates. Sometimes when there's an issue you wouldn't really feel comfortable raising it to HR. You may feel more comfortable talking to your friends or people from your background especially when those are done within a small private group setting. So, I think investing in affinity groups is a good way to improve diversity retention which in my view is more challenging than diversity recruitment.

**Q: What clear and transparent rules will you put in place for appointment to leadership opportunities? How will you eliminate gender bias eliminated in performance reviews?**

**A:** I think it's about having a very clear and open policy that's judged by merit rather than just say like some very general factors. I think the evaluation should be based on tangible things like the number of hours that you put in work and how many new clients have you made in the past year. However, soft factors like leadership skill are also important. To evaluate these traits, you can ask people to rank each other. When you are trying to think whether to promote someone, you should gather feedback from the associates who work with him/her. You can ask them questions like "Is this person a good leader?" and "Is this person a team player?" The feedback from that person's peers at the firm can really supplement the reviews of the supervisors. Also, you should try to ask a wide range of people so that you wouldn't let one bad review to skew the result. You need to be able to determine whether this is an isolated incident or it's like a very common occurrence. Sometime there might be discrepancy in terms of how a man and how a woman views the person. When evaluating a person for promotion, this should be also taken into account.

**Q: At the beginning of our interview, you kind of touched upon the potential need for women to take maternity or family leave during work, how will you develop caregiving and maternity leave policies for both sexes so that the outcomes are more egalitarian?**



**A:** I think it's about providing flexibility. You should allow people to work from home when they have family emergency. Also, you can partner with daycare center to set up a daycare room or program at firm so that women can bring their kids to work. I think the same should be given to men as well right. It is not just the job of women to take care of children or family. Men also need to spend time with family, and in some families, the father is actually in charge of childcare. The policy certainly should apply to men too. In setting up the family policy or program, the firm should listen to the needs of its employees from both sexes. Also, the firm should make sure its employees know all the resources that are available for them and makes it clear that the resources are for both sexes. From time to time, the firm should gather feedback from employees on potential areas for improvement.

**Q: What are the sexual harassment policies and interactive training you will put in place in the workplace?**

**A:** I think there are many things you can do. Training in sexual harassment is certainly necessary. You need to help people to understand what can be said and done, what can cannot. Sometimes people just don't realize that something counts as sexual harassment and they just don't take it seriously. An online training where you just watch 100 videos and do the quizzes in my view is not that effective. Group interactive activities can be a good option for the training program. I think role-playing exercise in some simulated real-life scenarios in my view would be more effective and memorable. Besides training, I think it's also important to have a hotline or report system where women can report instances of sexual harassment without worrying about any repercussions. Sometimes, the firms do not to take it seriously when they should. They just tend to brush it off and don't really do any investigation, so the women just don't feel the urge to report those cases. I think having a reporting hotline or even just actively gathering feedback from women in the interim or midterm review will help you discover many existing problems. In the review, you can ask women whether they have encountered any instances where they don't feel comfortable working in the workplace or have experienced sexual harassment. Once you get those feedback, you should take them very seriously to showcase the company's commitment against sexual harassment. Only in this way, will the women feel more inclined to report instances of sexual harassment because they know that their opinions and stories will be heard and will be taken seriously. Also, cultivating a very inclusive culture is also important. An inclusive culture would help to lower the number of sexual harassment cases since there is more solidarity against sexual harassment.

**Q: How will you structure the diversity committee and its reporting structure?**

**A:** I think that the diversity committee should be an independent body. They should be given full autonomy so they can do their jobs without any undue influence from the firm. They should be under no outside pressure so that they can provide their candid observations and feedback to the board of directors. I think the committee should not even be under the CEO's control. When there is a bad decision from the top that really affects the overall policy or culture of the firm in promoting gender equality, the diversity committee should be able to raise the problem to the board without concerns.

**Q: How will you create external pressures from clients to improve together?**

**A:** I think you can choose clients that also have the same kind of view about diversity inclusion. If the firm and the client don't share the same goal or view, I don't think they can work very well together in the long run. I think the firm should try to find clients that share the same values who can become its long-term clients instead of just focusing on short-run profits. To motivate clients to improve diversity, you can form a partnership with the clients to see if there are ways to collaborate on diversity and inclusion. Also, focusing on diversity gives the firm a chance to network with diverse people at the client side. This could largely broaden the client base for the firm. Today, many clients also care about the diversity of law firms they partner with. For example, like Google or Facebook would require their partner law firms to have like at least certain percentage of women or people of color in their leadership positions.

**Q: My last question would be what do you think of the intersection between LGBTQ+ diversity and gender equality in promoting inclusiveness at a law firm?**

**A:** That's a really hard question. I think they are all part of the same sphere, but at the same time each of them is very like intricate. LGBTQ is so expansive. There is a huge umbrella and within that there are still very nuanced differences between each subgroup. I think it's about again intersectionality. Instead of just sorting people into boxes, you should consider the existence of that umbrella and a person is more than his/her certain attribute. A person is not just an Asian woman or a black man. I think it is just about including all these things together and finding ways to support attorneys that correspond with their wide variety of identities. Only in this way can you truly make the firm more inclusive. At the same time, you need more cross-collaboration between various affinity groups. You can have people from each group to talk about their experience and to get to know each other more. Sometimes, people from different affinity groups can have same experiences or have similar concerns. Different affinity groups can certainly work together to find ways to improve diversity and inclusion at firm at a more general level.

## **Interview #63**

### **Q: How would you define male allyship?**

**A:** Recognizing that social relationships with people are different between genders, for a variety of reasons, and that extends to how people are promoted / offered opportunities / who is highlighted for big opportunities. And making sure that people aren't left out of important conversations because of those differences, and that people are taken seriously across the board. People should be rewarded for the value that they bring for a team, regardless of their identity.

### **Q: Do you consider yourself to be an ally for women? How so?**

**A:** I think I am. There are a lot of things I think you should do generally with everyone, and I think it's most effective when you do so. So, listening to people's critiques of systems and taking that seriously. Recognizing when other people have contributions and highlighting that "as so and so said." In the work environment, knowing how to distinguish between a social and professional environment is important. Not only in coworker setting but client setting too. Decrease in professionalism can lead to people feeling as though their priorities are not being taken seriously enough.

I try to make it as easy as possible for people to reach out to me however they want whenever they have questions or concerns. At social events, I make sure to make everyone feel welcome. I serve as a mentor to three 1Ls. I treat everyone with the same level of respect and regard. Anything I think is useful for people, I offer that to all three of them equally. I think one of the best things about these mentorships is that you're paired with people who are not identical to you. By randomly assigning mentors, it ensures you interact with people that you wouldn't necessarily do so normally. It's important to make people feel included. And that something you read in a social setting. Some people are missing that skill, so it's important to be aware of that and be the person that looks out for others.

### **Q: How do you speak up for women when they are overlooked? How do you bolster and draw attention to women's voices, and the voices of women of color?**

**A:** I think it's important to recognize when other people have contributions and highlighting that, such as "as so and so said."

### **Q: What is proactive allyship? How do you behave when women or other members of minority groups are not in the room?**

**A:** Recognizing and being someone that people are comfortable coming to with concerns about systems / businesses / groups undervaluing input based on who the input is coming from.

If those people are not there, I make sure that their interests are being represented. But at a certain level of meeting, for instance with all partners, representing those peoples' interests isn't enough. You need to ensure there are women and members of minority groups in the room.

**Q: Data has shown that when women do speak out, they can be ignored, or have their ideas taken. As an ally, how will you address this?**

**A:** If a good point isn't taken, and you think it's because of who offered it, I think amplifying it is important.

**Q: Are there times when you have or will privilege some women over others?**

**A:** No, I would feel bad prioritizing one woman over another for any reason other than based on merit.

**Q: How would you structure the design and layout of the workplace to advance diversity?**

**A:** I think the main thing is to ensure that portraits and such on the walls are representative of everyone, not just white men.

**Q: How would you eliminate gender bias in performance reviews?**

**A:** I think one way is to have more than one person conduct the performance reviews and ensure those people are from different backgrounds. You have to watch out because you don't want to make it so that performance evaluations are watered down in an attempt to eliminate bias, because people do need to hear honest feedback on how they're doing at work.

**Q: How is the MeToo movement shaping norms of masculinity?**

**A:** Hopefully it makes a lot of men think about what it is they want out of the relationships they have at work or at home. Men are ruining lives, and the consequences are catching up with them. I think the movement has made men take these accusations more seriously. Some of these things are hard to imagine when you aren't around them. But when you have a situation where police are investigating something, and the company still hasn't done anything about it, that's a problem. You need the proper channels to address these things.

**Q: Men mentoring women can make a large impact. Do you fear a backlash?**

**A:** Yeah, I think that's an important part of this. When you're mentoring someone, you're usually talking to people who you wouldn't otherwise be talking to. Some of that's seniority, but that's also just the way things are set up. Fears of that might be exaggerated, but they're not ridiculous. It's just added stress and trouble if something is misinterpreted in a relationship in which someone is trying to mentor another.

**Q: What are your views on work-family policies, such as parent leave, flex time, and part-time work?**

**A:** It's an attempt to target the underlying economic problems of the inequity between male and female caretaker for a child. I think it makes sense. Ideally, men and women would cost the

company the same amount when a child is born. When you equalize that, you also equalize the burden on both parents for taking care of the child.

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not likely at all, 5-very likely), how likely would it be for you to request & participate in work-family policies (i.e. Parental Leave or Flexible Work Arrangement) if your family situation made that need applicable?**

**A: 5.**

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not likely at all, 5-very likely), how likely do you think your male peers would be to request & participate in one of the company's work-family policies (i.e. Parental Leave or Flexible Work Arrangement) if their family situation made that need applicable?**

**A: 4.**

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not influenced, 5-very likely to influence), how much of your decision to participate in the work-family policies is influenced by your perception of what is accepted and expected by leadership/management and your male peers?**

**A: 4.**

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not comfortable, 5-very comfortable) how comfortable do you feel in your ability to fully be yourself at work?**

**A: 3.**

**Q: How often do you see women in leadership roles on television? Women of color?**

**A: Not very often.**

**Q: Does the way you see women in positions of power influence your view of women leaders?**

**A: No.**

**Q: Has the way you have seen women in positions of power on television influenced your actions or decisions to be an ally for women in your professional life?**

**A: No.**

**Q: Do you fear ally-ship or resulting backlash based on how the media portrays women?**

**A: No.**

## **Interview #64**

**Q: When you hear the word ally or allyship what comes up for you?**

**A:** I mean, I think it's someone who doesn't just like passively say that Women should like be treated equal but insists that women should be treated equal. When an opportunity presents itself to--I hate saying treat women equal again because that's all I said so far--but that they don't just kind of talk to talk, but that they walk the walk, too.  
So if I'm like a manager or whatever that I'm like, promoting women who deserve it and not just overlooking them are taking them for granted.

**Q: Can you see yourself even as like a first-year associate using allyship as a means to challenge implicit biases at work and make sure that your female colleagues are having their ideas being heard out, calling out anyone or any biases that you may see or challenging your own implicit biases?**

**A:** Yeah, I mean I could definitely see that. I think there's ways to go about it, where I wouldn't say screw you to like a managing partner, like you're being sexist but if you have a good idea and they weren't giving you attention I would say, "Oh, Bianca actually had a really good point about this" and kind of bring it to your attention. I wouldn't like try to get myself fired. And I know that's like bad, but just within the means.

**Q: That's not bad. I mean it. This has to be realistic. You know, like why anything that would ask you to get fired wouldn't succeed as a mechanism. Do you notice exclusion every day or the presence of people from different ethnic or racial backgrounds in spaces that you occupy?**

**A:** I do notice exclusion every day. Yeah, I think definitely there are people excluded. I mean it's hard but because you choose your own classes, but in a lot of my classes I'm just the only black person. So that's obviously a sign of exclusion. I think, just like when you're someone that's in a minority position so women, LGBTQ, minorities like Black, Spanish, whatever, what have you, um, Jewish people. You kind of just take that into consideration and like you're acutely aware and I think if you're not aware of who's in the room with you or your place in the room, then you're not a minority and you might be someone in power.

**Q: To be an ally is to bring intersectionality to the forefront. Gender is only one axis of difference. How do you, or will you open the doors to more participation from women and women of color, in terms of envisioning what you would want to do as a future leader?**

**A:** I think just naturally seek out as many women as I do men. I think my boss for the summer did a good job of this because he hired two law clerks, one was me and the other was a black woman. I mean just providing equal opportunity, because sometimes it is easier for men to you know get along with other men and they can talk football and stuff like this, but having women is almost more important because even though women in law school are progressing like you stated earlier, they're not in positions of leadership most of the time. So bringing women up and giving them the chance to succeed is very important, and I think we just need to do more of that.

**Q: How might we make sure that women, especially women of color, literally take seats at the table, rather than standing on the sidelines, like let's say they're uncomfortable talking about football, or something like that?**

A: Well that's a good question because even though I have like all brothers. I mean, it's easy to see that women are naturally conditioned unfortunately, in our society to be submissive. So, for example, there's one woman attorney at a table like eight attorneys, full of men, and they're all talking and being loud. Sometimes women might not feel comfortable speaking over men and raising their voice. So I think it is important to be kind of intuitive and see, hey, "Bianca hasn't said anything." So maybe I should take the initiative and say, Bianca, did you have anything you wanted to add. I think that's important and something that we need to be persistent in because society has told and pushed women to like contain themselves and especially Black women, LGBTQ women, minority Jewish women. To make themselves feel like they have to shrink themselves in order to fit in. But when that's happening, it's up to men, and people who have more power to encourage women to speak, and give themselves a voice.

**Q: Do you think that women who are outgoing or more comfortable speaking up have an advantage?**

A: Yes 100% I mean our Professor [ ]. You could tell she's like outgoing and like outspoken, and I mean you're outspoken too but I mean, if she was in a room like the situation I just gave at a table with eight attorneys. I think she would be bossing them around. So she has a clear advantage as opposed to a woman who might be a little more shy or soft spoken. Then those men might just be able to just talk and ramble over her and she might not feel comfortable speaking out, but I know Professor [ ] would probably tell people to shut up.

**Q: Do you anticipate there being any backlash to someone like Professor [ ] in that situation telling people to shut up?**

A: Yes 100% I don't know where I heard this, it might have been some class, but just the comparison. And I think it might have been Professor [ ], actually. When you describe a guy who like tells people to shut up. It's like, oh, he's taking charge and then for women, it's the B word. So like even those women who are outspoken are at a disadvantage because they might look that less favorably. You see this with women in power all the time that they're looked at as like difficult to work with and like B word or whatever.

**Q: Is that true? As an outspoken woman myself I can never imagine someone baselessly criticizing me for being too bossy if I have an idea. Is that a real thing?**

A: I think it is real but like it's obviously sexist, because if a guy was doing it. I mean, I don't think anyone likes getting yelled at. But guys are given kind of a pass over it like, "oh, well, he's just really passionate about his work", but with girls like another thing is sometimes people will say "what is she on her period?" or something like that. "She just has an attitude problem," but with guys it's seen as more like a good thing.

**Q: So let's say, a Professor [ ] came up and spoke and you're sitting with a group of guys and they said something like that. How would you feel, what would you think or what might you do?**

**A:** I would probably I would feel like kind of just bad that they would say something like that. And I would probably say that she's not like this word or that and it's not because she's a woman like that's just the person. She is is a boss. And it's not a bad thing, just because she's a woman. You don't have to look at it negatively like it's an attitude problem if she's passionate about our work. She's passionate about her work just like a guy would be passionate about their work. So you shouldn't like make comments just because she's a woman or look at her differently.

**Q: Right. What if one of those people in that group is your superior?**

**A:** See, this is like where it becomes honestly interesting in walking the walk and not talking the talk. But I still think that I would actively say, "Well, I don't think attitude problem, she's just really interested in this project", but I wouldn't like say, "Screw you, whatever." But I would say no, like, and call them out but reasonably, call them out, kind of just disagree.

**Q: Are there times when you think its ok for some women to have more privilege than others or can be more favored in the workplace?**

**A:** I think this is definitely an interesting question because I've heard of pretty privilege. So like prettier girls like obviously get more things handed to them or have an easier time getting promotions or what have you. But I think I might favor some women over other women but not because of anything like pretty privilege, it's because of just naturally who I click with personality wise. So, like you. I'm kind of more outgoing and so if a girl like not even doesn't matter what she looks like, was outgoing and was joking with me while we're doing the work. I would, I think, favor her as opposed to someone who is more quiet, But that's not favoring based on anything that has to do with her and I would have the same favoritism when it comes to men like some quiet men that I might not really click with. So I think there is favoritism but not like based on anything appearance wise or anything physical.

**Q: That's a really, it's a really good point. It is just like who you click with on a personality basis. What are your ideas on hiring practices that are clear and transparent: blind resume evaluation, such as evaluating resumes without names attached to reduce potential gender bias or do you think that we should have gender, race, ethnicity name identifiers on resumes? Which do you think is better?**

**A:** So I think not having any names on resumes sounds good in theory but then when you start thinking about it in practice. So let's say I'm from West Philadelphia and I obviously don't have the same access opportunities and internships and things like that, but I was still a good student. So I have A's on my transcript and whatever. But then, let's say there's someone from Center City whose parents are attorneys and were able to get them like three internships throughout High School, College, just looking at the resumes, obviously you're going to choose that person. So I don't think it takes into consideration those extra factors. I don't think I really like it.



**Q: So we talk a lot about the impact of gender roles on a woman's ability to advance in the workplace, for example, if a woman takes maternity leave, or paid leave then she comes back to work and she's behind and it's less likely for her to get a promotion or be considered for partnership. What do you think about the impacts of being out from the workplace due to taking care of your family on your career trajectory? Do you think that it is reasonable to question a woman's commitment to her work, reliability, or how hard she works, how available she is going to be on the job? Or should a woman's taking maternity leave or deciding to take maternity leave should not impact her performance reviews?**

**A:** I think that a woman having decided to have a child definitely should not impact her employment reviews. Strictly because kind of like you were saying earlier, I think in law there's no separation between work and life and people just mold the two together, like they're supposed to be married together. But a woman should be able to get paid maternity leave and then come back and not be judged for going and having a baby, which is actually a good thing, but in work, they make it like a bad thing and it's like frowned upon. Like, she's missing time. Yes, I don't think that should be looked at negatively in any way.

**Q: What do you think about men Taking paid time off paternity leave as well? This question is multiple dimensions. One is that, just give you some context, we find that a lot of men, even when they have paid parental leave available, they don't take it because they worry about the impact that will have on their job. Do you think that is true? If that's true, what do you think about a program that would mandate that men take some of the parental leave time, requiring them or incentivizing them to co-parent?**

**A:** Yeah, I think that's a great question. First, I can't say because I'm obviously not in that situation, yet. In theory, like everyone says men get paid paternity leave, like when they have a child, but like you're saying, many of them don't take it. I mean I want to say that I'm gonna definitely take it, but you know, in that environment. I'm sure there are like your boss, like “you're really going to take paternity leave?” “did you have the baby?” and might like joke and do passive aggressive, stuff like that. So I'm sure people are disincentivized also if they're working on a deal from taking that leave. I really like the idea of a mandatory program because that gets it out of the way and there's no question of men being looked at as like soft or slackers for taking it. I think it would just take a lot of pressure off. Also I think it'll be good for gender norms. The whole idea that man is also supposed to be there taking care of the baby in its first months, weeks, however long it is. And that will break down the idea of, oh, it's just a woman's responsibility. The man is supposed to be at work.

**Q: Men mentoring women can make a huge difference. But a lot of men are worried about mentoring women. Like Mike Pence has this lunch rule where he'll never be seen at lunch alone with another woman because he's too afraid of sexual assault allegations. Do you think that men are more worried about mentoring women after the #MeToo movement?**

**A:** Um yeah 100%. I mean I think it is kind of a legitimate fear. If you're a good guy, then you're a good guy. You don't have anything to worry about if you keep things professional. But there are some men, like I was saying earlier who naturally feel more comfortable around men, where you can joke around and say things that might not be appropriate, like, “shut up you're soft” to your

friend or something or tussle their hair, push them on the shoulder, anything like that. But you know, if you and me are out to lunch. And I have to be like, especially after the Me Too movement, which is good, but also this is what scares men is you have to be aware of what you're saying and not say anything that could be taken the wrong way so they have to put pressure on themselves to act in an appropriate manner. Guys feel comfortable to just totally not mentor women, which is probably definitely the wrong response, but I kind of understand the fear and like it's easy like lawyers are naturally risk averse.

So they see that as a risk as of them saying the wrong thing, doing the wrong thing. For example, like a perfect example is. The other day I told [ ] We haven't seen each other in a while, do you want to go get Starbucks? But like if I texted you or [another woman] asking do want to go get Starbucks or something like that, like, God forbid, I know you guys don't think like this, but what if a girl was like, oh, he's hitting on me. This is uncomfortable. You know, so that's just something that it's a harsh reality. And I don't know how we do deal with that, but guys do kind of have to be aware of that, because you never know.

**Q: That's kind of sad. Like if you wanted to get Starbucks with me, you couldn't just do it because you wouldn't want me to think you're hitting on me.**

A: You have taken in consideration because you don't want to put them or yourself in an uncomfortable position.

**Q: Do you think there's anything we can do about that, to help that?**

A: I mean, I guess through dialogue, be more open. For example, if a girl did feel uncomfortable just stating You know, hey, like I just want you to know—But then that's so awkward!

**Q: I feel like all of the confusion could be just solved the conversation of, like, “for what purpose” or Just being like “I would love to grab coffee like to discuss mentorship, etc.” and have that be clear that that's what it's about, just not lying.**

A: Yeah, but that's naturally why guys I think mentor women less because think about it, if I'm asking [ ] for coffee. He doesn't have to ask and what capacity. He doesn't think like, is this appropriate.

**Bianca: I guess you shouldn't have to ask in that capacity for women, either. If you think about it. Also, I feel like its an assumption of straight people. How do you even know the person likes men? It's interesting.**

A: It should just always be about business or if not, clarify.

**Q: How is the MeToo movement shaping norms of masculinity?**

A: I think definitely there's a shift. I worked in a men's retail store with a guy who was like his 40s. This is an example of something that I feel like is already being reduced and in the future might be nonexistent, but just that like “locker room talk” kind of stuff. So we worked in a mall and like if a girl passed by he would comment on their physical attributes and be like, Oh, man,

look at her. But I think that will just be less. You won't be talking bad about women's appearances or inappropriately about women's appearances. Men will be, at least should be more respectful and I mean, hopefully they're not just doing that in the open and behind closed doors still doing locker room talk. But I definitely think that men are becoming more aware and it's definitely not as acceptable to just make off the cuff kind of claims.

**Q: I want to hear more about your experience working this summer. What that was like? How would you describe or what stood out to you about diversity there like the working relationships, did anything stick out to you?**

A: I worked at a law firm [ ] in Philly. Like we were talking about before, being like acutely aware of your space in the room. We had a call like every Friday with all the attorneys, I don't know how many people were on the call. But I know there were like five or six like black people. That's just something you're like aware of. Also, they did a presentation on Juneteenth. My supervising attorney put it together, him and another law clerk, and both of them were black. So I think it's like you're black, tell us about being black kind of thing. Fortunately, there was a good amount of women attorneys I saw, but I'm not sure how many of them were partners, obviously I think less than there were male partners.

**Q: Did you see any of them like taking up leadership positions, speaking up in the in the Zooms, leading meetings, did you see the people who were black in those meetings in positions of power?**

A: Yes, so the woman who actually led our meetings and went through the agenda and everything she was a woman. And so she was definitely outspoken. I'm trying to think. There were a few women attorneys who were pretty outspoken. So I think in that space they were doing a good job of being inclusive of women, not just having them work there, but also giving them a voice and the chance to participate. In regard to black people, one partner, the partner I worked with, was black and he didn't talk that much in the meetings, but I think that might have just been because he's more of like a quiet like reserved guy. Yeah, I think that's it.

**Q: Did you ever see any of their ideas being taken less seriously?**

A: Hm. No, I don't think their ideas were taken less seriously and if they were like there were times where the partners would kind of grill people and ask where they were getting their information or if they had check something out. And I remember that happened one time with the woman who would lead the meetings. But I didn't get the sense that it was like, on the basis of that she was a woman. It was just genuinely because he was asking her a question about this topic. So if he was like not taking her seriously it wasn't like this is just a girl, what does she know, it was more of like did you do the research, type of thing.

**Q: Well, I guess what I'm getting at with this is to transition into talking about what we think gender and race discrimination will look like for our generation in the workplace, because it will be more subconscious. It will be less overt. We already know that. It's going to be much less overt, than it was even for our parents generation and even the generation**

**before them. So how do you imagine the prevalence of implicit biases coming up when were attorneys in the workplace? What are areas where you think it could come up?**

**A:** I think definitely in hiring and reviewing work. If I give my work to an attorney and they know it's coming from me. They might think, oh, this black kid. There are studies, we talked about this for Balsa at the Sadie Conference, studies that show that like attorneys are more likely to look at black people's work less favorably and like just through implicit bias kind of not seeing it as being as good. In that study I think they gave the same persons work or the same memo, but said it was from like a white person something and they looked at it more favorably were like, oh, like, yeah, there's not that many issues with this, this is good. So there are discrepancies like that. Also micro aggressions I was told about. I mean I'm speaking about it from the point of a black person. I can't think of any personal experiences right now. But when I was talking to a black attorney, he told me about micro aggressions and these, I can see definitely happening. So for example, if someone's giving a compliment to a white attorney, they'll say like, Oh, like he's really smart he's on top of his stuff. But if they're giving a compliment to me or a black attorney, they'd be like, Oh, like he's a smooth talker like he's a con man or something that's not smart but like able to trick people into thinking of things his way.

**Q: That's really gross. Do you have any personal experiences like with these things? Has like your work been criticized more harshly you think?**

**A:** Yes, but I don't have proof or know specifically.

**Q: You never would. Using your intuition.**

**A:** Yes, specifically in college. I had one professor who was like openly, kind of like very conservative. And that's not to say that, like all conservatives are racist or something. But like she would just give me horrible grades on things that I thought like, oh, this is definitely an A and then she'd like give me a really bad grade and I was like, how? I remember specifically on one test that I got a 94 when I like looked at the answer. I don't remember what the specifics were. But it was like one word, and she like took like six points off for it. So I was like, that's just ridiculous. And she would just kind of grill me for things. So in that way, definitely yes but I mean it's hard because like you're saying, you can intuitively kind of think, wow, like maybe this it has something to do with my race my gender, whatever. But it's hard to prove that and definitely know.

**Q: Right, well that's going to be our struggle. The struggle for our generation in the workplace. We're never going to have proof. That's why our discrimination is going to be more difficult than for people who came before us.**

**A:** It's definitely looked at negatively. Like if you were in a law firm to say well, I think this attorney or lawyers like treating me like this because I'm a woman and people would definitely like be like, Oh, here comes the feminist or something like that. And for me, people would be like, oh, pulling the race card, Jesus, here we go. So we're disincentivized from even calling that out.

**Q: Based on my upbringing, I hold this false assumption that I have my voice, I'll be fine, no one is going to discriminate against me. But I've been told that's very naïve of me. So I want to ask you, once women assume positions of power, what backlash if any will women face in our generation that's less overt? Once women assume enough positions of power, is there the potential for backlash from men who maybe aren't just automatically making as much money because they're not just funneled into these positions of power?**

**A:** Yeah, I mean I definitely think there would be backlash. I don't know what form, it would take. But I think men who have traditionally had our would be upset. Let's say for example, me and you are up for like the same promotion, we both want to make partner in the same practice group and you get partner. I feel like some guys would like be really upset and not openly say "she's a woman" but think that.

**Q: In our generation?**

Nicholas Alston: Oh yeah, in our generation.

**Q: Okay. You see, I didn't know that. I'm glad you told me. You think that men in our generation will feel threatened by women and potentially like hoard opportunities for themselves?**

**A:** I think maybe it will be better for our generation than in past generations, but...

**Q: Do you think men feel threatened by a woman in power?**

**A:** I think some do, but like, it's hard for me because I don't feel threatened. Again, this is just like obviously I see like how people say, "oh, I don't see color" like obviously I noticed who was a man and a woman, but like I was kind of scared of Professor [ ] but it's not because she's a woman in power. It's because of like her whole persona. Like if she was a male teacher still had a super successful background and was kind of like snappy and stuff like, I would be scared of him, like I was scared of Professor [ ], but not because he's a super nice old man, but he was just so smart. So like, that's why I was intimidated. But yeah, I wouldn't be intimidated or scared of a woman in power, just because she's a woman and in power. I would be more scared, if they have a scary personality, but like that is the same thing with a man.

**Q: I guess I'm just trying to like anticipate what the new issues will be, you know?**

**A:** Yeah, I mean, just kind of like you were saying like, it's not going to be so overt when women are discriminated against, but if a woman does speak out and a person in charge doesn't like it or maybe not even if they speak out, but if that attorney or a person in power just prefers men then that woman might be passed over for opportunities that they might be more capable of doing. One thing that someone said to me, which was kind of like a stereotype but I think does hold some weight and is true. She said that she could see me going far because I'm one of the guys that will just chum it around like the attorney and talk about football and this and then they'll love me and just hire from there. I mean, I think that I would get there because I'm able to do the work. But, I mean, I definitely think that is true for some guys like they get opportunities that

they shouldn't just because they're able to, like, man it up with an attorney But the good thing in our generation when women start to be in more power roles, women will get roles, because they can woman it up with women, and they might...

**Q: But that's not even true because I like football.**

A: Yeah, I know.

**Q: I'm not going to a woman it up with another woman, you know? Like what are we going to do talk about makeup and she's going to hire me?**

A: I mean not strictly makeup, but—

**Q: If anything, I'd rather talk about football, you know?**

A: Exactly so then maybe you get hired by man too.

**Q: No, it's not the same.**

A: Yeah. They'd rather talk football with a guy probably.

**Q: Yeah, it's weird. Okay. On a scale of 1-5, one not comfortable, five very comfortable, how comfortable do you feel in your ability to fully be yourself at work? The “man box” refers to the set of beliefs communicated by parents, families, the media, peers, and other members of society that place pressure on men to act a certain way. These pressures tell men to be self-sufficient, to act tough, to be physically attractive in certain ways, to stick to rigid gender roles, to be heterosexual, to not cry or show emotion and to use aggression to resolve conflicts. Do you feel any of these pressures?**

A: I would say like a four or three because, I mean, that man box thing is pretty true. You have to be aware of what you're saying. I don't think I have to like act super manly or anything like that. But there are certain ways you have to carry yourself. Even for example, if I was just in a room full of men, or if men are in a room, they might say something like, Stop being such a B-word. But then if you're in front of women you have to be aware of that type of thing. So it does change. But I almost think that's better because it forces men to act more reasonably and like a good person. So I think it's a good effect. I'm comfortable being myself because I'm not a scumbag that like really has to change myself, but I mean,

**Q: How comfortable do you feel being yourself in terms of like your personality, your self-expression, like, stuff like that?**

A: Probably a four because I like to joke around a lot. And people usually like the humor. But then there are times when I have to be more serious. Yeah, I mean, there's things that are just awkward like when people start talking about like police brutality or something and I'm the only black person in the room like sometimes naturally you want to talk about stuff.

**Q: Yeah, like in that situation do you feel like you have to like hold yourself back and like kind of subdue who you are?**

**A:** Yeah 100%. Just because, like, there's the whole notion that you don't want to make people feel uncomfortable, but I mean it would get to a certain point where I would say something, but I don't know. That's why I think I would say four not five because there are situations where I would like dial myself back.

**Q: What role do cultural differences regional ethnic, religious, class if any play in your attitudes to masculinity and allyship?**

**A:** I think black men are encouraged to be like more masculine. I remember, my mom yells at me about this, but when I was younger if I would cry or even like be pouting my dad would tell me to stop crying. And that's just like a natural thing. So I naturally am inclined to feel like I have to be more masculine and kind of not show emotion, things like that. And I mean, It helps to a certain point, but also it can be kind of like if I have emotions like I'm going to show them. But at the same time.

**Q: Have you ditched that belief or do you still kind of hold to it?**

**A:** I still kind of hold to it that I should be kind of masculine, but also not toxic. Like if I have something to say I should communicate it, and not just like hold it in and be angry or sad or whatever, I'm going to address it. But where it helps, and I think I'm appreciative of the way I was brought up is like my dad was very no nonsense and masculine kind of thing. So like for example, a lot of people today like struggle with anxiety and people pleasing and things like that. Like worrying about like, Oh, well, like if I mess this up my boss will be so upset and they said this about it, what were these people going to think about me. But even when I was six or seven years old, if I would go to my dad and say, Dad, this person said I'm stupid. He would say screw them, tell them "you're stupid." So just naturally now even if I get a bad grade or something like I'm thankful because I don't think like, man, I'm a failure. Like, I'm so stupid. I look at it and my first thought is honestly this teacher doesn't know what they're doing, like how could they possibly think this was not good. So it definitely helped me. I'll be like, well what type of ship, are you running. Let me see some of your memos. You're not doing it right.

## **Interview #65**

**Q: How do you define allyship? Ally?**

**A:** Advocating on behalf of those who face discrimination to change the culture we live in to reduce discrimination in our society and supporting those who have suffered from discrimination in any way necessary (financially, emotionally, etc.).

**Q: Do you consider yourself to be an ally for women? How so?**

**A:** Yes, I look for opportunities to actively speak up when I witness those around me committing sexist acts, and I try to evaluate my own actions toward women to identify any tendencies I have to unconsciously act in a sexist nature. I then try to adjust my behavior. I have also worked directly on changing national policies to support women, and I have consciously sought out professional environments that support women and that contain successful and impressive women who I can learn from.

**Q: How do you speak up for women when they are overlooked?**

**A:** I point out to my superiors if there is a gender imbalance in the office, or if an impressive woman should be considered for a specific job. I also encourage women to apply for jobs and share impressive details about themselves in interviews that they may feel are too braggadocious.

**Q: How do you help amplify women's voices, not competing with them for influence or for the sake of showcasing what an admirable feminist you are?**

**A:** I usually try to take the lead from women around me on what they need. I look at this as their fight, in which I am an ally, as opposed to my fight that I am engaging in on their behalf.

**Q: How do you bolster and draw attention to women's voices, and the voices of women of color?**

**A:** Same answers as above and below.

**A: How do you help them to gain as large of an audience as possible?**

**A:** Invite them as speakers in panels, support their candidacies for appointment or election to high levels of government, repeat to other men what I hear from women about key issues as often as possible.

**Q: What is proactive allyship? How do you behave when women or other members of minority groups are not in the room?**

**A:** Try to encourage others to be conscious of their actions and words and recognize their own biases or discriminatory tendencies. Every time I speak, I try to think about what women or



people of color that I care about would think of me if they heard me speak. That motivates the way I talk in all situations, even when I'm around other white men.

**A: Do you notice exclusion every day? Do you notice who are not there? Are you proactive? Marc Benioff, ED of Salesforce noticed exclusion and corrected it.**

**A:** I do not typically notice exclusion unless it is pointed out to me. I have been working to get better at this, and to make the women around me feel comfortable telling me when they face discrimination or harassment.

**Q: How do you or will you open the doors to more participation from women and women of color?**

**A:** I will go out of my way to ask women and women of color to speak up in a conversation. When I am in a position to hire, I will also try to seek out women and women of color to apply for positions to ensure they are considered for professional opportunities.

**Q: How do you make sure women, especially women of color literally take seats at the table, rather than standing on the sidelines?**

**A:** Invite them into the room for important conversations and encourage them to speak up.

**Q: Data has shown that when women do speak out, they can be ignored, or have their ideas taken. As an ally, how will you address this?**

**A:** Periodically reflect on meetings afterwards and think about who raised the points you remember. If it was all or mostly men, then go back and speak to the women in the room. Also consciously take notes on what women say to ensure you take notice of their points.

**Q: Do you attribute an idea to a woman who offered it, and you endorse worthy ideas and ensure the appropriate person is remembered for them?**

**A:** I try, but I am sure I often ignore women's ideas unintentionally in favor of the louder speaking men in the room.

**Q: How have you put a woman/women on center stage? How would you do it?**

**A:** Ask women to take charge of projects and present their ideas in formal situations at the office.

**Q: Are there times when you have or will privilege some women over others?**

**A:** Yes.

**Q: If no formal format exists, how do you (or will) offer peer to peer mentoring? Schedule phone appointments? find a coffee shop or office with other people around? How do you keep it professional?**

**A:** Meet in public places. Avoid any physical contact besides a formal handshake. Keep the conversation mostly on professional success and not on personal lives.

**Q: How would you help the company start a program to attract a diverse talent pool?**

**A:** Start at the school level. Find successful individuals meeting diverse characteristics, recruit them, and have them reach out to their network to recruit others like them. Also change the recruitment criteria to include factors that add value outside the traditional grades, resume etc. Also consider life experiences that provide value to the good/service the company is selling or an ability to develop relationships with clients.

**Q: What are your ideas on hiring practices that are clear and transparent? blind résumé evaluation. evaluate résumés without names attached in order to reduce potential gender bias.**

**A:** Start with a blind resume evaluation and select the top group of candidates (probably 50 to 100% more candidates than there are positions). Then evaluate the candidates including information about their gender/race/age etc. Then try to keep a diverse group, balancing different life experiences and demographics.

**Q: How would you structure the design and layout of the workplace to advance diversity (portraits, art, architecture, iconography etc.).**

**A:** Let people decorate the space around them themselves. Also have a committee made up of a diverse group to develop and approve ideas for common spaces.

**Q: How would you create a policy on equal wages for equal work?**

**A:** Pay equal wages for equal work. The more important question is how do you ensure women and people of color get the opportunity to perform equal work (and thus get the corresponding wages) as white men. The biggest barrier for women is maternity and childcare. Create policies to not discriminate against women planning to have children and help them continue on their career path while they are raising children. For people of color, help them advance through their careers and get promoted at the same pace of their white counterparts.

**Q: How will you eliminate gender bias eliminated in performance reviews?**

**A:** Picture employees of a different gender acting the same way and see if you would evaluate their performance differently.

**Q: What are the sexual harassment policies and interactive training you will put in place in the workplace? How will you deal with arbitration clauses in sexual harassment policies? (New York and California have done away with this).**

**A:** Ensure employees are aware the arbitration clauses exist and give them the option to remove them (many employees want these clauses to avoid the need to pay for litigation or to avoid the publicity that could hurt their future career prospects, so giving them this option ensures they consciously take on the pros and cons of removing the clauses).

**Q: How will you ensure no penalty for flexibility?**

**A:** Focus compensation and promotion opportunities on outputs, not inputs. As long as employees get the work done it doesn't matter when or how they do it.

**Q: What do you think of options for telecommuting?**

**A:** It should be available without a stigma, but only encouraged on a limited basis. Face time is still important, particularly for development of junior employees, as well as for developing office culture.

**Q: What clear and transparent rules will you put in place for appointment to committees, leadership opportunities?**

**A:** Make the qualifications criteria public to everyone in the company.

**Q: What are the networking and mentorship/sponsorship?**

**A:** Create mentoring opportunities for affinity groups to help advance women and people of color.

**Q: Will you put in place a program on male allies and sponsors?**

**A:** Yes, but I would do it as part of a program to advance women in the workplace. The goal should be to give women a platform to encourage men to act as allies and work with men to develop better ways male allies can help women.

**Q: What about a program to counter stereotypes?**

**A:** Yes.

**Q: How will you structure a company's core mission on diversity?**

**A:** Advance as many women and people of color as possible without sacrificing talent.

**Q: How will you structure the diversity committee and its reporting structure?**

**A:** Report to the CEO and board. Have the committee consist of CEO, COO, HR, a mix of senior and junior employees both white and people of color, and at least one independent member from an outside source with training on promoting diversity.

**Q: What work/life balance policies through flexible work policies, support systems are available?**

**A:** See above.

**Q: Does the CEO and company take on the role of advocate of female employment within the wider community through raising awareness, launching initiatives and, in general, acting as ambassadors of gender empowerment?**

**A:** Yes, that is how the CEO/company both advance their own interests by recruiting and developing more talent and advance society by addressing inequities between genders and races.

**Q: How would you create processes and incentives for those in the firm/ company to serve as a mentor for women in the community, particularly those seeking to engage in industries that have historically been difficult for women to penetrate?**

**A:** Create incentives, like provide funds for fun mentorship activities or give compensation for time spent on mentorship (i.e. hours at firms).

**Q: How would you create provisions for annual bonuses, as a way to incentivize focus on and improve diversity?**

**A:** Spending more than X hours on mentorship and recruitment of diverse candidates equals X bonus.

**Q: How will you create external pressures from clients to improve together? “When companies like Microsoft make it clear that they factor diversity and inclusion in their hiring efforts, and will reward performance, it changes the way firms approach the work and the issue. it reinforces and accelerates our own work and makes it clear that there’s a business case for diversity and inclusion.”**

**A:** Represent clients that take diversity seriously. Adopt the diversity requirements of those clients. Encourage clients to adopt diversity standards and frame it as a way to advance their own business interests (these incentives are substantial for most companies).

**Q: How will you encourage Male Champions of Change?**

**A:** Talk to other men about these issues and give them bonuses/credit for taking initiative to promote diversity.

**Q: How is the MeToo movement shaping norms of masculinity?**

**A:** It’s emphasizing how outdated they are.

**Q: Men mentoring women can make a large impact. Do you fear a backlash?**

**A:** No as long as they're careful about it and approach it with good intentions.

**Q: As an ally, how can you transform the social value attached to child- care including the role of both parents in caregiving equally?**

**A:** Paternity care and daycare in the workplace.

**Q: As an ally, how can you play an integral role in constructing these equalizing policies and constructing care as a policy issue?**

**A:** Communication with all parties involved.

**Q: As an ally who will be in a decision-making role, how will you help prevent retaliation and unequal treatment upon parental leave?**

**A:** Have an open reporting system where employees can complain to top management if they think they are being discriminated against by lower management.

**Q: How will you advocate for Fair Workplace Policies?**

**A:** Join leadership committees and speak up about policies you think need to change.

**Q: How will you send out the message that work family policies are important to men and women aren't the only ones caring for family members? Advocating for flexible hours, working from home, on-site child- care helps men and women. Observing how and when colleagues are evaluated and promoted can also be an important area where policies can be adjusted.**

**A:** Same as above.

**Q: How will you address challenges that care givers (both female and male) face upon returning to the office?**

**A:** Same as above.

**Q: What are your thoughts on on-ramping (flexible hours at full pay) and guardrails (predictable hours) to help those returning?**

**A:** Positive. We need more of those ideas.

**Q: What are your thoughts on Onramp Fellowships?**

**A:** Good.

**Q: How do you feel about Flex-hours or Agile Working Options, ranging from flexible hours to work from home to remote working?**

**A:** Good.

**Q:** What are your perceptions on non-linear leadership tracks that take into consideration women with families?

**A:** They need to be encouraged and more common.

**Q:** What are your views on work-family policies, such as parent leave, flex time, and part-time work?

**A:** Good policies.

**Q:** On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not likely at all, 5-very likely), how likely would it be for you to request & participate in work-family policies (i.e. Parental Leave or Flexible Work Arrangement) if your family situation made that need applicable?

**A:** 5

**Q:** On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not likely at all, 5-very likely), how likely do you think your male peers would request & participate in one of the company's work-family policies (i.e. Parental Leave or Flexible Work Arrangement) if their family situation made that need applicable?

**A:** 5

**Q:** On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not influenced, 5-very likely to influence), how much of your decision to participate in the work-family policies influenced by your perception of what is accepted and expected by leadership/management and your male peers?

**A:** 5

**Q:** On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not comfortable, 5-very comfortable) how comfortable do you feel in your ability to fully be yourself at work?

**A:** 5

**Q:** The "man box" refers to a set of beliefs, communicated by parents, families, the media, peers, and other members of society, that place pressure on men to act a certain way. These pressures tell men to be self-sufficient, to act tough, to be physically attractive in a certain way, to stick to rigid gender roles, to be heterosexual, to not cry or show emotion, and to use aggression to resolve conflicts. How much do these descriptions relate to something that you have experienced?

**A:** I have experienced this somewhat, but over the years the pressures have become less, and I have felt an active opposition to those norms, and made a conscious effort to question them myself.

**Q: What role does cultural differences (regional, ethnic, religious, class) if any, play in your attitudes to masculinity and allyship?**

**A:** A lot.

**Q: When you see men and women paired together on television, in movies, or other media platforms, what tends to be their relationship?**

**A:** Men tend to be the more successful ones, but that is changing.

**Q: How often do you see women in leadership roles on television? Women of color?**

**A:** Not often, but more and more every day.

**Q: Does the way you see women in positions of power influence your view of women leaders?**

**A:** Yes

**Q: Has the way you have seen women in positions of power on television influenced your actions or decisions to be an ally for women in your professional life?**

**A:** Yes

**Q: Do you fear ally-ship or resulting backlash based on how the media portrayal of women?**

**A:** No

## **Interview #66**

**Q: How do you define allyship? Ally?**

**A:** An ally is someone that does not merely refrain from discriminatory behavior but additionally speaks up and calls out conduct that excludes historically marginalized populations.

**Q: Do you consider yourself to be an ally for women? How so?**

**A:** Yes. I always do everything I can to hold myself and others accountable when consciously or unconsciously engaging in sexist behavior.

**Q: How do you speak up for women when they are overlooked?**

**A:** When I see that women are overlooked, I ask for their opinions or ideas to make sure that their voices are heard.

**Q: How do you help amplify women's voices, not competing with them for influence or for the sake of showcasing what an admirable feminist you are?**

**A:** See above.

**Q: How do you bolster and draw attention to women's voices, and the voices of women of color?**

**A:** See above.

**Q: How do you help them to gain as large of an audience as possible?**

**A:** To the extent I am involved in the planning in large events, I make sure that their voices are adequately represented in panels and lectures.

**Q: What is proactive allyship? How do you behave when women or other members of minority groups are not in the room?**

**A:** As a proactive ally, I try to hold others and myself accountable for harmful behavior whether it is conscious or unconscious. It is also important to advocate for women and minority groups when they are in the room just as you would when they are not in the room.

**Q: Do you notice exclusion every day? Do you notice who are not there? Are you proactive? Marc Benioff, ED of Salesforce noticed exclusion and corrected it.**

**A:** I do not notice exclusion every day. It is more difficult to see in the mist of the pandemic, but it is apparent that exclusion is a problem.



**Q: How do you make sure women, especially women of color literally take seats at the table, rather than standing on the sidelines?**

**A:** I invite them to the table and ask for their input.

**Q: Data has shown that when women do speak out, they can be ignored, or have their ideas taken. As an ally, how will you address this?**

**A:** I point out and emphasize their contributions and ideas during or after a meeting to make sure that they properly credited.

**Q: Do you attribute an idea to a woman who offered it, and you endorse worthy ideas and ensure the appropriate person is remembered for them?**

**A:** Yes.

**Q: How have you put a women/women on center stage? How would you do it?**

**A:** I involve them in the projects and events that I am also involved in.

**Q: Are there times when you have or will privilege some women over others?**

**A:** No.

**Q: If no formal format exists, how do you (or will) offer peer to peer mentoring? Schedule phone appointments? find a coffee shop or office with other people around? How do you keep it professional?**

**A:** I keep the conversation related to professional development and avoid any physical contact besides shaking hands.

**Q: How would you help the company start a program to attract a diverse talent pool?**

**A:** Encourage employees to engage in mentorship and recruiting efforts (e.g., by paying them for a certain number of hours to do so).

**Q: What are your ideas on hiring practices that are clear and transparent? blind résumé evaluation. evaluate résumés without names attached in order to reduce potential gender bias.**

**A:** Yes. I think blind resume evaluation is a helpful start. Collect a group of top resumes blindly and then select among those for employment in a manner that reflects adequate representation.

**Q: How would you structure the design and layout of the workplace to advance diversity (portraits, art, architecture, iconography etc.).**

**A:** One option is to create a committee that is adequately represented by diverse individuals to decide workplace layout.

**Q: How would you create a policy on equal wages for equal work?**

**A:** Create a policy that does not discriminate based on gender or race. Fair maternity leave policies would also be helpful.

**Q: How will you eliminate gender bias eliminated in performance reviews?**

**A:** Having performance reviews conducted by multiple people that represent different groups may be helpful for reducing the risk of bias.

**Q: What are the sexual harassment policies and interactive training you will put in place in the workplace? How will you deal with arbitration clauses in sexual harassment policies? (New York and California have done away with this).**

**A:** I'm not sure of the exact training that should be put in place but I think any training that makes employees aware of the conduct that is inappropriate inside and outside of the workplace is invaluable. I would give employees the option to opt out of arbitration clauses.

**Q: What do you think of options for telecommuting?**

**A:** I am in favor.

**Q: Will you put in place a program on male allies and sponsors?**

**A:** Yes.

**Q: What about a program to counter stereotypes?**

**A:** Yes. Trainings such as those that focus on implicit bias are helpful.

**Q: How will you structure a company's core mission on diversity?**

**A:** Promote a high number of diverse individuals with merit.

**Q: Does the CEO and company take on the role of advocate of female employment within the wider community through raising awareness, launching initiatives and, in general, acting as ambassadors of gender empowerment?**

**A:** Yes.

**Q: Does the company create partnerships with external partners and the broader community on gender empowerment?**

A: Yes.

**Q: Is the diversity strategy focused on a relatively well-defined groups such as first-generation college graduates, female owners of small businesses, or mothers returning to work?**

A: Yes, among other defined and undefined groups.

**Q: Is women's empowerment part of the empowerment of women and part of corporate social responsibility efforts?**

A: Yes.

**Q: How would you collaborate with organizations across industries on research and data backed initiatives that could help generate new ideas and strategies?**

A: Incentivize employee involvement with research and initiatives. Emphasize these endeavors as central to the company's mission.

**Q: How would you create processes and incentives for those in the firm/ company to serve as a mentor for women in the community, particularly those seeking to engage in industries that have historically been difficult for women to penetrate?**

A: Create incentives for employees to engage and management to engage in community outreach.

**Q: How would you create provisions for annual bonuses, as a way to incentivize focus on and improve diversity?**

A: Establish a minimum amount of time spent on mentorship and recruiting as a requirement to receive a bonus.

**Q: How will you encourage Male Champions of Change?**

A: Trainings to spread awareness and monetary incentives (e.g., bonuses) for promoting diversity.

**Q: What kind of global and local outreach program would you design? Examples might be supporting global symposia, leadership excellence for women awards and symposiums?**

A: I think large scale events and awards are great examples that I would incorporate.

**Q: How is the MeToo movement shaping norms of masculinity?**

A: It is spreading awareness on the harms that traditional norms of masculinity can create.

**Q: Men mentoring women can make a large impact. Do you fear a backlash?**

**A:** No, if the approach is responsible.

**Q: As an ally, how can you transform the social value attached to child- care including the role of both parents in caregiving equally?**

**A:** Provide both maternity and paternity leave, as well as other childcare benefits.

**Q: As an ally who will be in a decision making role, how will you help prevent retaliation and unequal treatment upon parental leave?**

**A:** Fostering a work environment that encourages reporting of any discriminatory or retaliatory treatment.

**Q: How will you advocate for Fair Workplace Policies?**

**A:** Speaking to employees and management about what fair workplace policies should look like.

**Q: How will you send out the message that work family policies are important to men and women aren't the only ones caring for family members?**

**A:** Advocating for flexible hours, working from home, on-site child- care helps men and women. Observing how and when colleagues are evaluated and promoted can also be an important area where policies can be adjusted.

**Q: How will you address challenges that care givers (both female and male) face upon returning to the office?**

**A:** Same as indicated in the following question.

**Q: What are your thoughts on on-ramping (flexible hours at full pay) and guardrails (predictable hours) to help those returning?**

**A:** I view these favorably.

**Q: What are your thoughts on Onramp Fellowships?**

**A:** I am in favor.

**Q: How do you feel about Flex-hours or Agile Working Options, ranging from flexible hours to work from home to remote working?**

**A:** I am in favor.

**Q: What are your perceptions on non-linear leadership tracks that take into consideration women with families?**

**A:** They should be implemented.

**Q: What are your views on work-family policies, such as parent leave, flex time, and part-time work?**

**A:** I am in favor.

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not likely at all, 5-very likely), how likely would it be for you to request & participate in work-family policies (i.e. Parental Leave or Flexible Work Arrangement) if your family situation made that need applicable?**

**A:** 5

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not likely at all, 5-very likely), how likely do you think your male peers would request & participate in one of the company's work-family policies (i.e. Parental Leave or Flexible Work Arrangement) if their family situation made that need applicable?**

**A:** 5

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not influenced, 5-very likely to influence), how much of your decision to participate in the work-family policies influenced by your perception of what is accepted and expected by leadership/management and your male peers?**

**A:** 3

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not comfortable, 5-very comfortable) how comfortable do you feel in your ability to fully be yourself at work?**

**A:** 5

**Q: The "man box" refers to a set of beliefs, communicated by parents, families, the media, peers, and other members of society, that place pressure on men to act a certain way. These pressures tell men to be self-sufficient, to act tough, to be physically attractive in a certain way, to stick to rigid gender roles, to be heterosexual, to not cry or show emotion, and to use aggression to resolve conflicts. How much do these descriptions relate to something that you have experienced?**

**A:** I have experienced these to a limited extent.

**Q: What role does cultural differences (regional, ethnic, religious, class) if any, play in your attitudes to masculinity and allyship?**

A: They play a large role.

**Q: When you see men and women paired together on television, in movies, or other media platforms, what tends to be their relationship?**

A: It is a romantic relationship a lot of the time.

**Q: How often do you see women in leadership roles on television? Women of color?**

A: More often now than a few years ago but still not enough.

**Q: Does the way you see women in positions of power influence your view of women leaders?**

A: Yes.

**Q: Has the way you have seen women in positions of power on television influenced your actions or decisions to be an ally for women in your professional life?**

A: Yes.

**Q: Do you fear ally-ship or resulting backlash based on how the media portrayal of women?**

A: No.

## **Interview #67**

**Q: First question JJ, how do you define like being an ally to women? As a male ally? And first of all, would you consider yourself to be a male ally? Let's start there.**

A: I guess you know, being willing to be a voice on the side of someone who might not have a stronger voice at the table. Does that make sense? I mean, it's like it's such a vague term like ally ship is like being there to support like, but also being willing to advocate on their behalf? I don't really know.

**Q: Okay, let me rephrase this question. What does ally ship in like the 21st century or in 2020 look like to you? What does being a good ally in 2020 look like to you? Is it important to you to help women advance? You know, professionally, socially, economically, academically, like is that important to you?**

A: Yes. Yes. Just in general, things have not been exactly fair up to this point. So like I honestly have not been in a position to specifically advance those goals yet. But like, I can surely see myself.

**Q: You have been in a position to affect women, you can vote right.**

A: I did vote for Hillary in 2016.

**Q: Yeah. But I mean, even like, with Kamala, like that's advancing, right, like being able to see a woman be vice president potentially president like, that helps women everywhere.**

A: Right. But I guess more in like a direct sense. Like, I'm not someone who's had an opportunity to be in a hiring position. To ensure like equity between genders. I guess that's something. I don't see a difference between candidates based off their gender.

**Q: But if you weren't in that kind of position, do you think you would do well? How do you think your behavior would change? If you did feel like you were in a position of power?**

A: I don't think it would, I mean, I guess, if anything, you would only be for more support, because like you have the ability now to like, make sure that everyone's on equal footing, as opposed to just sort of abstractly believing that that's just. You can actually do something about it. I guess there's like two separate pieces of getting everyone on equal footing and then once that's the case, ensuring that everyone is treated, not based on gender. I don't think like it's always the case that that sort of colorblind argument makes sense. But like there's a point where you sort of need actual advocacy, and then after that, like ensuring I guess, more equitable treatment.

**Q: So you don't agree with like, maybe gender blind or like colorblind like resumes or like other practices that seek to kind of remove that as a consideration**

A: I think that it's nice, but I also think it's not probably perfect in practice. So like, I mean, you can because at some point like yeah, there's that will get everyone like it was particularly like the

colorblind thing like there are certain disadvantages already, I guess it's not as much the case with gender as it is race, but there are certain, like, disadvantages that aren't being solved that you just go colorblind or gender-blind. But I think women do have opportunities to be educated, more so than like, there's that disparity is not as large I think, as it is with race, but like, I don't know, I guess that might not solve underlying issues. It's just sort of pretending like it's not there.

**Q: Okay, next question. How have you in the past amplified women's voices? And how have you spoken up for women when they were overlooked, or help drawn attention to women's voices and the voices of women of color?**

A: What's hard, is I don't even amplify my own voice. I don't really think I ever really put myself in a position to step up for anybody. So I don't know.

**Q: So there's never been an there's never been a time you were like, I'm gonna say something to support this person or I'm gonna publicly stand by this person.**

A: I don't know. I think I'm stuck in sort of the professional mindset, in terms of helping someone, like progress in anything, that I'm not able to because I have so few life experiences in my life. What's particularly coming to mind is like a lot of like the slut shaming like that something that I will stand up against in like a locker room environment.

**Q: See you're an ally. You're a working ally. Okay, data has shown that when women do speak out, they can be ignored or have their ideas taken as an ally. How will you address this?**

A: But that's true to everybody I guess. Like if if someone's idea is being stolen? Like you just sort of make sure it's attributed to the right source. Again, yeah, I haven't really been in a position where voices are even being heard because, I'm not really in a position where ideas are flowing. I don't have a great answer for that.

**Q: Okay, this you can speak to. As someone who's going into OCI and going to be evaluating firms on a series of criteria, would you say that it's important to you that the firm that you go to supports women and where women's success is important to that firm? Is that important criteria to you?**

A: I mean, like, it's definitely a criteria. Determining what's important to me right now going into OCI is part of my problem, but like, I don't want to walk into a firm and see a bunch of old blind men. I want to see female partners and a lot of the firm's I have seen they do have a lot of female partners. Not like disproportionately not oh, like, there are more white male partnership just around but I don't think anybody wants to work at a firm but that sort of closed off mindset of one type of person running this show.

**Q: Okay, so diversity matters. That's what you're saying?**

A: Yes for sure.



**Q: Okay, well now I have some statistics for you. According to the Bureau of Labor, the legal profession is one of the whitest professions out there with around 80% of lawyers being white. And then it gets even worse at the partner level and especially like managing partner level. So there's not a lot of women, and there's not a lot of women of color, especially. And there's also not even just a lot of minorities in general. They're underrepresented across the board. What do you think big law is missing? And why do you think that although almost every big law firm has all these diversity initiatives and commitment to a more diverse hiring practices, we still have these numbers, and we still have these poor retention rates? So like, what do you think, a) is the reason for that and b) what do you think are some ways to fix that?**

**A:** I think the answer is at the law school level. I don't know what those numbers look like. But if those numbers aren't lining up, it is hard, obviously, to see that all the way up the chain. And I do think that Penn does a good job, particularly with people like with the with the race issue, like they make sure that BLSA students have those extra firm opportunities, particularly during the spring. I think that is part of it. Like we need to see that more widespread like I don't know if Penn is particular in that or if that's like something that is true at other law schools. That's something that like giving, you know, the people of color, more exposure to big firms early on, and making firms sort of have to have a strategy as to recruit people of color. Like that's something that could probably help. I think that should be more true with like the women affinity groups more so as well. Like, it doesn't need to just be BLSA that has this kind of opportunities. But the law school level. I'd like to see any opportunities there. But it's hard to answer the first things because I really don't know anything about firms, which is part of my problem. So that's why I'm speaking more to like the law school aspect. I really don't know what firms do. But I know that some claim to have affinity groups. But how much of that is a sham? Like, I think you actually have leadership groups inside of your trainings in leadership with exposure to those groups that might be a good way to go about it, too. But I do think like, I don't think it's a law specific issue. I think it's a universal issue. So like, I think that that's just sort of a representation of some of the problems in society.

**Q: Can you please speak about any female mentors you've had and how they've influenced you? And in what ways?**

**A:** With our LPS professor I guess in that sense like it in terms of like writing like she was obviously influential and like I really had no idea of anything with a lot coming in. So I did sort of lean on her to show me the way and she was very understanding and and helpful not boy. And then the same is true, I guess, with Professor Hoffman like she's someone who made the transition a lot easier and she's someone I looked up to, but like, direct mentorship, I don't think I can even think of one. Most of my life has been looking up to my brothers. A mentor to me is someone I'm trying to emulate in my life and I can't really think of anyone.

**Q: Okay, well I feel like mentor is different than role model. I think you're talking about role model and mentor, just someone who provided guidance. And I feel like you basically said Pierce and Hoffman, both provided guidance, because you had no experience in the law. And so they kind of set the foundation for your legal framework and kind of set you on the path that you're on.**

**A:** Right, I guess true. To that extent then I would think of my pre law advisor. She just sort of helped me through the application process. Like, we were never really that close, but I had no idea anything about law school. So she sort of acted as that guidance as well. I do also look up to my girlfriend in some sense, like, in terms of kindness and being just a good person. So there you go.

**Q: Okay, my last question let's circle back to the first question that we started with. How do you define allyship?**

**A:** I mean, like it in like the simplest form, it's doing what you can to support everyone around you. Making sure that everyone's on as much as equal footing and speaking out when you see when you consider to be injustice.

## **Interview #68**

### **Q: How do you define Allyship?**

**A:** I was actually just thinking about this a second ago. Being an ally in a general sense is, if you support some cause, or you are a type of person, that someone who's an ally is on your side supporting your cause. In this specific context, what they are referring to, is using your position of privilege and power, or the fact that you are not affected in the same way as the group you are being an ally to, to use your advantages to help other groups when you don't have to.

### **Q: Do you consider yourself to be an ally for women? How so?**

**A:** Yeah. This is definitely something that I've grown into over time. Just in general, genders were "pitted against" each other in my early childhood. At least for me, I had separate classes for guys and girls at middle school. Overtime, being friend with more women and listening to their experiences, I feel like I've definitely learnt more what it means to be an ally.

In terms of how, it's whenever I hear a woman describe their experience and instead of reacting like, "oh that's not what they meant," I just sort of try to empathize and believe their experiences, and also when I hear guys saying not really respectable things - obviously I can't be perfect and always speak up - but I am trying to make an effort at least.

### **Q: How do you speak up for women when they are overlooked?**

**A:** I don't have a lot of chances to speak up. That will more apply in a professional setting, like a job. Although I had jobs before, I used to be a tutor and a paralegal at a law firm, and don't have much say.

In a family dinner setting, a guy friend is not being as receptive to female advice as he should be, and I was trying explain that to him. I definitely feel like I have that experience recently.

### **Q: Are you on the board for any student groups?**

**A:** YES – DLSA (Disabled Law Students Association) and JLSA (Jewish Law Students Association).

### **Q: Have you taken any concrete action to promote inclusivity and equality within those groups?**

**A:** At DLSA, I tried to take the position that, I'm not disabled, and be extra careful of what I say, and making sure everybody is getting heard. It's definitely something that has to be consciously done.

Now that I think more about it, I feel like more can be done, and I'm going to talk to some of the other members and see if they can think of events that would be conducive to more conversation.

**Q: Are there times when you have or will privilege some women over others?**

**A:** No, except in dating context LOL, which is kinda natural to show preference.

**Q: Data has shown that when women do speak out, they can be ignored, or have their ideas taken. As an ally, how will you address this?**

**A:** Just emphasizing what's already been said. If someone comes to me for advice right after asking somebody else for advice, and I feel the exactly the same, and I'll make sure to tell them, why don't you just listen to X so and so the first time? I can't say I have a ton of experience like this, but I guess more in class – less interrupting and I definitely talk a lot in class. I have to make sure not to cut people off and shut them down, because I've definitely been there.

**Q: How would you create a policy on equal wages for equal work?**

**A:** This is really tough – I don't have any experience on that. I guess that's a strength-in-number sort of thing. It's not really smart for me to go to HR or my superior by myself to say, hey you are not paying woman enough. It has to be a bunch of women and men to do it together, to come together on a unified front, to advocate.

**Q: What are the sexual harassment policies and interactive training you will put in place in the workplace?**

**A:** First of all, making sure women feel that their job is not in danger when they speak up against sexual harassment, and they are being comfortable in their environment. Also, through education program or something similar, let people know that there's a broad range of inappropriate behaviors. Generally, to create a respectable environment.

**Q: How will you structure the diversity committee and its reporting structure?**

**A:** Make sure adequate representation for all non-majority interest. Make sure that the selection process for the committee and the rules for what decision they can make are proper.

**Q: How would you create processes and incentives for those in the firm/ company to serve as a mentor for women in the community, particularly those seeking to engage in industries that have historically been difficult for women to penetrate?**

**A:** Mentorship programs, internships and diversity programs where the focus is on underprivileged population / communities. Just focusing on where opportunities go in a way that maximizes the chances that these underserved communities get more people into these industries. I can't think of a specific program, but I guess some sort of overtime incentives and some sort of benefits.

**Q: How will you create external pressures from clients to improve together? “When companies like Microsoft make it clear that they factor diversity and inclusion in their hiring efforts, and will reward performance, it changes the way firms approach the work**

**and the issue. it reinforces and accelerates our own work and makes it clear that there's a business case for diversity and inclusion."**

**A:** There's always the fact that you can say like, "we are not gonna work with you." But I don't know if that's the best solution, because then they will just go to somebody else. Maybe we can say do a trade - we'll do XY, you'll do XY, here are the terms, here are the type of companies that we want to work with, and just lay it all out on the table what we would like from them. I think that might be more effective, because we can get some concession from them.

**Q: How is the MeToo movement shaping norms of masculinity?**

**A:** Making sure that you are not assuming behavior is okay before you listen to a woman or when a woman tells you something you don't react defensively. You just take it in and assess it in a fair manner.

**Q: Men mentoring women can make a large impact. Do you fear a backlash?**

**A:** If you (as an ally) are not careful, it can be seen as overbearing - "oh what do you really know? Why do you think you can just mentor a person just because you are a man? or are you really mentoring her out of romantic interest?" Maybe these things can come into play. There's some sort of power dynamic. But personally, I don't fear a backlash.

**Q: As an ally, how can you transform the social value attached to child-care including the role of both parents in caregiving equally?**

**A:** Changing the culture around that. A lot of men don't see child-rearing as also their equal job. Making sure men see it as their job too. When I speak to other people, my friends, my male friends, and just whoever I speak to, I make sure that they know I don't just see it a chore but see it as that "this is my child as well." The key is to raise the awareness.

**Q: What are your perceptions on non-linear leadership tracks that take into consideration?**

**A:** Good idea. I think that women often face tough choices between advancing their career and child-bearing, and I think that's an unfair false choice that they have to make. A non-linear track would recognize that, and that would be great they take into consideration such dilemma.

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not comfortable, 5-very comfortable) how comfortable do you feel in your ability to fully be yourself at work?**

**A:** 3. When I was at my last job as a paralegal, I was more subdued. It was a new and scary environment, and I was coming in as an entry level position, and it's hard to fully be your personality in that type of environment.

**Q: The "man box" refers to a set of beliefs, communicated by parents, families, the media, peers, and other members of society, that place pressure on men to act a certain way. These pressures tell men to be self-sufficient, to act tough, to be physically attractive in a certain**

**way, to stick to rigid gender roles, to be heterosexual, to not cry or show emotion, and to use aggression to resolve conflicts. How much do these descriptions relate to something that you have experienced?**

**A:** Definitely. Sounds just like the typical . . . or what's expected out of a male. Not necessarily how I think now - I was trying to open my emotions to people. And I am generally not very confrontational when it comes to inter-personal conflict, so I don't think I would resolve conflict mainly by resorting to aggression – not how I approach things.

**Q: What role does cultural differences (regional, ethnic, religious, class) if any, play in your attitudes to masculinity and allyship?**

**A:** Everybody grows up in different environment, and we'll be used to different things. A lot of the Jews that I grew up with . . . it's not a great culture with woman. A lot of people are married young and have kids, so women in religious groups are taking a pretty domestic role. That sort of shapes the perception on people of what they should be doing. So certainly, there's an effect.

**Q: When you see men and women paired together on television, in movies, or other media platforms, what tends to be their relationship?**

**A:** That's another thing that's forced. There's a lot of media and TV shows that whenever there's a male and female character, it's always about when they are getting together. There are male-female friendships on TV, but almost always . . . something happens eventually.

**Q: How often do you see women in leadership roles on television? Women of color?**

**A:** Not very often. In Parks and Recreation - Leslie is in a power position; also in Madmen. They are relatively main characters. But in general, not seen very often. For women of color – not really – Mindy Project maybe, but that got cancelled.

## **Interview #69**

**Q: How do you define Allyship?**

**A:** To be respectful and not an a\*\*hole.

**Q: Do you consider yourself to be an ally for women? How so?**

**A:** I don't consider myself an ally because \*this is what everyone should do\*. Should not be limited or defined in any way.

**Q: How do you speak up for women when they are overlooked?**

**A:** There's one time that the girl and I were both fired. And I was telling the boss that he made the bad, the wrong firing decision (regarding the girl). This girl has good work ethic and she's good at what she does. I think it's probably a personality thing. But I am glad I did speak up for her.

**Q: Are you on the board for any student groups?**

**A:** No.

**Q: Are there times when you have or will privilege some women over others?**

**A:** No. I mean, if they are more capable and smarter and better at their jobs, yeah, definitely. But I wouldn't call that "privilege." I wouldn't privilege someone over the other for reasons beside their personality or work ability.

**Q: Data has shown that when women do speak out, they can be ignored, or have their ideas taken. As an ally, how will you address this?**

**A:** Problem is that it happens to everyone, in my experience. I don't know. At the junior level, your boss always takes the credit regardless of gender – it's the corporate culture thing. If it happens unfairly to women, I will tell them to find a new job. Have to change corporate culture, and the problem is that it can't be done as easy as we think because there's a reason those problems persist for so long. It's like Communism lol. A practical solution is to avoid the hassle and just leave and find a new job / place that's more accommodating.

**Q: How would you create a policy on equal wages for equal work?**

**A:** Most objective way is to have performance-based metrics. Problem is, a lot of jobs cannot be quantified. For example, how do you value a secretary who's very good at talking to clients and getting information from them without them ignoring emails or questions. Realistically the only way to enact a policy that would make sense would be either, first, a broken system where there's performance-based things. But at least since you know what you are getting graded for, theoretically you can try to do that, and you might just succeed and perform at various level of

success. That might not be the strongest suit, but at least you know what you have to do. Second would be the quota system. But I strongly disagree with this. It allows 1. for coworkers to feel like this person does not deserve the job, which is bad for the working environment; and 2. Maybe that person actually does not deserve it, and that's actually bad for the working environment.

**Q: What are the sexual harassment policies and interactive training you will put in place in the workplace?**

**A:** First of all, not to do any ADP (HR website software that does payrolls and benefits, just a HR thing) because of it being a complete waste of time by asking people to watch the videos. Most effective way would be to interact with each other and explain and make it very clear what's not acceptable. Biggest problem that most people have is that they can't understand the concept that just because you are okay with it, doesn't mean someone else is okay with it, and most people will probably never understand that. And there's no solution to that because it's never possible to convince people that they are wrong.

**Q: How will you structure the diversity committee and its reporting structure?**

**A:** I would not structure it at all. When you structure a committee, it fosters the same resentment as I discussed earlier – “they don't deserve it.” Diversity at a firm cannot simply be measured by race, gender, or sexual preference. What make corporation achieve goal more easily is the diversity of thought, rather than their physical attributes, which are sometimes but not often a close proxy. The only way to really get that is about the corporate culture, which starts from the top. But there's no diversity committee for that. It's really just about whether your manager is an idiot or not. At that point, it's not a diversity committee - it's just the CEO and upper management. The way I see, the only reason for a diversity committee is to implement a quota, either hard or soft. At the end of day, the business should be choosing the people that are best fit.

**Q: How would you create processes and incentives for those in the firm / company to serve as a mentor for women in the community, particularly those seeking to engage in industries that have historically been difficult for women to penetrate?**

**A:** I don't personally see that, working in the financial industry. I guess the pressure could be internal, where the girls feel like they would not be sponsored by a potential mentor in this industry at all and they just don't bother reaching out. Investment banking people are known to be a\*\*holes so the girls looking for jobs in the industry probably don't even reach out for mentorship.

**Q: How will you create external pressures from clients to improve together? “When companies like Microsoft make it clear that they factor diversity and inclusion in their hiring efforts, and will reward performance, it changes the way firms approach the work and the issue. it reinforces and accelerates our own work and makes it clear that there's a business case for diversity and inclusion.”**



**A:** I would tell them to do what they feel is right, from the bottom of their heart. Although if I'm a businessman I would not stop doing business with someone just because they are like that. I would stop doing business because someone else is giving me a better rate and they happen to have diversity as well. If I'm dealing with someone who's blatantly discriminatory, I would tell them they need to be careful of their reputation and it's certainly hurting their brand and business.

**Q: How is the MeToo movement shaping norms of masculinity?**

**A:** It is polarizing men into two side of extreme of masculinity – one side being more aggressive and more macho and more assertive, and they feel like their opinion is even more valuable; the other being more inclusive, and be more careful, or probably too careful like treading on thin ice. The reason - I think social media has a lot to do with it. I think people tends to naturally cut off people that disagree with them, and they will gravitate more to people who agree with their opinion, and over time that will fester into some kind of weird cult.

**Q: Men mentoring women can make a large impact. Do you fear a backlash?**

**A:** Why backlash? Sounds like a sexist question lol.

**Q: As an ally, how can you transform the social value attached to child-care including the role of both parents in caregiving equally?**

**A:** 1. If the wife earns more, then the bread-winner role transitioned gradually to the wife, and the husband will naturally be doing more child-rearing and they want more of their rights, since they are now taking care of the child. Then they will understand. 2. Encourage couples to talk about the obligations before marriage. Write a pre-nup or something. Goal is to have "meeting of minds."

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not comfortable, 5-very comfortable) how comfortable do you feel in your ability to fully be yourself at work?**

**A:** 5. If I'm too weird, I might not get promoted. I have to be professional.

**Q: The "man box" refers to a set of beliefs, communicated by parents, families, the media, peers, and other members of society, that place pressure on men to act a certain way. These pressures tell men to be self-sufficient, to act tough, to be physically attractive in a certain way, to stick to rigid gender roles, to be heterosexual, to not cry or show emotion, and to use aggression to resolve conflicts. How much do these descriptions relate to something that you have experienced?**

**A:** Yes. Very much. XXX (Interviewee's partner) reminds me of this everyday. She says I have to be more manly and to work out. And do more of the work, do more cooking and cleaning. Go out and walk the dog. Just do more of everything, because you are man and thus you can and you should.

**Q: What role does cultural differences (regional, ethnic, religious, class) if any, play in your attitudes to masculinity and allyship?**

**A:** My cultural background changes how I interact with people. For example, if the person is a Chinese student, I will assume he/she is sexist. If an international Chinese female student, I assume she will have more expectation for guys, than guys do for girls. Then if just an American, I will assume that they are more for gender equality. Because I have experienced both Chinese and American cultures, I can confidently say that the Chinese are more sexist than the American. You can just point to an online article in China where the guy proposes with a big house and a flashy car. I do have those bias and perceptions but these are largely based on my observation and experience with two cultures.

**Q: When you see men and women paired together on television, in movies, or other media platforms, what tends to be their relationship?**

**A:** They usually start off as friends, and somehow turn romantic. That's what the script is. Either friends or enemies that always end up in romance.

**Q: How often do you see women in leadership roles on television? Women of color?**

**A:** Almost never. Maybe Suits. Still, not quite often.

(On women of color) I don't think they cast them, period. I feel like that the only shows that cast diverse actor/actress, they are always so edgy and make political points. They don't feel like normal TV shows with a normal plot, and it just so happens to have a diverse cast of characters - that just does not happen.

(At the conclusion of interview) I think the last point I want to make is, one thing that the people are doing really wrong is that they are trying to put a spotlight on this, and trying to make it seem like, if you are involving a diverse group you have to make a stand and say something, and you can't just be there and be normal. It's like, you have to do something flashy. The way to correct that, is just say, "yo just relax and we are just normal people just like you." There's no reason that just because you are a black woman in leadership, you need to be on TV, or have charity fundraising, making a speech every other night, advocating for more women in businesses. I think you just need to be there, be ready to work with an open mind, and try your best. Let your work product and accomplishment do the talk.

## **Interview #70**

**Q: How do you define allyship? Ally? Do you consider yourself to be an ally for women? How so?**

**A:** Someone who understands women or women of color and does their best to promote them and their different spaces and prioritizes them.

**Q: How do you speak up for women when they are overlooked?**

**A:** I try to be cognizant and I try to make sure if there is a woman or women of color that they are heard and what they think about different topics. If someone is left off of an email I try to loop them in.

**Q: How do you help amplify women's voices, not competing with them for influence or for the sake of showcasing what an admirable feminist you are?**

**A:** That's a great question. In the roles I have had it has been a lot of behind the scenes supporting women in different groups and I give credit where credit is due. I am the first person to admit something was not my idea. So those are my main ways. I don't believe in showcasing and I try to prove things through my actions.

**Q: How do you bolster and draw attention to women's voices, and the voices of women of color?**

**A:** That goes to my first answers. Acknowledging them when they say something. It is always difficult in firms as I'm not the person with power but I try to focus on acknowledging what they have to say and making sure women's voices are heard in any particular situation.

**Q: How do you help them to gain as large of an audience as possible?**

**A:** It is not my particular skill set to get a larger audience but I help them by trying to finance symposiums and paying attention to their priorities and making sure things are executed in a timely manner.

**Q: What is proactive allyship? How do you behave when women or other members of minority groups are not in the room?**

**A:** I do try my best to be proactive either from conversations with them, or bring up things that were not thought about. It is a tough question but I don't think there have been meetings I was at where there were no women of color in the room. By virtue of me being a minority it is harder to answer. I think in those situations, fortunately with Penn Law myself and others acknowledge that, and point out that missing groups should be here in these meetings and discussions. And to the credit of law school administration and others at the law school they recognize that and include these groups in their discussions.

**Q: Do you notice exclusion every day? Do you notice who are not there? Are you proactive? Marc Benioff, ED of Salesforce noticed exclusion and corrected it.**

**A:** Yes I notice who isn't there. Every day I notice in different groups have exclusion soldier groups things like that and I bring it up sometimes.

What are you met with when you bring it up?

Usually I am overruled. A lot goes into the idea of different spaces for different groups and inclusion of more ppl is great but ally groups are democratic and my view is not always in the majority but I try to make the best case possible.

**Q: How do you or will you open the doors to more participation from women and women of color?**

**A:** A group I was in in 1L year was making more of an effort to listen to women and women of color. We would try to be more mindful of making sure they are always in the room instead of just an afterthought and making more of a conscientious effort to make sure they are in the room and that they are thought of.

**Q: How do you make sure women, especially women of color literally take seats at the table, rather than standing on the sidelines?**

**A:** The same as my previous answer.

**Q: Data has shown that when women do speak out, they can be ignored, or have their ideas taken. As an ally, how will you address this?**

**A:** I think for this I make sure I am not the one taking credit for the idea and making sure to attribute the idea to the appropriate person, but being a minority I am sometimes not the person listened to either, but I do try when I can. So given the power structure, I try the best I can. We have spoken to Dean Ruger and we assume people in power have been told that but in groups I am in charge of I see that you don't get as much feedback as I would have thought so maybe people don't really think about it.

**Q: Do you attribute an idea to a woman who offered it, and you endorse worthy ideas and ensure the appropriate person is remembered for them?**

**A:** My previous answers cover that.

**Q: How have you put a women/ women on center stage? How would you do it?**

**A:** That one is tough. I may have alluded to men in positions I have been in are in a power structure where I may not be able to do that. I have helped women behind the scenes. I would work with them to make sure to understand their goals and priorities and try to make that a reality. I'm good at strategizing so I could help getting them from point A to point B and realize who we have to contact to make that happen.

**Q: Are there times you will privilege some women over others?**

**A:** None that I can think of.

**Q: If no formal format exists how do you or (or will you) offer peer to peer mentoring? Schedule phone appointments? find a coffee shop or office with other people around? How do you keep it professional?**

**A:** I will offer it but in theory my peers are in the same position as me. Phone calls, emails, maybe coffee shops. How would it not be professional?

**Q: The literature and practice on debiasing the workplace is shaped by insights from behavioral economics: focus on de-biasing systems and workplaces (e.g., how we evaluate performance, hire, promote, structure tests, form groups, committees etc.) What are your ideas on the world of work/ law firm? Would you help set up or engage in the following? Would you challenge give assumptions about gender, race and sexual identity? ask these questions? How would you help the company start a program to attract a diverse talent pool?**

**A:** I think you have to expand the law schools you look at. You can't just go to the top 14 because that is a certain demographic to begin with. And then you still need to make more of a conscious effort and be completely honest because even if they work on diversity it is just a tiny sliver. Publish the numbers of your diversity.

**Q: What are your ideas on hiring practices that are clear and transparent? blind résumé evaluation. evaluate résumés without names attached in order to reduce potential gender bias.**

**A:** I am for them. I think you have to go further. You can still show your gender and ethnicity by the groups you are in. There are ways to get around it.

**Q: How would you structure the design and layout of the workplace to advance diversity?**

**A:** I don't know how much it does help but I would promote having artwork or artists from unrepresented groups instead of stuffy portraits of partners from the 1800s and I would have open concept offices although I am not sure if that would help diversity.

**Q: How would you create a policy on equal wages for equal work?**

**A:** First, in the law firm context, having multiple people to evaluate employee and I am not opposed to have salaries published. In the most cases salaries are lock step but at partner level maybe that should be more of a routine thing.

**Q: How would you boost gender diversity within their own operations improving retention, and lowering the considerable cost of staff turnover?**

**A:** Recruiting other people. In terms of the law school I don't know. I make efforts to recruit in every group I am in. It is down to if actual students want to join though.

**Q: What rules and criteria will you create for promotions?**

**A:** The quality of work done, evaluated by multiple people, focusing on the merits of their work. And make sure everyone gets a variety of work so one person doesn't get certain cases and everyone gets guidance they need and substantial cases. I would offer more training if people needed it and proper feedback.

**Q: How will you eliminate gender bias eliminated in performance reviews?**

**A:** You have to have multiple people in the room. And then make more of an effort to look at the work and to take what one person says. Make sure the critiques are detailed so there is more thought put into it.

**Q: What are the sexual harassment policies and interactive training you will put into place in the workplace? How will you deal with arbitration clauses in sexual harassment policies? New York and California have done away with this).**

**A:** I don't know.

**Q: How will you ensure no penalty for flexibility?**

**A:** I don't know because of COVID. I am curious if there is still penalty or stigma.

**Q: What do you think of options for telecommuting?**

**A:** I think they are fantastic.

**Q: What clear and transparent rules will you put in place for appointment to committees, leadership opportunities?**

**A:** I guess you could have certain spots reserved for underrepresented groups.

**Q: What are the networking and mentorship/sponsorship?**

**A:** I don't know.

**Q: What is the corporate culture that elevates both male and female employees through appropriate symbols and non-stereotypical leadership roles?**

**A:** Promoting people based upon merit and the work that they do.

**Q: Will you put in place a program on male allies and sponsors?**

A: Yes.

**Q: What about a program to counter stereotypes?**

A: Yes.

**Q: How will you structure a company's core mission on diversity?**

A: I would start by assembling the groups within my company and get their feedback for what they would like it to focus on since you can't just make a missions statement without soliciting their feedback.

**Q: How will you structure the diversity committee and its reporting structure?**

A: Make sure that the committee is actually diverse and represented from those communities is the key thing.

**Q: What are the programs and plans for structured career planning, mentorship, role models and networking that you would recommend?**

A: Focus on finding appropriate mentors for people and then make sure they are willing and able to serve as mentors and are committed to the goals and is broad enough to have a male ally, female in leadership, and so on.

**Q: What work life balance policies through flexible work policies, support systems are available?**

A: I don't know.

**Q: Does the CEO and company take on the role of advocate of female employment within the wider community through raising awareness, launching initiatives and, in general, acting as ambassadors of gender empowerment?**

A: Yes.

**Q: Does the company create partnerships with external partners and the broader community on gender empowerment?**

A: Ideally it would.

**Q: Is the diversity strategy focused on a relatively well defined groups such as first generation college graduates, female owners of small businesses, or mothers returning to work?**

A: It should be.

**Q: What are the partnerships with women-led businesses? Are there ventures to ensure they have access to capital?**

**A:** Ideally they are.

**Q: Is women's empowerment part of the empowerment of women and part of corporate social responsibility efforts?**

**A:** Yes.

**Q: What gender equality programs or conferences is the firm engaged in?**

**A:** All of them.

**Q: How would you collaborate with organizations across industries on research and data backed initiatives that could help generate new ideas and strategies?**

**A:** You could have working groups with industry leaders, have conferences, and working groups can be made up of under-represented areas. Keep them small so you can actually get something done.

**Q: How would the firm/company promote work outside of their organizations to advance gender justice and diversity?**

**A:** Being part of groups and encouraging your employees to be active members by letting it fulfill hours required.

**Q: How would you create processes and incentives to serve women as a mentor in the community particularly those seeking to engage in industries that have historically been difficult for women to penetrate?**

**A:** Having a culture where you encourage involvement in the broader community, and have budget or stipend to take people to coffee or to have lunch.

**Q: How would you create provisions for annual bonuses as a way to incentivize focus on and improve diversity?**

**A:** It would relate to leaders within the organization and having a metric they need to meet to get a further bonus but the flaw is we don't want them to do it just for the sake of doing it.

**Q: How will you create external pressures from clients to improve together? "When companies like Microsoft make it clear that they factor diversity and inclusion in their hiring efforts, and will reward performance, it changes the way firms approach the work and the issue. it reinforces and accelerates our own work and makes it clear that there's a business case for diversity and inclusion."**



A: I don't know.

**Q: How will you develop Certification programs like the Mansfield Principle which calls for 30 percent women in leadership?**

A: It's about insuring transparency to show you are complying and it starts there.

**Q: How will you encourage Male Champions of Change?**

A: I mentioned leadership in organizations but also added compensation, public recognition.

**Q: What kind of global and local outreach program would you design? Examples might be supporting global symposia, leadership excellence for women awards and symposiums?**

A: Yes I would do all of those things.

**Q: How is the MeToo movement shaping norms of masculinity?**

A: I don't know if there have been changes.

**Q: Men mentoring women can make a large impact. Do you fear a backlash?**

A: No I don't. As long as you are professional and not creepy there shouldn't be a backlash if you are mindful of the other person and don't do things that make anyone uncomfortable.

**Q: As an ally, how can you transform the social value attached to child-care including the role of both parents in caregiving equally?**

A: I think it goes to encouraging maternity and maternity leave and making that more standard. Taking it to the maximum level and place emphasis on spending time with the family for both the father and the mother.

**Q: How do you understand that there are times when certain gender specific policies conserve a legitimate purpose, however that these must be determined on a case-by-case basis?**

A: I just do. I think that is common sense for our generation.

**Q: As an ally, how can you play an integral role in constructing these equalizing policies and constructing care as a policy issue?**

A: Being vocal and also actions that show how important it is. Leading by example.

**Q: As an ally who will be in a decision-making role, how will you help prevent retaliation and unequal treatment upon parental leave?**

**A:** It involves communication with the person taking the leave and having a set process for bringing them back in and making sure they are caught up and training for how to deal with that, and being flexible. It is incredibly important to integrate them back in.

**Q: How will you advocate for Fair Workplace Policies?**

**A:** I would bring those up to my colleagues and discuss them and make sure there is input from those groups and make sure the groups actually want that for their organization.

**Q: How will you send out the message that work family policies are important to men and women aren't the only ones caring for family members? Advocating for flexible hours, working from home, on-site child-care helps men and women. Observing how and when colleagues are evaluated and promoted can also be an important area where policies can be adjusted.**

**A:** By example. By encouraging members of leadership to do the same. I don't know how useful it is to just tell people, so lead by example.

**Q: How will you address challenges that care givers (both male and female) face upon returning to the office?**

**A:** I would make sure there's a process in place, and that they can be brought back in, and that there's no penalty for differences in performance.

**Q: What are your thoughts on onramping (flexible hours at full pay) and guardrails (predictable hours) to help those returning?**

**A:** I think it is great and that goes to the whole predictability in the schedule of newborns.

**Q: What are your thoughts on Onramp Fellowships?**

**A:** I am not sure.

**Q: How do you feel about Flexhours or Agile Working Options, ranging from flexible hours to work from home to remote working?**

**A:** I think it is great.

**Q: What are your perceptions on nonlinear leadership tracks that take into consideration women with families?**

**A:** I would be fine with them. People should not be penalized if they are coming back to work or working from home. I think as long as the quality of work is good it should not be a problem.

**Q: What are your views on work-family policies, such as parent leave, flex time, and part-time work?**

**A:** I question the age range of the people in that survey. I do not look down on them at all.

**Q:** On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not likely at all, 5-very likely), how likely would it be for you to request & participate in work-family policies (i.e. Parental Leave or Flexible Work Arrangement) if your family situation made that need applicable?

**A:** 5

**Q:** On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not likely at all, 5-very likely), how likely do you think your male peers would request & participate in one of the company's work-family policies (i.e. Parental Leave or Flexible Work Arrangement) if their family situation made that need applicable?

**A:** 5

**Q:** On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not influenced, 5-very likely to influence), how much of your decision to participate in the work-family policies influenced by your perception of what is accepted and expected by leadership/management and your male peers?

**A:** 1

**Q:** On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not comfortable, 5-very comfortable) how comfortable do you feel in your ability to fully be yourself at work?

**A:** 3

**Q:** The "man box" refers to a set of beliefs, communicated by parents, families, the media, peers, and other members of society, that place pressure on men to act a certain way. These pressures tell men to be self-sufficient, to act tough, to be physically attractive in a certain way, to stick to rigid gender roles, to be heterosexual, to not cry or show emotion, and to use aggression to resolve conflicts. How much do these descriptions relate to something that you have experienced?

**A:** 5

**Q:** What role does cultural differences (regional, ethnic, religious, class) if any, play in your attitudes to masculinity and allyship?

**A:** I don't think it plays that big of a role in it.

**Q:** When you see men and women paired together on television, in movies, or other media platforms, what tends to be their relationship?

**A:** Most cases the guy takes the lead or is the one in charge and the woman is usually a sidekick.

**Q:** How often do you see women in leadership roles on television? Women of color?

**A:** Now a decent amount. But rarely women of color.

**Q: Does the way you see women in positions of power influence your view of women leaders?**

**A:** Yes because they seem far more competent than their male counterparts.

**Q: Has the way that you have seen women in positions in power in television influence your decisions influenced your actions or decisions to be an ally for women in your professional life?**

**A:** No because I realize it is scripted so I do not allow fictional shows to impact my everyday life.

**Q: Do you fear allyship or resulting backlash based on how the media portrayal of women?**

**A:** No.

## **Interview #71**

**Q: So, to begin, I have some specific background questions that we'll be using as data points for our report.**

**A: Sure**

**Q: I need your ethnicity, relationship status, and if you have any children**

**A: I'm uhh, like I'm biracial, I usually just say white but I'm Filipino and white. I am single, and no children**

**Q: Have you taken any concrete steps to serve as an ally to women and/or any other marginalized groups?**

**A: I don't think so. Not concrete steps. Like, I would never say that I've volunteered, I'm not on a board of any organizations..**

**Q: Oh, that was actually the next question; if you were on the board of any student groups**

**A: For umm, women, well for marginalized groups, I am in APALSA. I don't know if that counts for the question**

**Q: Nono, that's fine. So, are you on the board of any student groups?**

**A: I am on the board of Penn Law's Mock Trial.**

**Q: Ok. So, starting with our questionnaire, and these can be thinkers so if you need a couple of minutes to collect your thoughts, that's fine. My goal here is just to have you talk a lot about what you think about these issues, and this class is great because we're looking for a lot of male input, which at least for me, makes me feel more comfortable**

**A: Yea I've heard great things about this class**

**Q: Oh yea, professor is such a sincere person who wants to make the world a better place. Every time we come in, she just has all these impressive people come and talk to us who are all her friends, and it's really enjoyable.**

**A: That's awesome**

**Q: Ok, so lets get into the questions. How would you define allyship, or being an ally?**

**A: That's tough, I think at the end of the day it comes down to support. Being there for this groups of people who've been overlooked by society. And like, being there can mean a lot of things. And sometimes it can just mean listening, listening to people and helping them. It can**

also be speaking out for them when they can't speak up for themselves. Seeing something wrong and standing up for it, if others wouldn't. I think that's what being an ally means to me

**Q: Awesome, and then do you consider yourself to be an ally for women and if so, how?**

**A:** I think I do consider myself an ally for women. I think in the how department, it's tougher. I mean it's not like every day, you know, it's not a cartoon network show where every day there's this big bad villain and you have to stand up for every women everywhere. But I think it's more in the little things you do, and this could be as simple as like, again, listening or like in class giving a chance for more women and more people of color to speak and ask questions instead of trying to command the room and take space which is something that I feel like a lot of men may feel entitled to, because they're so used to always being able to ask their questions and have them answered first.

**Q: Yea, I actually really liked that part, because we talk a lot in this class about the concept of 1000 paper cuts, which is all of these little microaggressions adding up. And I really liked that you draw that distinction right there. As far as allyship in general goes, do you notice exclusion every day? And I'm not just talking specifically about women, really any marginalized group. Is that something you notice? Do you notice people who are not there? Are you proactive in that space? Is that something that's an issue for you?**

**A:** So I will say, being remote and everything I definitely do not notice as much now just because I'm not in a classroom, I'm just online. I literally don't see people, I've been in quarantine for the past 8 months it feels like. But, prior, I do notice it. I wouldn't say it's... I don't want to say it's like every class I go to that something's wrong or something's off, but I will definitely notice when something is up. When sometimes a student's question might be ignored, or brushed over, or even outside of class, in smaller interactions where it can be hard, or harder for women and people of color to speak up. Especially in groups where the ratio of men to women, or the ratio of white people to non-white people is skewed one way.

**Q: And is that something that you think happens often? I mean obviously I understand the limitations with zoom, but with law school in general?**

**A:** I think it happens often. I don't know if it happens every day, and I don't know if I see it every day, but I'm sure it happens often

**Q: So jumping to a new topic, we have a more nuanced understanding of allyship and intersectionality. And again, these are more of "what would you do" questions, so take your time. So one of the things we've talked about, is how being an ally is bringing intersectionality to the forefront, and gender is only one axis of those differences. So, thinking about how you would approach a situation, how do you or will you open the doors to more participation from women and women of color?**

**A:** It feels like a trick questions somehow.

**Q: Well just how would you**

A: Oh how would I?

**Q: Yea, a big goal of our project is thinking through how we want to go about solving certain problems, and getting varied input on these issues is. So, how would you or do you open doors for more participation for women and women of color?**

A: I think that's a tough question for me because I don't think that I have a lot of power to be opening doors. Right now I'm a 2L and I don't think I have a lot of influence. But I guess there are little things you can do. And I think if that's just, helping out or approaching a person of color and giving them a connection you have with a law firm or internship. Those small things that help open doors that get their name in, that stuff I would be completely fine doing, but again, I don't feel like I have a whole lot of power to be opening a whole lot of doors right now myself

**Q: Ok. So in class, we talked a lot about getting women a seat at the table, and I think you're touching on that a bit here. And, a lot of these are going to be questions like that, so again don't worry about taking time thinking with these. So if you did have the power to figure out how to better put women on the center stage, thinking a little outside of your box of who you are, what are some of the things you would think to do or try as an ally?**

A: I don't know if this is a good answer, but I know it's something they're doing in California where they're trying to make their structure of board to be more diverse, like a mandate of having ok, let's say, half of all board have to be women. And I think that's a step in the right direction, but I also feel at the same time that, when you have mandates, it's almost like a lose/lose. Because, people can say "oh, they're only on the board because they're women and they didn't actually earn this job". So I don't know if that's the approach that I would take, but I do think that there should be, like in the application process, I feel like the application process should be, you have to at least read this many applications from these kinds of marginalized groups. And again, not necessary, you have to take them, but just by opening them up to reading more applications, to receiving more applications, that can do a lot for reflection later on, in who actually gets the job.

**Q: It's funny, we talked a lot about exactly that in class. In how we came down on it was that the quota system, like you said, has drawbacks, but pluses. The resume issues, or at least application issues, are very interesting, because it's been shown that when people apply with their resume and you can tell their gender, or if they're a mother, it actually can make them less hireable. And that data is very interesting to think about, and I think you touched on that well**

A I have a lot of opinions on applications. I think applications should be blind. And then there's the whole thing with the interview... It's tough... I guess... It's tough

**Q: Well I'd love to hear more, let's talk it out**

A: So I really think applications should be blind. You should be given a number, you shouldn't have anything about your race or gender, and everyone should just get to be interviewed. And

obviously getting interviewed, bias can be injected, but just getting into that first step, where you're not knocked down right at the application door. And with the interview, I feel like there needs to be more documentation as to why certain candidates didn't make the cut. The interviewer has to be able to justify why they chose this candidate over that candidate and give a reason. I think that the application process, where people can't even get in the door because the person reading they're application thinks "oh, I don't want a women, or a black man, or a Hispanic person". I really feel like all applications should be blind

**Q: That's interesting, I like that point on making them explain their reasoning behind their decisions. It's really easy to hide behind "oh I didn't like them" instead of giving a real reason why. So talking about that, to shift to the workplace more, the literature in practice on debiasing the workplace is shaped by insights from behavioral economics, focusing on how we evaluate performance, hiring, all of that. So, what are your ideas for the world of work in a law firm for example? Because, obviously law can be, well law school is pretty good with having a good women to men ratio, but not as much so with minority groups. So on top of that, as far as promotions go, women in general are less often considered. So how do you want to think about, or what are some of your thoughts on the world of all of this?**

**A:** Well I think, the biggest thing, is that any change is going to come top down, right? So we'd have to be changing the boards of these companies to more reflect the general population, the real pool of people. If you have 8 white men on your board, it's going to be hard to invoke change no matter what. And so that kind of goes back to how do you get the board to be more reflective of our diverse population, and maybe that's a mandate or whatever. There's only so much you can do when the people at the top are just going to be against you at every turn. But, I do think opportunity matters also a lot. Like, if you just give more opportunities, by virtue of having more numbers of applications and more people in a law firm who are diverse, there's more of a chance for women and people of color to rise up. So, I mean, first is just from the top, and second is giving more opportunities out.

**Q: It's interesting you bring that up because we did in class talk about both top-down vs bottom-up integration, and where we landed was that we really need both. And you're completely right that top-down, having white straight men at the top makes it very difficult for people of color to succeed, and at the same time, we come to the agreement that bottom-up needs to happen to. That we need to coalesce, and this has been a big theme for our class, talking about male allies. So, and I know it's very easy for us in our positions right now to say "we don't have a lot of power, what can we do", just thinking in a different role, how would you help a company attract a more diverse talent pool? I know we spoke about blind resumes, and I think that's a great idea, but even in structuring the layout of a workplace to promote diversity, or even policies that you think are helpful.**

**A:** Is this for me as a 2L, or me if I was working at a place?

**Q: I think we can approach it for now as the latter, but I don't want to discredit the fact that right now as ourselves we do have some things that we can do.**



A: Gosh this is tough, I haven't spent a whole lot of time thinking about what we could do in our 2L position, or working as an associate at a law firm

**Q: I know that this might be catching you a little blind, but I think that's part of the exercise. To get a natural response and go through your thought process when confronting these kinds of issues.**

A: Ok well, where to begin. Maybe like, changing the culture that a lot of law firms and a lot of these spaces for me in a sort of "man's world". I'll say this a bit, so I didn't work in a law firm, but for the most part I worked at the public attorney/public defender office. And I will say in general, the overwhelming amount of men are there. Especially as lawyers, at the lower levels like paralegals you'll find a lot more women there, but for the lawyers, the overwhelming majority of them are men. And, you know, it can seem for a lot of the time that it's a man's world, that men chit chatting around the water cooler, stuff like that. And part, just because there's so few women attorneys, and I mean I guess one way to promote more women attorneys in these roles and I guess people of color too, is something changing about the culture. Where the culture isn't just straight white men talking about their days, but I mean how to change a company's culture is like a whole other question. And how that can even be done. And again, I will argue that it's more top-down than the reverse, but..

**Q: Nono, we just want to get your take on all of this, so whatever avenue you want to go, we can have this free form. It's a dialogue.**

A: Ok, so I definitely think work culture, like a lot of companies like to change their work culture and bring in outside consulting agencies and they talk to their employees and say "this is the kind of work culture we want to promote". I personally don't know how effective they are or whatever, but I think that it's a good step. Because it's going to be hard to do it internally right? You know, if you were sick you don't try to operate on yourself, you try to bring someone else in to help you. And so, I can definitely see some value in bringing some outside agencies or businesses who have experience with this who are already more diverse, who already have the expertise in this area to come in and try to fix your law firm or your attorney's office's culture to be more opening to women and people of color.

**Q: So I want to challenge you a little bit here to go even further than that. So one of the things we talk about is gender bias, and trying to eliminate gender bias in performance reviews for example. Like thinking about the promotion of women and how sometimes they can get looked over because of these inherent biases. Or even things like sexual harassment policies, or work leave policies with women who are pregnant. Which, you know, as a spouse who is a man, their entitlement to leave policies. So thinking more along those lines of things that, may to you seem obvious, but talking through them has value.**

A: I think for all of those things, none of those things are changing overnight. In the next year, in the next four years, maybe even the next decade. Those are things that take a generation to change because it's these inbuilt values that people, that society has had for years and years and I'm hopeful that the next generation is more open to this but, things about problematic ideas like "gosh women take time off because they're women all the time" or "we should pass up

promotions on women because we never know when they're going to leave because they're pregnant" like stupid stuff like that. Those things are somewhat engrained in society, and those personal gender biases will not go away overnight. They might go away if they get a lecture to from some outside corporation. I mean, once you have these biases and they're ingrained in you, they probably stay with you for your life. I mean, I'm sure there are examples of people who can overcome that, but for the vast majority once these biases you have, you're going to hold onto them. So honestly, my answer to that is you have to wait for those people to die. And I wish I had a better answer

**Q: Haha, well I don't want to be so glib about it here. So, for example, in other countries they have better work leave policies that are more equal between men and women. And, I think your example of a blind resume review and application process is another great concrete step we can take. I think the issue is, I don't know necessarily that we're trying with this interview to eliminate gender bias completely right here right now, but ways we can minimize it, so we can be on the road to eliminating it.**

**A:** I mean I guess, but that's going to be so hard because, like, for example, who do I consider for this promotion between a man and a woman who are equally qualified. And let's say the person who's giving the promotion has this natural gender biases? There's only so much you can do. And again, I think documenting why you think this person should get this or whatever, but even then they can make up bs excuses, and they may even believe them to be true. Like, "oh, jack takes more initiative than jill" or you know "jack always seems to be a team player, jill seems a little more cold and frigid" like nonsense like that. And it's going to be hard to prove at this micro level. Thinking off the top of my head, what policies could change it in that scenario, where you have two equal candidates up for this promotion. It's going to be really hard to prove biases. So yea. At the micro level it's hard, and I think it's going to have to be a real, I'm sure there are policies that can help but I really feel like that's a societal problem. Where these inherent biases that we grow up with, in the culture and society we live in, carry into the workplace. Like those have to change first before we can change the workplace. At that minute of a level.

**Q: Why don't we take it to something that maybe we can relate to better. Like a networking event or something like that. What are some avenues there that you think introduce bias, and what are some things that we can do to negate that? So for, one great example, we had a guest speaker who was a women lawyer and early in her career she once walked into a meeting and, upon noticing her enter, the staff there removed the more hard liquor and replaced it with wine, presuming that to be more suitable for her. As if she was, not going to drink alcohol like the men would or something. Or they would ask her to leave because she's not a lawyer on the team. Events like those, where we're trying to think of how we can better structure things to make that harder, to impose bias I mean.**

**A:** Yea, that's hard. I mean, I don't even know how to like... Well, the only the to me is that, and it's funny, but do nothing? Treat everyone the exact same, but the exact bare minimum. No alcohol for anyone, and just like, I- honestly I don't think that's the right answer

**Q: Well I think you're not entirely off track. Ruth Bader Ginsburg, before she was a Supreme Court Justice, when she was arguing before the court, her arguments for work-leave policies were all gender neutral. That everyone should get these things, because she felt that if we treat everyone the same, it's harder to introduce bias. So I think you're on the right track, we just need to think through it a bit more so we can find little things we can start to do.**

**A:** Ok, so for a networking event right?... Uh, I just think it's so stupid if people really think "oh if there's a group a women time to bring out the wine" like that's so dumb. But I guess the obvious answer is just to do nothing. If a group comes in, to have some set plan that says "this is what we're going to do and it's not really going to change no matter who walks through that door." And I think the little things, like, in these group settings especially, with networking events and also in class, and letting more people of color and more voices being heard is just, letting there be space. Physically and metaphorically. I always think that there should be space at these events for women to talk. Like if you're in a circle with one associate at this law firm, and there's like three 2Ls all standing there, and let's say two of the 2Ls and an associate are all men and there's just one woman, and it's just the boys talking about whatever, talking about the NBA draft or something like that, I feel like it's important in that position, that if I was in it, and I felt that that person was being left out, to include them in the conversation. Or steering the conversation towards something back where I feel like it's more of an even playing ground. Especially if they're being left out. And like these smaller events, I think it's so important to have the space for women to talk. And also this is another thing I've heard too. So I went to NYU right, and it was actually a majority women school. And one of my departments, I was in journalism which was a huge majority of women. I remember I had multiple classes where it'd be me and this other guy and we would be the only men in the entire class, and I remember we went out to lunch once with our professor, I think it was a journalism writing course, and I want to say this was around 2017/18 at the height of MeToo. And we spent a lot of time talking, there was only three men, the professor, me and this other guy. And we spent a lot of time talking about how the f does this stuff happen, what can we do to stop it? And I remember one of the things that we spoke about over and over again was this idea of space. Giving space to women to talk but also giving women physical space. And that could also be because it was New York, and everything's crowded. And men are always standing right in their face, like too close to them. And it can be sometimes standing too close, or even on a party when men will put their hand on women's back as they pass them, little things like that. Like you need to leave space for women and let them alone. Both physically and also in just giving them space to talk I feel like is so important.

**Q: Nono, I think that's all very important. And I think we touch on a lot of those issues in class so I think you're on the nose. So to quibble a little bit, I feel like it's difficult to have this conversation in the reality of the space we're in because you have a point where you say it's hard for us to sort of have power and "who are we to say x" especially in a quarantine over zoom. So let's put you in the role of someone who's running a company**

**A:** Oh gosh

**Q: Haha, whether or not that's something you have interest in. But are there some things that you would think about with promoting diversity, whether it be company structure, plans or programs that you think, or that you would like to see at any place you would want to work at? Even things like mentorships.**

**A:** So one thing for sure 100% is blind applications. I feel like that that should just be done. I actually like the idea of mentorships a lot. I like the idea, and I don't know how strong this is, but I feel like every class should have a little buddy in the next class. Like I know in the District Attorney's offices, in this class of new lawyers, new Das who come in, and you're part of your class, and I think that the class above them should definitely have mentorship roles. And I also feel like it's important to increase the amount of women and people of color in leadership roles. Being like, a lead on a case, or being a manager of a team. So I do feel like it's important to have a good variety of diversity and leadership roles, but again I don't want to do a mandate. Like I don't want to have like half of our leadership roles HAVE to be women or HAVE to be people of color, because I feel like nobody wins in that scenario. But I do feel like there has to be more people in these leadership positions. And so I think one thing that helps with that is blind applications. Also just like, increasing the number of people being interviewed. Like increasing the number of people who make it to the interview process can also help. Especially if you're not doing the blind application part. If, let's say you only interview 10 people for some position. And statistically, law school let's say 7 of them are going to be white, right? If you were going to interview 100, 70 of them are going to be white but 30 are going to be diverse candidates, so I do think the number matters. I don't think firms need to be SO selective with who gets an interview, but you know, I do think that's one thing that can help.

**Q: And what about thinking about things once we do have people in that space. Because I think you're right, one problem we can identify is getting the right kind of people an opportunity to just be in the room, to get through the door. But, to go further, what about once we get them there? Work policies, or different systems. What are some of the things that you would be looking for if you're looking for a big law job, things that you think would be helpful, or things you'd do if you were at the top?**

**A:** So this is kind of corny, but I do think it's important for firms to have a work culture that, and I'm sure lots of firms say this haha, you know? "Oh we all know each other and we're super friendly". And I think it's one thing to say and then another thing to actually do. But I think I'd want a firm culture where we actually do see each other outside of work, and we don't hate each other. And I think it would be super beneficial to see women and people of color, outside their suits and outside the courtroom. And so I feel like having, you know, as many events as possible where people can come and you know, bring their families and bring their friends and develop this culture where you see your coworkers outside of work, can really help in producing diversity. Because like, then you'll see them more as like, I guess people and not like, coworkers. You know? And you'll care less about their color, their sexual preference, or whatever. That's the guy at work when I know him, I've met his wife, I've met his boyfriend, his whatever. And you feel more connected that way.

**Q: And so as far as being a male ally, being one in the workplace, what are something that you would want to do to encourage more things like that? Like if we had to take a bottom-up approach?**

**A:** This is something that I would never do, because I'm just not that much of a social person. I would organize events, and be like "hey, we're all from the same class entering this district attorney's office, let's all go out this week and let's all do something". You know? And making sure that everyone is involved and I'm sure that you know it's hard to get any group of any kind of people to come to anything, but having it available for them for like women and people of color to interact with the rest of the group. And it's not just all the boys lets go grab drinks after work on Friday, but having everyone and being open too. Because I feel like it's super important in work places where you actually enjoy the people you're working with and you see them outside of work. And I feel like you know, these toxic work environments, you don't see everyone, you don't see all of your coworkers, you see the same three or four guys who all have the same world view as you and we all do the same thing. Like maybe we go bowling every week or whatever. We need these company wide outings where people can see each other and get to know each other. So one thing I would do is organize. And Again, I personally I hate any event, I hate hosting parties, I would never do that in my life. But it's something that I would want to see at a place that I was working. I would want someone who's, haha, someone who's better than me to organize these kinds of events where people can feel more included.

**Q: So I think you're right, that's a great idea as far as culture. But what are some way to incentivize a focus on and an improvement on diversity? If you had to be at the top of that. What are something thinks that we can think about? A great example we had was, when a company like Microsoft makes it clear that they factor diversity and inclusion into their hiring efforts, and that we have performance, it can change the way firms approach those issues. So if you had to be a leader in a field, what are some considerations you would have on these approaches?**

**A:** Again, that's so tough because, well I don't want to say the easy answer which is we have to have this amount of people on the board because again I think that that can hurt both parties. But maybe, it's like a necessary thing where it's like, ok yea people may think poorly of them because they think they only got that position because they're a minority or what ever, but at least they got that position. At least they got their foot in the door and can now make more change now that they're at the top, so maybe that is for the best, but I mean. If I was at the top, and I really wanted to push diversity, and I can make any sweeping thing, I would literally just make it so you each one of my head hunters has to interview at least like, 100 people for this position, and of all backgrounds. And please, go ahead and choose who you think is the best for the job, but you have to interview all of them and each part of the interview process has to have notes on what you like and what you didn't like, why you dismiss or why you accepted this person over this person. I think the biggest thing is in the hiring process. I do think the biggest thing is getting into the company, and then there's this second set of problems once you're there, but I think first it's getting them in there. And then afterwards you can also have... And I'm not sure this is the greatest idea but like, groups within the company led by women or almost like affinity groups at Penn Law, where you have like- we have this board of women who help with women issues within this office, within this company. And you can go to them if you have a problem, and you

want it to be more spread throughout the company. Or minorities or other things. You have these groups that you can go to and speak to the board on your behalf and things like that. And again, I'm not sure if that's the best idea, it feels like a law school affinity group. But it might be good in that, you know for a fact that these underrepresented people have a voice that can be heard. I don't think that it's the perfect end all solution. The ideal world is that everyone just listens to you no matter what group you're from. But I think for now, having internal groups within a big company who act as a voice for these minorities is super helpful.

**Q: So, on that point, I want to shift a little bit to issues of masculinity. So, do you ever feel backlash in speaking on these issues in a public space? Sort of like, being a man speaking on these sort of issues?**

A: I do yes. I also feel, a lot of the time talking about, well- I don't want to say that I feel bad about talking about women's issues, but especially if I'm talking with another women, I never want to feel like I'm lecturing another women about "oh you don't understand real women's issues" like I feel like that's a terrible place to be in. And again, I feel like I'm encroaching on their space. Like, my opinion does not matter as much as theirs on this issue and this affects them and not me. And so I will say, if I'm talking to a group or even if it's just one person about women's issues, I'm always going to have this kind of claw in the back of my head that's like "dude, it's not your place to take about these issues, it's their problem and if they have a different opinion on this issue then you should defer to them because they have more experience on this". So I do feel like there's this like, this thing in the back of my head that's like "hey watch what you say, this shouldn't be your space".

**Q: And do you think that's something that's like- well one of the things we've talked about is how the MeToo movement and it's shaping of the norms of masculinity. Do you think that's something that plays into it? Maybe not just because you're in a different group, but maybe the dynamic between genders? Or is it more of a thing that you hope that at one point where we'll be past it and you'll feel confident talking that way?**

A: I mean, I imagine most people aren't going to be like that where they're like "oh I'm nervous about speaking too much about women's issues because it's a women's space" I feel like most people don't care. Not necessarily bad people, but the people who might be on the other side, or maybe people who are not going to talk about women's issues period because they don't care about this. Or they're going to say it's a nonissue, and "why are you even talking about this" kind of thing. So I feel like, both are problems within itself, and I do think, better, like obviously in an ideal world yes you would invite all of the men to speak on women's issues and again be allies, but like, that's hard. You're never going to find this monolithic group of men who also support this one view on women. I'm sure even in women groups they differ in how they should approach a certain issue, right? So I feel like you're never going to be able to get a group to entirely agree with your one point about this one issue. And there's always going to be fear of backlash of what you say no matter what side. Like, oh I'm worried I'm encroaching on that space or, oh I don't care about these issues. There's always going to be backlash from someone no matter what you say. And I don't know, maybe the answer is be comfortable with the backlash? Get used to it? It's worth it if you feel like you're saying something important that needs to be said, even if it might be in a space that's not yours. I don't know how confident I feel

in that answer, but it is a possibility. Maybe it's like, you know, I shouldn't be saying it but no one else is right now and so I am going to say it anyway even though it's not my place to say.

**Q: No I mean, I don't think you're too far off with what I think where you are on the needle with that sort of issue. I think that that can, I mean that's why it's one of the questions we're asking. And we talk a lot about norms of masculinity in that regard. So I want to go back to work place policies real quick. As far as a fair workplace policy, could we just talk a little bit about how you would advocate for that. What that looks like to you? Or what are some things that you consider important? Whether it be more flexible hours, taking time off for both men and women in a pregnancy situation, or even things like work/life balance generally. Just your views on how you would go about developing these kinds of policies, or good ideas you have that you want to be recognized.**

**A:** So I think one thing with these work policies, to make them more fair to men and women and people of color, is to make them not have, almost have a point system? Like a tally system, and I know for Disney as an example, Disneyland – I have friends who have worked at Disneyland, they have a strict point system on how many days you can be late, or how many you can take off. And it ignores you're gender or background, you're just on points and you have this many days you can take off and this many days you can be late. And so, it may not be the most nuanced system, there's always going to be times where "ok, this person actually needed to take more days off, they came down with a terrible illness or whatever" so it's not always going to be the most nuanced. But I think to eliminate biases, it's going to need to remove as much bias as possible, to make it a strict black and white system. Where there's less chance for human biases to get involved.

**Q: So do you think there are some certain gendered policies that can serve a certain purpose? Like almost on a case by case basis? Do you think that that's something viable or do you think it's inherently with issue?**

**A:** Again, like, this isn't the nuanced answer but like, I do think it's inherently an issue. I feel like when you try putting up things like "oh this case is a little bit different than this case, which is a little bit different than this case" it allows for human biases to creep in and make things unfair. But I think that if you have black and white, like this is what happens when you have this many x or this is what happens if you've been working at 5 years and you've been doing this type of work you're guaranteed this promotion or pay raise. Like, where it's black and white, yea you might have a couple of, well I don't want to say bad cases. You might have a couple of undesirable results.

**Q: Right right, one size fits all can't be perfect all the time**

**A:** Right right, you might have some false positives or false negatives or whatever. But, at the end of the day, assuming this system was built, and there are black and white systems that are horribly prejudiced, but assuming this system was built fairly and like, I think it's better than having you know, a wizard of oz behind the curtain making decisions case by case, like "oh no, we're going to give Tim more time off for whatever or we're going to give Anna this raise because she didn't take that time off for whatever"

**Q: So it's interesting because, one of the things we talk about is what's the default. Like, when we make rules like that, is the default just a generic idea of a person? Because a big thing we see in the workplace is that because men are the ones making these rules, they assume men to be this default, and so issues like pregnancy, or taking off time for your family, are things that they didn't really consider when they made these normative rules. So, one of the things we talked about was nonlinear leadership tracks, that take into consideration women with families. Would that not fit into your model? Or is it something that you think you can fit into your model?**

**A:** I actually think I could. I think a black and white model is fine, for a non-linear thing, yea. Our black and white model has this route where, if you take time off to raise your family, you can still come back and make partner at your firm. It shouldn't be a big deal. For like, that, that's fine. Because I also feel like men should be able to take time off too when they have a kid and be a part of their baby's life for the first year. And also help out whoever, or maybe they're a single parent as well and they need to spend time with their child. So, that's completely- I don't see that as being case by case, or one sided, I think that I'd be fine with. I think it's more for like the little things where it comes down to an executive making a single decision. I want that executive to have a checklist. Like how professors will say "oh I want to make the grading as fair as possible for the final". That's why with Baker, he had a point system.

**Q His rubric right.**

**A:** Yea, and again it's not the most elegant or nuanced answer but I do feel like it's probably the best in the long run.

**Q: Nono, I don't want to discredit your opinion at all, I don't want to say that that's- well everything has it's problems and it's a very viable solution sure. So, just go get through the last questions here on workplace policies here, supportive workplace and work family policies have become increasingly more common, which is a great thing. However, research shows that men's responses by these policies are shaped less by their own personal beliefs, and by their preset perceptions of what is accepted and expected by their male peers. So what are your views on work family policies, such as parent leave, flex time, part-time work?**

**A:** All the paid leave in the world. I don't know, I don't understand why companies don't want this. Like, ok, it is bad for business. It is bad to pay someone to not do work for you, yea it sucks for your business. At least in the short term, but in the long term you have a faithful employee who comes back happier and healthier and they're more energetic to work or whatever. And I understand that it's bad for business, but I have NO problem with paid leave for men and for women. I definitely think that that should be the norm. The amount, like how many months or years, I don't know. I don't want to get into the details. And I would never judge someone else for like, taking time off for raising their kid like "what a loser, they don't care about the grind?" Like for me, I think that's an easy issue. People should spend as much time with their kids as they possible can.



**Q: Ok, so we're nearing the end here. The next here are on scales of 1 to 5, with 1 being not likely and 5 being very likely. So how likely would it be for you to request and participate in work family policies, like parental leave or flex work, if your family situation made that applicable?**

**A: How likely am I to ask for work leave? Like for a company to have that policy before I join?**

**Q: How likely you'd be to participate in it if it's offered.**

**A: Oh ok, 5**

**Q: Ok cool, and so on the same scale, how likely do you think your male peers would request and participate in one of these policies if they had the same situation?**

**A: I mean I think it should be a 5 but I image that it's probably closer to a 3**

**Q: Ok, so you think you're personally at a 5, but the average guy would be at a 3?**

**A: Yea, I think honestly I could see a lot of guys saying "no I don't need to take time off, the wife whatever we'll get a baby sitter, I got to focus on work I got to make partner". And that's the whole thing with toxic work culture and toxic masculinity, but that's a whole other thing**

**Q: Well no, that's definitely what we're trying to talk about, so explore that more.**

**A: So I could not imagine why, like, as soon as I have a kid I'm taking off work for a year and I don't care. And that's just like, unless I have the nuclear codes and we're going to war, you guys can see me in a year**

**Q: Haha ok. So on the same scale, how much was your decision to participate in these policies was influenced by your perception of what is accepted and expected by leadership/management and your male peers**

**A: 1. I do not care, I mean, I don't plan on going to a big corporate law firm or like a big business. Like making partner is cool but like, I don't- family first. Family first. And that can just be how like, I was raised. It's a very Filipino thing, family first and work comes second. But like, for me, I do not care if Bob and Tim upset with me.**

**Q: Ok, so these next questions are about masculinity, and you just touched on toxic masculinity a little bit so I'm glad we're naturally on the right track. So this one is another 1 to 5, 1 being no comfortable, 5 being very comfortable. How comfortable do you feel in you ability to fully be yourself at work?**

**A: I'd say like a 2. I feel like this has less to do with toxic masculinity and more just about "professionalism" and what a "professional is seen as a sexist or not, that's a whole other debate, but I feel like- I would never swear at work right? Like you're always thinking about your image. And I don't know if that comes from a place of toxic masculinity, but like, I will never be acting**

100% myself at work, or 100% myself in public. You always have this face you put on. And I don't want to say that I'm inauthentic when I'm at work or I'm not being true to myself, but I'm definitely not showing all of my cards. So I would say a 2 on that one. And less for toxic masculinity reasons and more for, because you have to have a certain air of professionalism and stoicism. Well- actually dang maybe that is toxic masculinity? Haha. Well ok, you have to have this air of... I don't know. Being a professional in your field, and you can't just be going around and messing around while you're at work. You have to be a lawyer, you can't just sit at your desk browsing reddit and playing videogames. Which is what I would love to do. But you have to put on this face, your going to be this professional person as soon as you walk in through the steps you know? Walking through the door to your office. I feel like you are a different person and you kind of should be.

**Q: On the line of toxic masculinity, one of the things we've talked about is the "man box" which refers to a set of beliefs communicated by parents, family, maybe peers and other members of society that place pressure on men to act a certain way. And these pressures tell me to be self-sufficient, act tough, be physically attractive in a certain way, to stick to rigid gender roles, to be heterosexual, to not cry or show emotion, and to use aggression to resolve conflicts. So how much do these descriptions relate to something that you have experienced?**

**A:** I think definitely. Especially, I'll say growing up my parents were kind of old for my age. My parents are both in their 60s now and they're very old school and very old fashioned, and I feel like I was always raised not so much solving things with aggression but definitely self-sufficiency. "You do not rely on others, you have to make things for yourself in this world, you have to provide for others and no one's going to provide for you" like that kind of stuff. I will also say, this is very prominent in media as well, although you notice it much less because you're just watching cartoons and movies. And this is one thing that I hate, and I think there's less of it now but there's still probably a good amount, but you know in romantic movies, they portray this guy who gets rejected but never gives up and always comes back? That's awful. Every romantic movie from prior to the 2010s and even after, like it's this desirable quality. So it's definitely prevalent throughout society and its engrained in a lot of families and a lot of media. So I would not say that it's unfounded. The aggression one maybe a little bit, but it depends on culture. I think a lot of different cultures may say "you don't punch first but you punch last" but I was always told to avoid fights

**Q: Well why don't we dig in to more cultural differences, regional, ethnic, religious, class, how do those play in to your attitudes towards masculinity and allyship?**

**A:** In terms of like, to tell exactly where mine come from? It's hard to look inwards, and to be specific that "oh that comes from my Filipino half" or whatever, but I imagine that it has to. It has to. This idea of what a man should be definitely comes from cultural. Or even how much it affects me, I don't know, it's hard to pin point. To say that I have this belief because it's a commonly held belief with people of my ethnicity or background.

**Q: But it plays some sort of role, you just can't pin point it.**

**A:** I think it has to. And I think it's an important point, but it has to. I feel like you're built by your parents' beliefs and our ethnicities' beliefs as well so I know it has to I just couldn't pinpoint what exactly.

**Q:** Sure sure. Well you jumped ahead of me on this last point here, but one of the things we want to talk about is media portrayal. And I think you just started to talk about that a little bit, and I wanted to go deeper with that as far as, when you see women and men paired on TV, what their relationship tends to be. Things that you dislike or do like. You just mentioned this kind of guy who continues to pester this person which you think is antithetical to how real life should work. What are some more examples that you think are important to think about or discuss?

**A:** I'm sure there's a lot of tropes, and I don't want to say it makes a show bad. Like the TV show friends, it has lots of stereotypes. I think most people say that Ross is a terrible person, but I still like friends, and I find it very enjoyable and funny, even though it can be problematic. I do feel like men are also portrayed really aggressive in a lot of media. There are not a lot of soft spoken men who are "no guys maybe we should take a step back and think about this, cool our heads off", and then if there are people who do that they usually get portrayed as the wimp or nerd of the group. I think that's pretty common. I think a lot of how romance is portrayed in media is just wrong. That guys have to make the first move, stuff like that. I feel like it's archaic.

**Q:** And what about the positions that women have in media, like leadership roles, or women of color specifically?

**A:** I think it's getting better but I also think it's terrible. The "strong woman" character, they always give them the same attributes. They have to be mean, and tough, and know how to fight, and I feel like the portrayal of these strong women it's always this very what's traditionally a masculine idea. They have to know how to fight, they have to be really strong and mean, things like that. Whereas I feel like you can have strong feminine women as well, but you just don't see that as portrayed in the media.

You could also say, with women in leadership, that there's a lack of it. And then Hollywood will make these movies that are these "girl boss movies" and I don't know if it helps or hurts but I want to go with it helps? I think it's bad to make a movie whose sole purpose is to have this woman in this position of power and that's our plan for the movie. Like a woman James Bond. I feel like the ideal, the utopic society is where we just have a woman in the head of the movie, the lead of this action film, and no one comments on it. It's just another action movie. No one's like "oh this is the all women's ghostbusters" it should just be "ghost busters 5" or whatever. I think that's the ideal world, and obviously we're not there yet. And I have a lot of thoughts on retconning and changing casts to different genders or races and I feel like it can do more harm than good.

**Q:** Why so? Because I think that's what we're trying to get at here. When we're talking about seeing women portrayed in a certain power or influence role. Maybe that changes your view on women leaders in the real world? Maybe it doesn't? Or maybe seeing women

**in positions of power on TV could change the way you treat women. I think these are topics that are worth exploring so if you have grievances definitely air them.**

**A:** Well, for what I think it can be pandering. And it's not Hollywood saying we need more women in this role because it's underrepresented. It's Hollywood saying we need more women in this role because we think it will sell more tickets. And I feel like it's really obvious when a studio does this for a movie or TV show, where the whole purpose of this movie was built on the idea that we're going to get more women in our seats, rather than advance good role models. And I feel like it can harm to story and harms the production. Like a lot of people hated the new ghostbusters movie, and I didn't see it because I never really liked the ghost busters that much, I watched some of them when I was young and didn't really care about them. But then people look back on the all women ghostbusters and say that it was so bad, and it was stupid Hollywood pandering, or erasing whatever the original did. When you change something just for the sake of changing your audience I mean, yea now more women can be inspired in some ways, but also at the same time, you just have a lot of people saying "why did they do this?" "why not make a new intellectual property where women are the center, instead of changing something old" you know?

**Q: Well what are some ways you've seen it done right? In any media?**

**A:** I think it's a little played out but there were a lot of women spy thrillers, I want to say it started with SALT with Angelina Jolie, and there was one with Charlize Theron. And I've heard really great things about them because they're not trying to do Mission Impossible and instead of Tom Cruise use like, Christina Applegate or something. We're going to make our own story and women are going to be at the head of that story. Another one I really enjoyed was Wonder Woman. I thought it was fantastic, with obviously a woman lead but also a woman director, and I thought it did a great job of where it takes this idea. Wonder Woman was the first major superhero film, which is funny because there's only really been 2: Wonder Woman and Captain Marvel. And there's been so many of these superhero movies. And I thought Wonder Woman was a great example, a great role model for women to look up to. And it's this idea where we're not just taking something, and co-opting it. It's about taking a character who happens to be a woman and do something great with it, while at the same time making them a great role model for other people.

**Q: Well that's about it for these questions. I think you had great responses for all of these, and thank you so much for taking the time for this. So are there any closing thoughts you have, at least now after having this conversation, on ideas like allyship? Or any of the concepts we touched on?**

**A:** So I don't think my ideas about allyship have necessarily changed, and I don't think I'm going to do a whole lot differently, but again, if someone were to tell me that my view on some issue was backwards and that I should approach it some other way, I'd be very willing to change it based on things like what we discussed. Moving forward, I don't imagine there's a whole lot I'd do differently, but that's just because I'm not doing a whole lot right now.

## **Interview #72**

**Q: Mr. V, I chose to interview you because you have an inspiring story and have used your position of power to encourage those around you. I am excited to hear your answers and learn more about you as a role model to your kids and your community. Your responses will allow others to learn from your perspectives and to become a better, more supportive leader to those around them.**

**First, can you tell the readers a little bit about why you chose to come to the United States from Ecuador?**

**A:** I have lived in the United States for 30 years. I got here from Ecuador in 1989. I started my travel to the United States by land. When I was in Ecuador, I was a student, and I was in college, but I did not finish my degree. I had three years in the university, but I was obligated to immigrate to the United States because of my lack of opportunity. I saw so many friends who immigrated from Ecuador to the US, and they came back wealthy and with power. I had a chance to join them and get here to build my family with my wife. Even if you had a job and worked hard in Ecuador, it is not easy to offer what the family needs, so I chose to come to the United States.

**Q: Can you talk a little bit about how women were represented in the media in Ecuador vs. how they are represented in America?**

**A:** In Ecuador, when I was there in the 1990s, women and men had very different visions in society and the media. Now, things have not changed enough. Women are treated like a second class person. Power is in the men's hands. Here in the United States, the situation is very different. Women and men are almost treated as the same. We have to keep fighting for their rights, but it is definitely different in Ecuador.

**Q: Did the way you saw women in positions of power influence in Ecuador influence how you view women leaders?**

**A:** Of course, when the history of society views women as a second class person without power, women's behavior and general perceptions are influenced. We need to change that mentality and work hard to keep the rights and what they deserve. Everyone has to have the same rights. But still, when society and history see women as a second class, it will be a long time unless the fight for rights is strong and supported. Right now, we have a long way to go.

**Q: Do you think women are adequately represented in leadership roles in America?**

**A:** No. Women are not represented in the leadership roles in society, jobs, or political power. We do not see representation in the government, any government. Even in the united states, it is minimal. In Latin America, women are still seen as a person who should stay home, watch the kids, do the dishes, and cleaning the house. This is a terrible point of view. We have to fight vigorously to provide women with equal rights. In the United States, there is a long way to go. When a woman comes from Ecuador to the United States, she can break free and see the world

from another perspective. When family and women friends come from Ecuador, they can get jobs, go to school, own money, and get a paycheck. Women can become lawyers, professionals, engineers and get a job much more easily than in Ecuador.

**Q: Do you have/did you have any strong women in your life that have served as a mentor? If so, how has that experience shaped your leadership style?**

**A:** Yes. My mother and my sister. I saw my mother when she was with the family. She passed away when she was 38 years old. She was young, and at that time, she had seven brothers, and two of the brothers passed away. She was so strong. She was a Catholicism teacher in the church. She was a tailor, a machine operator, and helped my dad on the farm. She was an excellent medical helper. My mother was my inspiration, not just for me, for many people in my neighborhood. They told me how proud I have to be to have a mother like her. I was nine years old when she passed away, but still, I remember her as my inspiration. My dad as well. They worked super hard to support my family, and I think that is a value I can set as my heritage. I learned from them. When I got to the United States with my wife, she was my inspiration here, and she is also my inspiration.

**A:** My wife, she lives to support people, to help people. I do not see what she sees. When she meets someone, she asks if they are working or if they need a job. If someone says that they need a job, she will also look for them. If someone needs extra clothing or extra food, she is all the time supporting. That's how I learn from her, and I support her. I love her and the way she sees life.

**Q: How have you been an ally to women in your life, specifically your wife? I understand that your wife co-founded a non-profit that builds power in Latinx communities for justice and develops community leadership.**

**A:** Yes, that is right. My wife, who I think every woman has the quality of seeing in ways that men cannot. When my wife sees something, I do not. She has another way of seeing reality. When we got to the United States, we met so many friends, and we were looking for a gathering place to share to be together on the weekends to hang out and to watch movies, and maybe on the weekdays to share a cup of coffee, which is why we created a non-profit that builds power in Latinx communities for justice. It was a place that we could share and support each other. My wife saw that way, and I support her. It was hard for me to understand this point of view that she has, but I think that she is right at the end of the day, and I am so glad to support her. No just in this example. She is all of the time watching to do something for society, for the good of the people. In June, when COVID started, we started a fundraiser to support people in Ecuador who do not have a job or do not have food. We raised 7,000 dollars. We continue to do actions of love for the people in need. Right now, we have another Facebook group to support the town where I was born. We have almost 800 members. We are planting, gardening, and gathering food for the people in need. That makes us happy, but there is still a lot to do. We are looking for people to get support in this way to see the world. It is a unique touch that we need in the heart, and my wife is like that.

**Q: What makes your wife a strong leader?**

**A:** She is a strong leader. People ask her for advice and support. She organizes groups to get involved in rallies and sometimes political support and always supports people in need, such as undocumented immigrants and women in need of support. It is because she has a spirit. She was the first member of the family and supported the rest of the brothers and sisters. When she was ten years old, she had to leave the house and start working. At 10, 11, and 12 years old, she was looking for jobs to support her brothers. She came from a hard family and situation. She was the support of the brothers, and she knows how it feels when nobody has food. She feels that. When somebody does not have clothing or heat, she knows what it was like to be cold and sleeping outside on the ground. All of these memories make her strong. Her history has made her the strong woman she is today.

**Q: Do you think men can learn from women's leadership styles?**

**A:** Men should learn from women's leadership because women have a special sense of reality. They have intuition and love, and compassion. We should learn from women to become a better person in society.

**Q: Does gender diversity exist in your industry? Why do you think that is?**

**A:** Yes. In my industry, there is gender diversity. I do construction, so it is known to be a job for a man. They say construction is hard work and needs strong power, but women can do the same things men can. Maybe they do it slow or fast. In my situation, I do it with my wife. She comes with me almost every day, and she plans the work wisely. She does the colors because they like how she contrasts. She proposes all kinds of models and colors that people choose from. She has a special touch to see what people will like. Although construction is hard work, women can also do the job.

**Q: Do you think anything can be done to diversify your industry?**

**A:** Yes. We have to do something to include the women in this line of work. My wife works with me all of the time, and I am happy with her. Sometimes when we work with all men in the job is boring and technical. When women come, it feels like another air. We should encourage everybody to join together in this kind of job. Women are a part of this kind of work, and I am glad.

**Q: Do you think that diversifying your industry has benefits?**

**A:** Yes! I think that diversifying my industry has benefits. Not just my industry, all industries if we involve women in the jobs because they can support. It would be very productive and more efficient. It will also be richer in the concepts because they have an open mind, and women can support, provide another point of view for construction even in how we treat each other.

### **Interview #73**

**Q: Thank you so much for your willingness to be interviewed for our class. We have been discussing the importance of male allyship this semester, and I thought you would be a great person to interview as a male student ally of women at Penn Law.**

**To start, could you speak a little about how you serve as an ally to female students and/or other marginalized groups? This can be general steps that you take in your daily life, or more particularized steps you've taken.**

A: There's of course more that I can be doing and what others can do, but a big part for me day-to-day is acknowledging my privilege and continually taking a step back, especially when engaging in complex or simple conversations, to evaluate how my position in life affects both the way my statements are perceived and their impact in group contexts.

**Q: Are you involved or on the board in any student groups at Penn Law?**

A: I am [involved with] Penn Business Law Association. We have a Co-President, who is female -- who was the one who convinced me to join -- and three of the board's leaders are female students. The 2L/3L board itself is approximately half male and half female.

**Q: Before law school, did you have any work or professional experiences in which you witnessed a woman being sidelined for her accomplishments, or treated unfairly by a superior or colleague?**

A: I have, definitely. Before [law school] I worked in a job where sometimes, when my female colleagues were trying to problem solve, clients would defer to me [male employee] instead of those female colleagues. I imagine this could be quite demoralizing, and it's unfortunate because it causes people to miss out on so much valuable expertise.

**Q: What kind of societal messages do you think most affect the way that males treat their female colleagues in professional environments?**

A: I think it's the roles that we are taught that we are meant to fit into throughout our life -- and those roles are reinforced constantly. And when people deviate from those roles, it can make others uncomfortable. Plus, these roles are reinforced in such a way that makes divergence difficult.

**Q: When you say divergence, do you mean women diverting from "traditional" roles? For example, diverting from roles that have been traditionally ascribed to women such as being mothers, caregivers, etc.?**

A: Yes, by divergence, I mean any woman or other individual who decides to pursue a life or goal that is not traditionally expected of them. When divergence from these roles happens sometimes people react in pretty terrible ways.



**Q: How did you become so enlightened on the issues faced by women?**

A: I wouldn't necessarily consider myself enlightened about these issues. I think a big part of being open to learning about new things and acknowledging one's own privileges is having the mindset of "you are probably wrong about a lot." I think it's important to constantly evaluate when you might be wrong -- and be okay with people pushing back against what you've said. My wife is also an African American female, which has certainly made me more introspective on when some of my assumptions, in regard to race or gender issues, might be wrong. In terms of what I've been doing, I think it's important for people to -- if they want to push back against patriarchal norms -- to get engaged [with these issues], and try to take steps to improve the circumstances across the broader class and political struggles across the country.

**Q: In class, we've talked about potentially ineffective diversity trainings. Do you think that diversity trainings are effective? Have you ever done a diversity training yourself in past jobs? If so, did you think it was effective or not?**

A: In a work setting, I don't think I've ever had a broad diversity training--perhaps because of the [type of] jobs I've had-- definitely not in the comprehensive manner in a way that one would hope.

**Q: What traits do you think make for effective male leaders?**

A: I would preface this by saying that leadership that should not be defined as [male] -- leadership is leadership. But of course, a male's status as a male in a leadership position should not be ignored. That's a fact of that individual's reality (and the people around him). And it no doubt can affect the dynamics of his leadership style. That is something that any male leader needs to acknowledge so that they can continually evaluate how their privileges might be reflected in their decisions or lead to blind spots. I would say a good leader generally is someone who is open, and willing to take the perspectives of their team into account, so [the team's perspectives] are factored into policies, actions and broader decision-making. Not just the stated perspectives but also the unstated needs.

Creating a safe space for [employees] to state their needs [is important]. It is not good when people take unilateral action on issues--for minority groups and other groups-- you should have discussions with the people whose decisions are affecting.

**Q: Somewhat relatedly, we've also been discussing the concept of tokenism in our class, which has come up in our readings. It struck me that some organizations will sometimes ask their employees of color to be recruiters at events, to show that the organization is "diverse" -- without even asking those employees if they want to do the recruiting in the first place. It's a glaring issue.**

A: Definitely, and I would add that this also applies to those who reach positions at the top. When we see people from different minority groups or women reach leadership positions, we can't act like race and gender barriers don't exist anymore. Just having one individual success does not equate to broader equality-- and I think that's something that often gets lost in the

discussion. So even as we see women become partners and CEOs, if the needs of the broader groups that they come from aren't met, then the meaning of them being in those [leadership] roles isn't as great as it may seem.

**Q: This has been a wonderful discussion, and I just have one more question for you. What do you think male students can do to be better allies of women at Penn Law?**

**A:** I think first, by becoming cognizant of the fact that there are gender related issues within the law school context and how our roles as men as perpetuate those issues. And next, by trying to take proactive steps (through active discussions and by deferring to women's perspectives/leadership) to solve the many problems that are involved with the patriarchal setting in education that we're placed in.

## **Interview #74**

**Q: How do you define allyship?**

A: Not centering yourself, recognizing that people have needs diff from yours that come from systemic issues, doing your part to address

**Q: Do you consider yourself to be an ally for women? How so?**

A: Yes, I learned a lot from women friends. I try to listen and be responsive. I try to support feminist causes. I do think the inherent need to label yourself as an ally is weird. People use the term like a merit badge.

**Q: How do you speak up for women or amplify their voices without inserting yourself into or dominating the dialogue?**

A: On social media, I feel like I don't need to write a long post about men taking up space, it's more effective to share something someone else wrote, better to hear the message from actual voices. Overall techniques like echoing and crediting ("like this person said") are important.

**Q: Data has shown that when women can often be ignored, or have their ideas taken. As an ally, how will you address this?**

A: As a man you don't notice these things as much as you should, I'd call this gender-blind glasses. Again, I try to employ techniques like echoing and crediting

**Q: Do you attribute an idea to a woman who offered it, and you endorse worthy ideas and ensure the appropriate person is remembered for them?**

A: Yes.

**Q: How can you be an ally for women or other members of minority groups when they are not in the room?**

A: Try and behave the same, I've never been a "they're not here so we can say this" person. I grew up in a not diverse area, so I recognize that certain things are out of my wheelhouse, and I try to educate myself.

**Q: Do you notice exclusion every day? Do you notice when groups are not represented?**

A: I do notice certain boards I'm on aren't gender diverse, they skew to more men. It can be difficult at times because I feel like as a society we're not at the point where we can specifically say we don't have enough women on the board. There's a point where I'm concerned it comes off as tokenism, but I might be getting in my head a bit too much. We've all noticed these things.

**Q: How do you or will you open the doors to more participation from women and more specifically women of color?**

A: Focus on inclusion, ask if there are reasons someone might not be comfortable in the space, amplify voices when they're there. Asking if there are reasons someone isn't applying, is there something prohibitive about the group you're in that makes people uncomfortable about even trying to join.

**Q: How have you put a women/ women on center stage? How would you do it?**

A: Honestly, first of all voting for them, in clubs or hiring decisions.

**Q: Are there times when you have or will privilege some women over others?**

A: If they're my friends yes. It depends on the context, if someone has a more important perspective it's important to privilege that voice.

**Q: If no formal format exists, how do you (or will) offer peer to peer mentoring?**

A: I try to make the lls I interact with aware of the professors who treat people unequally in class. It's hard for me to notice these things sometimes, so I consider reputation, and I tell people about professors with reputations for not being inclusive.

**Q: How would you help the company start a program to attract a diverse talent pool?**

A: Recruiting is about going to diverse sources. Penn Law Lambda has firm dinners, other affinity groups have that as well.

**Q: What are your ideas on hiring practices that are clear and transparent? Do you think blind resumé evaluation is a positive step or does it have drawbacks?**

A: Yes blind resumes are good. The issue is that you're not going to hire someone based on resume alone, you have to meet them, and I think that's where the issue comes in. Getting rid of names alone will not do the trick, the problem will always stem from subjective perspectives, and biases and subjectivity will come in during the interview process too.

**Q: How would you structure the design and layout of the workplace to advance diversity (portraits, art, architecture, iconography etc.)?**

A: Let's be honest, any workplace I have will be covered in photos of famous women. In the me too era even something like more glass everywhere, literal transparency, might help.

**Q: How would you create a policy on equal wages for equal work?**

A: Assuming I'm in the position to really implement policies, scale is pretty much paid at firms. It gets hairy when we get to the subjective stuff. I don't know how bonuses are paid, or how pay

scale works for firm employees who aren't lawyers, but I think standard scale, culture of transparency, and talking about your paycheck are all important.

**Q: What policies might promote retention of diverse candidates?**

A: People leave jobs because they're unhappy. Quality of life is important for retention. Honestly things like childcare policy, maternity and paid family leave are important. A hectic workplace will affect women, especially women juggling childcare on top of work.

**Q: How will you eliminate gender bias eliminated in performance reviews?**

A: More women should be conducting the reviews. You also have to ask people how gender codes their views. There should be mechanisms for making people confront why they view people as they do.

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not likely at all, 5-very likely), how likely do you think your male peers would request & participate in one of the company's work-family policies (i.e. Parental Leave or Flexible Work Arrangement) if their family situation made that need applicable?**

A: 2

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not influenced, 5-very likely to influence), how much of your decision to participate in the work-family policies influenced by your perception of what is accepted and expected by leadership/management and your male peers?**

A: 4

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not comfortable, 5-very comfortable) how comfortable do you feel in your ability to fully be yourself at work?**

A: 3

**Q: When you see men and women paired together on television, in movies, or other media platforms, what tends to be their relationship?**

A: I think about the 30 Rock of it all, except not funny. Men tend to be the boss, women the subordinate.

**Q: How often do you see women in leadership roles on television? Women of color?**

A: I can think of some examples from How to Get Away With Murder and Suits.

**Q: Does the way you see women in positions of power influence your view of women leaders?**

A: I grew up in an environment where I was used to strong women so I think that had a positive impact on how I see women leaders.

**Q: Has the way you have seen women in positions of power on television influenced your actions or decisions to be an ally for women in your professional life?**

A: No, because I know women in real life so don't base my perceptions on TV.

**Q: Do you fear ally-ship or resulting backlash based on how the media portrayal of women?**

A: I don't feel being an ally has caused me any harm or backlash so I don't really fear it will.

**Q: What rules and criteria will you create for promotions?**

A: More of an objective system with clear guidelines and point totals. Obviously, that has test design risks but that is better than a wholly insular and subjective system.

**Q: What is the corporate culture that elevates both male and female employees through appropriate symbols and non-stereotypical leadership roles?**

A: I'm not sure what this question is asking. I guess, encouraging diverse leadership styles regardless of gender.

**Q: How would you structure a company's core mission on diversity?**

A: Reducing institutional and individual barriers to entry and considering the way a company interacts with the outside world.

**Q: How would you create processes and incentives for those in the firm/ company to serve as a mentor for women in the community, particularly those seeking to engage in industries that have historically been difficult for women to penetrate?**

A: In those cases, I think the first step is making people aware that the opportunities exist, especially in industries where historical lack of inclusion have made women see application as a futile gesture.

**Q: As an ally who will be in a decision making role, how will you help prevent retaliation and unequal treatment upon parental leave?**

A: Continuing to hold space for people who aren't in the room.

**Q: How will you develop caregiving policies for both sexes and offer suggestions on how to design leave so that the outcomes are more egalitarian?**

A: Equal parental/family leave.

**Q: How will you address challenges that care givers (both female and male) face upon returning to the office?**

**A:** Giving people time and space to reacclimate and creating expectations that co-workers will assist in this process.

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not likely at all, 5-very likely), how likely would it be for you to request & participate in work-family policies (i.e. Parental Leave or Flexible Work Arrangement) if your family situation made that need applicable?**

**A:** 5

**Q: The “man box” refers to a set of beliefs, communicated by parents, families, the media, peers, and other members of society, that place pressure on men to act a certain way. These pressures tell men to be self-sufficient, to act tough, to be physically attractive in a certain way, to stick to rigid gender roles, to be heterosexual, to not cry or show emotion, and to use aggression to resolve conflicts. How much do these descriptions relate to something that you have experienced?**

**A:** HAHA I’m gay. So definitely, very much so, yes. Honestly, I find it difficult to be myself around straight men because I can always tell that they have to put in work to accept my less masculine tendencies. I appreciate that they do put in the work and I love my friends, but it still is something I’m aware of. For straight men I don’t know, I have to watch very carefully to see how they are perceiving me with regards to the “man box”. I also think that this box can sometimes code the way women act around me, often through a series of predetermined words and gestures that tell me that I’m viewed as more of an archetype of a Gay Best Friend than a person. For example, the phrase “YAAAS” makes my ears bleed. I don’t really get any of this from non-binary people, likely because they tend to have a more deconstructed understanding of gender than I.

## **Interview #75**

### **Q: How do you define allyship? What does being an ally mean to you?**

**A:** It's an interesting question because I feel like allyship is kind of a concept that I haven't thought a lot about because I think I've been kind of skeptical of its usefulness. To me, allyship is something that developed within activist circles just to name people who are involved in community work or activist work that aren't part of the community, but who are basically willing to join the struggle and be basically a good ally in a particular fight and think critically about some of the identity-based kind of contradictions that come from being in that position. The reason that I feel like I'm skeptical of it sometimes is that I think it's really been adopted more widely by corporations to basically name a certain way of being sort of progressive in the workplace and it's kind of divorced it from the content of the work that's being done. In the wake of George Floyd, all these big law firms came out with statements of allyship with the Black community and I mean I just think there's a question about if a whole bunch of your work is slapping down race discrimination employment suits or something, and you're saying, we want to be good allies, there are limits to how much that concept can be pushed there. I guess the recent fad around allyship has made me reluctant to think of myself in those terms explicitly, even if it is a useful concept sometimes and it certainly began with really good intentions.

A robust idea of allyship I think needs to go beyond, you know, the way allyship often gets used and talked about is microaggressions in the workplace, which I think is really important and it can be a useful way to talk about those things. But I think just reducing it to that and not looking at the broader content of how you're engaging in the world and your ethical practice in the world strips it of a bunch of its meaning, which really comes from, like I said, originates from terms within activist circles to talk about ways to engage in community work and liberatory work across class and race and social divides. And I think that gets lost in this sort of corporate version of it.

### **Q: Do you consider yourself to be an ally for women? How so?**

**A:** Yes, I think broadly. It's funny I think a lot of my thinking about this comes from being involved in groups who are doing a lot of community-based work or more kind of horizontal or non-hierarchical groups, and out of a real learning process of participating in those kinds of groups and learning how to recognize your own biases and your social impact on other people.

For me, there's a really formative experience for me in this space or in regards to allyship. Working on the board of a [college] coop group, we had recently had some new members join the board and we were all sitting around for a meeting and we kind of got the business of what we were doing that day. We were all sitting around talking. One of the women who was there put up her hand and she said, "I just want to flag for everybody that the entire time not a single woman spoke. It was just the men talking to each other." It was about a fifty-fifty split on the board. And you know, I just hadn't noticed and I think in the moment like that your immediate reaction is to be kind of defensive and say, "No, it's not what you're implying. I'm not sexist." But thankfully I was able to kind of nip that in the bud and actually reflect on it. For me, I was really thankful for that experience and for that board member for speaking up because since then,



I've tried to be much more aware of those dynamics in board meetings. It's something that's constantly present. That's just an experience that stood out in my memory because at the time it was eye-opening for me. But it's a constant struggle to challenge your own biases. So, I'm kind of rambling, but I think naming yourself as an ally is just a way of saying that you're willing to think engage in that process of critical self-reflection and being open to criticism from others. And I think I try to do that.

**Q: Why is allyship important during a time of a public health crisis?**

**A:** I think the thing about the COVID crisis is that it has really exposed a lot of the underlying tensions and inequities in society, which were certainly there, but has been exacerbated and I think come to the attention of a lot of people. And especially I think the coincidence of that with George Floyd and sort of the consciousness around race, however significant you think that might be in a historical sense, I think has really opened a lot of people's eyes to some of those racial and social [issues]. It's funny actually, thinking about it, there have been stuff I've read about the gender impacts of COVID-19, but it's certainly been less of a focus in the media, at least that I've consumed. So I think to the extent that you think that you define allyship as being willing to engage in a kind of deep reflection and self-criticism of your own positionality in the world and your own identity and the ways you contribute to these systems, I think it's crucial. But I think also this time has really unleashed a beast in terms of the thin version of allyship and companies just jumping on board and trying to position themselves as allies in order to avoid PR scandals or attention to the work they actually do in the world. So it's kind of a double-edged sword. There has been a real positive movement and I think a lot of people have become newly aware of some of these social issues, but I think there's been a lot of cynical uses of allyship as well.

**Q: Why is allyship at the forefront of addressing systemic and structural bias?**

**A:** Again, it's a question about definitions I guess. To me, if you want to take allyship seriously, that's precisely what it is. It's a process of interrogating your own racial and social and gender biases, and again of really listening to criticism from other communities. So to me, they kind of one and the same I guess.

**Q: Have you taken concrete steps to serve as an ally to women and other marginalized groups? What do those steps tend to look like?**

**A:** I think part of why I am where I am in law school and pursuing a public interest path is because I want to be an ally in the fight for social justice and racial justice. I've ended up doing quite a bit of environmental law work in my time here at Penn, but at the same time I've tried to find ways to be involved in the community here in Philadelphia as well. The main way that I've gone about that is basically trying to get involved through various kinds of housing work. I've worked with different students here at the law school trying to build connections between community groups in Philly like the tenants union, who is doing more organizing, less legal work, but more organizing work around housing and racial justice as well and trying to build connections with the law school and with law students in Philly.

That work has been really interesting and also educational for me in terms of thinking about what that kind of allyship looks like, especially as a law student and as a prospective lawyer, because I think public interest lawyers have a real tendency to make everything into a legal problem. To think that the most important way of thinking about things is a legal way of thinking about things, you're conditioned into thinking that way when you come into law school. But when you go into communities, especially when you're working with organizers, that can actually be a really demobilizing way of thinking about things. To take the tenants union as an example, a lot of the things that they're doing like rent strikes or organizing tenants are not things that are really legal in nature or protected by law. They actually entail quite a bit of legal risk and if you take kind of a legal perspective on those things and approach it with legal thinking, I think it can be really demobilizing and suck the wind out of the sails with what these groups are trying to do. In terms of doing that work, I think myself and other law students involved have tried to be really conscious about how we're engaging and how we're taking up space and really to just be as supportive as possible towards those organizing efforts. But it's tough. Lawyers are kind of an egotistical and narcissistic bunch, so I think part of it is law school and part of it is you just have to find your own personality and really just be comfortable taking a back seat and listening to what other people need.

**Q: Are you on the board for any student groups? Have you taken any concrete action to promote inclusivity and equality within those groups?**

**A:** I've been involved in a few different groups. I'm involved in the Penn Housing Rights Project, so some of the housing work I've done is through that. I'm also involved in the *Journal of Law and Social Change* on the board there. For that, I was involved on the board in the recruiting efforts for the journal. We tried from the get-go to try to reach out and to improve diversity within JLASC because it's a pretty white bunch overall. But we're unfortunately up against the wall in that the public interest community at Penn Law is pretty white in terms of the scholars that The Public Interest Center brings in and everything. JLASC is a public interest journal. We're kind of fighting against this broader tendency within the lack of diversity within the public interest community. That has I think a combination of causes, but certainly there's no doubt that doing public interest work, [which] doesn't pay as well, is a privilege and that a lot of people who can afford to do that are less likely to come from disadvantaged communities. So I think it's tough. But we've certainly tried to be conscious of it and tried to take proactive steps as much as we can.

**Q: What kind of recruitment efforts did you guys do?**

**A:** I would say the immediate recruitment efforts, well, one it was a bit of a tough year because of COVID. We're all remote, so we couldn't do a lot of things that we normally would. We didn't have the regular means of reaching students. So we were basically stuck a) participating in school-sponsored panels and things like that and b) just reaching out to different listservs. So obviously we tried to circulate our call on the different affinity group listservs and everything. Also just, practically with journals, a lot of membership just comes from word of mouth and people just saying, "Hey, come join this journal. Come hang out with me." So we tried word of mouth as well. But to fairly mixed success.

**Q: Have you started or participated in any mentorship initiatives through student groups?**

**A:** I actually have not been very good about doing mentorship on either ends actually. I would say I have a few people appointed as my mentor going into Penn Law and they kind of just ignored me, which is fine. I found other people to mentor me in other ways. But in terms of my formal mentors, for whatever reason, we just didn't click. I think one of them wasn't even physically at the school; they were doing some joint degree somewhere else in another city, so they were a little less present. But in terms of the school-sponsored mentorship, no, unfortunately I think I haven't. I think I have given myself kind of a pass this year because of my role in JLASC running the JLASC seminar. It's not a mentorship role, but I feel like it's an opportunity to engage with students who are not in the same year as me and build those connections. I kind of felt like on top of that, being a mentor would have been a lot.

**Q: Do you notice exclusion every day? Do you notice who is not there? Are you proactive?**

**A:** It's a funny question now because we're so isolated. I don't really see anybody every day. So do I notice it in [the past two and a half years of law school]? Absolutely. I think there's no question that Penn Law is not especially racially not representative of the city that it's situated in. I think that's kind of glaringly obvious. That sort of divide is also glaringly obvious in terms of the divide between Penn campus and the rest of West Philly, especially the farther you go west in Philadelphia, I mean it's incredibly racially segregated. So it's block to block, you can see the difference. So it's clear the university has a really kind of central role in that process of residential segregation. I think being a Penn student in Philadelphia, especially in trying to engage with community groups, is not the most comfortable position to be in, because people are well aware. Community groups here in Philadelphia don't have a good view of the University of Pennsylvania. It's kind of glaringly obvious when you talk to people. That is certainly ever present in my mind.

**Q: Data has shown that when women do speak out, they can be ignored, or have their ideas taken. As an ally, how will you address this?**

**A:** I think one of the most important kind of practices in terms of allyship is being aware of how much space you take up in a group. I think just the way you act, the way you have ingrained patterns of behavior, they're really hard to notice. It often takes somebody kind of calling you out to really get you start paying attention to those kinds of things. I mean that's how it was for me. People called me out about it and thankfully I feel like I didn't take it personally. I mean I took it personally in that I tried to internalize it, but I didn't just reject it and I think that's really crucial. Kind of circling back, I think on the one hand, it's important of being conscious of the space you're taking out, especially in group settings, especially how much you're speaking and your dynamics of interaction with other people in the group. And then also you just need to be willing to really take criticism to heart and to incorporate it into your daily practices, which is challenging. It's hard to stay attentive to that stuff and I think everybody is going to do an imperfect job of it, but I think it's important to try at least.

**Q: What are your ideas on hiring practices that are clear and transparent? (e.g., blind résumé evaluation of résumés without names attached in order to reduce potential gender bias)**

**A:** I think certainly blind review is a great mechanism. It's something that going back to JLASC, I'm proud that we're one of the only journals that have at least a stage of our process where the articles are reviewed blindly. I think race or gender are irrelevant to the merits of an article, unless it's a really experiential piece or something. It's really hard to kind of cut out those ingrained biases especially across a group of people you can't control. But I think I haven't thought a lot about from the perspective of an employer in terms of hiring practices. I guess one thing that I would maybe say is that more important than maybe the specific hiring practices are the way that those processes get determined. In a unionized workplace, you're not just relying on kind of the goodwill of management to create a "fair process." Workers actually have some power to shape those hiring practices. I think when you look at those sort of advances in employment rights, they're largely the results of organized labor and organized activity on behalf of workers, women workers, in terms of getting those institutionalized in a broad way in the workplace. So I think if you want to be an ally-employer and have good hiring practices, don't be like a union-buster. Be pro-labor. I don't think there's many employers that do that, but if you want to be serious about allyship, that's one step you could take.

**Q: How is the MeToo movement shaping norms of masculinity?**

**A:** That's a good question. I have to think about that in my experience or just in general. Frankly, it's hard for me to speak generally about that because there has been such a polarized response. There's certainly at a broad societal level, there seems to be at least lip service to the ideals that the MeToo movement espouses and greater attention to the toxic forms that masculinity takes in different workplaces. But there's also really strong counter-movements, which I'm not exposed to very much because of this sort of bubble I live in, but I think a lot of people really react to the MeToo movement as sort of PC culture gone amok. It's hard for me from my vantage point to say how significant that is. But I think overall, it's certainly had a positive effect in terms of surface-level visibility of issues, issues of sexual violence and gender oppression. I think there's no doubt that visibility is good and is the first step to taking action. So I think at least in that way it's had a significant impact.

**Q: Men mentoring women can make a large impact. Do you fear a backlash?**

**A:** I guess in certain circumstances some men might feel that way, but if they feel that way, I think they're probably not really going to be great mentors anyways. They're probably kind of still grappling with the core problems that MeToo is trying to address. So I think if MeToo is successful, that shouldn't be a problem at all, because there's no reason that men can't mentor women without exploiting them in some way.

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not likely at all, 5-very likely), how likely would it be for you to request & participate in work-family policies (i.e. Parental Leave or Flexible Work Arrangement) if your family situation made that need applicable?**

A: Absolutely 5, any day.

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not likely at all, 5-very likely), how likely do you think your male peers would request & participate in one of the company's work-family policies (i.e. Parental Leave or Flexible Work Arrangement) if their family situation made that need applicable?**

A: I guess I'll say 4. I guess it depends on what you define as my male peers. I guess if I'm thinking the entire pool at Penn Law, it's more of like a 3 or a 2. I'll say a 3 just to average it out between my immediate peers and my broader peers.

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not influenced, 5-very likely to influence), how much of your decision to participate in the work-family policies influenced by your perception of what is accepted and expected by leadership/management and your male peers?**

A: It's hard to answer because certainly my supervisor could influence, but I never once thought about what my male peers would think of me taking parental leave. I guess I would say 2 maybe. In certain circumstances, everyone has to pay attention to what management expects of them to some extent, but I think that question is driving more towards social pressure rather than employer coercion or something. So not too likely.

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not comfortable, 5-very comfortable) how comfortable do you feel in your ability to fully be yourself at work?**

A: I'll land on a solid 3 for that one. Average. I really can't complain about it being a white dude, but you know nobody is really fully themselves at work, unless you're really likely, you're doing a great job.

**Q: The "man box" refers to a set of beliefs, communicated by parents, families, the media, peers, and other members of society, that place pressure on men to act a certain way. These pressures tell men to be self-sufficient, to act tough, to be physically attractive in a certain way, to stick to rigid gender roles, to be heterosexual, to not cry or show emotion, and to use aggression to resolve conflicts. How much do these descriptions relate to something that you have experienced?**

A: I think I was very lucky to grow up in a family where I think rigid gender roles weren't really enforced, not that I ever really transgressed them that much. But I didn't really feel censured or experience censure from my family for transgressing any gender boundaries. For that, I feel like I have to say in terms of family life, I think I'm lucky in that I haven't had the same kind of pressures that a lot of people have. Certainly it's something that's reality of gender and society is that there are expectations of masculinity and they get enforced in more or less formal ways. But I'm lucky in that I've never been at the receiving end of that, but maybe that's just because I present as pretty nonthreatening to those sort of norms, being white, male, cis-gender, more or less heterosexual.

**Q: What role does cultural differences (regional, ethnic, religious, class), if any, play in your attitudes towards masculinity and allyship?**

**A:** That's an interesting question I don't know I'm really qualified to answer. I'm certain that they do. The ways I think that gender expectations manifest themselves, at the very least the mechanism and the way they get expressed across regions, across cultures. That's the whole idea of intersectionality, right? Gender can't be analyzed in a box that's separate from those different things, that they really kind of co-articulate—gender, race, class—all together kind of transform each other through the social process. I'm having a hard time articulating exactly or succinctly articulating how that looks like in my own life.

**Q: Do you think Canadian society has a different view of masculinity than American society, for example?**

**A:** That's an interesting question. Yes, possibly. I also spent most of my adult life in Toronto, and I think urban environments tend to have different expressions of masculinity than rural environments as well. I guess I think they do. I'm hesitant to spout off broad generalizations about Canadian character and American character, especially because Canada is a pretty small country. You can generalize about Canada somewhat, although you're obviously going to exclude different groups of people when you do that. But I think the United States is way bigger than Canada and just defies generalizations. But there's certainly aspects of the kind of American individualism that aren't expressed in the same way, and the way that American individualistic sort of masculinity I guess might be somewhat different than Canadian, although Canadians certainly have their own weird pathologies.

**Q: Does the way you see women in positions of power on television, in movies, or other media platforms influence your view of women leaders? If so, how?**

**A:** Sure it does. I think it has to. That's the way that media works. It shapes how people view different leaders. But specifically I think personally the rise of the Squad in Congress has inspired a lot of people to see such incredible progressive female leadership in Congress. I think people like AOC have been really so skillfully called out the gendered behavior of their colleagues and really put a spotlight on what it means to be a progressive woman of color in Congress in a way that I think has been educational for a lot of people. I think those women have done a great job broadcasting those issues to a wider [audience of] people.

## **Interview #76**

**Q: How do you define allyship? Ally?**

**A:** Allyship to me is synonymous with partnership. When you have partners internal and external who are willing to work with you on projects, issues, concerns, those are counted as allies even if they're in a colloquial sense opposed to what you intend to do.

**Q: Do you consider yourself to be an ally for women? How so?**

**A:** Yes. As a male in a position of power at my agency, I seek to ensure that my biases don't affect my hiring or promotional decisions and treatment of my staff. Right now, 2/3 of my team are women because they were the most qualified and because in their roles, they're simply the best at serving the functions of the agency.

**Q: How do you or will you open the doors to more participation from women and women of color?**

**A:** By continuing to ensure that my personal biases don't affect staff who are women and ensuring that my biases don't incline me to simply defer to men in decision making or promotions. And to make sure that with continued expansion of my staff, that women are always at the table with me making that decision. That has been commonplace up until this point in time and I plan to continue that trend.

**Q: How do you make sure women, especially women of color literally take seats at the table, rather than standing on the sidelines?**

**A:** If I'm in a position where I control who is at the table, I make sure that I have quality representation at every table. I always make sure that women are always part of the decision-making process and involving all team members by allowing everyone to weigh in.

**Q: Data has shown that when women do speak out, they can be ignored, or have their ideas taken. As an ally, how will you address this?**

**A:** When I'm in the planning and development stages for projects or strategic development and someone speaks up, my objective is to ensure that they have ownership over their idea and that the origination of the idea is properly accredited to them. In instances where someone tries to claim someone else's idea, I make sure that it's properly and appropriately attributed. This is something I call "active attribution."

**Q: How have you put a woman or women on center stage? How would you do it?**

**A:** I have promoted women to leadership roles more senior than their male counterparts as recently as within the last year. In addition, I'll continue to promote women to roles of leadership whether formally or informally to make sure that they consolidate the power that is rightfully theirs in the workplace.

**Q: Are there times when you or will privilege some women over others?**

**A:** Yes, my personal bias is that if an individual who has served longer at an agency, my bias is towards the person who has the longer tenure.

**Q: If no formal format exists, how do you offer peer to peer mentoring? How do you keep it professional?**

**A:** One on one phone calls every week between peers or between management to peers, and once per quarter pre-COVID, meals with each staff member would take place to continue to develop interpersonal relationships. It's important to have lunch at places that are publicly visible, during working hours, where no alcohol is served.

**Q: How would you help the company start a program to attract a diverse talent pool?**

**A:** I'd begin by working with existing managers and directors to gauge their interest in forming recruitment teams to attract diverse talent from all employment seeking opportunities such as career days at universities, career days at local workforce solutions agencies, and in large scale networking events and conferences available and use these as targets.

**Q: What are your ideas on hiring practices that are clear and transparent?**

**A:** It's a necessary component for adoption because people

**Q: How would you structure the design and layout of the workplace to advance diversity?**

**A:** I'd consult my team and see what their preferences are to make sure to solicit their perspectives before pursuing art or workplace layouts. If I were in a position to make substantive decisions in this area, I'd make sure that within a decision-making team comprised of members of my team, that we have representation from folks from everyone from different backgrounds. More people of color, more women, etc. and other dynamics including aspects of ableism.

**Q: How would you create a policy on equal wages for equal work?**

**A:** I am a proponent of performance management. I believe that the best HR practice to implement for ensuring equal pay for equal work is measuring the performances of staff members over time, comparing them all at the same point in time, and assigning values that appropriately correspond to the work they do. From there, letting data inform equal pay for equal work.

**Q: What rules and criteria do you have for promotions?**

**A:** Utilizing that same performance management framework mentioned previously, I would let that inform the potential for promotions and make sure to use data.



**Q: How will you eliminate gender bias in performance reviews?**

**A:** At all possible, I like to have two levels of reviews. And to make sure that reviews are conducted by folks of different backgrounds – gender or other dynamics of diversity.

**Q: What are the sexual harassment policies and interactive training you will put in place in the workplace? How would you deal with arbitration clauses in sexual harassment policies?**

**A:** In an ideal setting where I can implement my choice of sexual harassment policies, I would have strict language about interactivity between employees and specifically define what harassment is and what it includes and the consequences associated with that harassment. I would ensure that there's harassment training on bi-annual basis at minimum. I believe in this frequency because 1) you have new hires at all points in time throughout the year 2) it never hurts to have a refresher on policies so people can't feign ignorance and 3) the policies would evolve ideally over time as we come to learn more about the potential actions of sexual harassers, you have to design policies to prevent them from taking advantage of the policies in place.

**Q: How will you ensure no penalty for flexibility?**

**A:** By not imposing penalties, as simple as that. Speaking up when others are displaying biased patterns of behaviors in favor of penalizing employees will also be crucial.

**Q: What do you think of options for telecommuting?**

**A:** Strongly in favor because the standard 9-5 practice is best for building team cohesion and ensuring accountability because of proximity to employees. However, as we've seen with this pandemic, and I've noted in the data I've collected from my team, their productivity remains the same or is higher because of their ability to work in a quiet space at home to conduct their work.

**Q: What clear and transparent rules will you put in place for appointment to committees and leadership opportunities?**

**A:** To make sure that committee selection criteria and committee selectors are diverse in the first place and as committees are formed, that there are several levels of approvals from several diverse viewpoints so that you don't have stacking of committees with power and little power with less diverse vs more diverse candidates.

**Q: Does the CEO and company take on the role of advocate of female employment within the wider community through raising awareness, launching initiatives and, in general, acting as ambassadors of gender empowerment?**

**A:** Yes

**Q: How would you create processes and incentives for those in the agency to serve as a mentor for women in the community, particularly those seeking to engage in areas that have been historically difficult for women to penetrate?**

**A:** If they're historically hard to reach, it's likely the pool of mentors is small too, or largely homogenous. This is a social endeavor, so in an ideal situation, you want to garner the buy-in of those spaces that don't have the diversity we're looking for and are historically difficult for women to break into. Identify them, identify the leadership in management in those areas, and create a mentorship journey for all of them to buy into. The incentives from management side are for them to garner social credit whether it's affirmations from executive leadership such as the CEO or Agency's Commissioner, and for a journey to be laid out step by step. A bidding process and rank order process for candidates (mentees) to select the spaces they want to break into and present these candidates to these leaders in these spaces for them to select candidates. An exploration of how that space hasn't garnered diverse representation is crucial. It's hard to describe in the abstract.

**Q: How will create external pressures for clients to improve together?**

**A:** When you interact with your external stakeholders, you present to them the personnel that the work should be attributed to. If you're delivering a service or project or information, it's crucial for them to put a face to the person who created these things and to publicly applaud and celebrate them to their work. This sends a signal to external stakeholders. Even though I'm in government, we can continue to promote diversity – here are all the people who did this fine work and it could only have been done because of this diversity and our team isn't a monolith.

**Q: How is the MeToo movement shaping norms of masculinity?**

**A:** As it relates to the workplace, the MeToo movement gives power back to the people who have been abused and puts it back in their hands. And it raises a lot of awareness about how the person could be affected by it and simultaneously be sitting right next to them at work. It shapes masculinity from this point forward differently because abusers are being held accountable but the knowledge of your abuse could travel and come into the public at the speed of light.

**Q: Men mentoring women can make a large impact. Do you fear backlash?**

**A:** No

**Q: As an ally, how can you transform the social value attached to childcare including the role of both parents in caregiving equally?**

**A:** By making sure that organizational policy is to incentivize those who need flexibility to use it. In addition, to make sure that there's no penalty officially or unofficially for those who need those policies. Children need their parents and parents shouldn't be penalized for taking part in their children's' lives.

**Q: As an ally in a decision-making role, how will you help prevent retaliation and unequal treatment upon parental leave?**

**A:** Being in a position of power means that I need to ensure that I won't treat people differently. I would make sure that written policies give employees the flexibility to take advantage of all options available to them.

**Q: How will you send the message that family policies are important to men and women and women aren't the only ones caring for family members?**

**A:** By serving by example and leading by example. I strive to ensure that others in management and leadership do so as well.

**Q: How will you address challenges that caregivers both male and female face upon returning to the office?**

**A:** As a manager, providing as much flexibility for them as possible is a central part of how I make my employees feel comfortable and supported in the office. Whether that means giving people time off and being willing to work with people when unexpected things come up, or just being there to help fill in when necessary, the process of supporting my employees in this way is a regular part of my work at the agency.

**Q: What are your thoughts on flexible hours at full pay and guardrails to help those returning?**

**A:** In organizations, written work policies should reflect options for both so it empowers employees to cite the written work policies when they take them. If things are busy for parents, they always have this option to note and refer back to. It's important for leadership to message to staff that whatever their preference is for hours, it doesn't matter to me as long as hours and deadlines are met and they have the flexibility to go with either option.

**Q: What are your perceptions on non-linear leadership tracks that take into consideration women with families?**

**A:** If it works for the organization, then by all means, adopting it is a great idea. At my agency, we don't have anything quite like this but it would be an interesting option to consider.

**Q: How will you develop caregiving policies for both sexes and offer suggestions on how to design leave so that the outcomes are more egalitarian?**

**A:** Ensuring that written policy indicates that caregiving is an act conducted by any and all persons with families will be crucial. When it comes to the observation of said policies, you don't contract or loosen the policy's interpretation, you just apply it uniformly regardless of who is looking to use it.

**Q: On a scale of 1-5, how likely would it be for you to request and participate in work-family policies like parental leave or flexible work arrangement if your family situation made that need applicable?**

**A: 5**

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 how likely do you think your male peers would request and participate in the company's work family policies?**

**A: 3**

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5, how much of your decision to participate in the work family policies influenced by your perception of what is accepted and expected by leadership and management and your male peers?**

**A: 2**

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 how comfortable do you feel in your ability to be fully yourself at work?**

**A: 4**

**Q: How much do these descriptions relate to something you have experienced? What cultural descriptions play into your attitudes?**

**A:** Yes, I have experienced all of these things. As an Asian American who grew up in a very Asian American household, there were very rigid gender roles. We were taught to adhere to a certain level of masculinity and to take advantage of other people's perceptions of what it means to be male and to adopt those characteristics in my behavior. My behaviors reflect a lot of these developmental attributes and this experience is a big part of who I am.

**Q: When you see men and women paired together on TV, in movies, or other media platforms, what tends to be their relationship?**

**A:** They typically seem to be paired in a romantic fashion, even if that's an overused stereotype.

**Q: How often do you see women in leadership roles on TV? Women of color?**

**A:** Women, about 40%. Women of color, about 10% of the time.

**Q: Does the way you see women in positions of power influence your view of women leaders?**

**A:** Yes

**Q: Has the way you see women in positions of power on TV influenced your actions or decisions to be an ally for women in your professional life?**

**A:** Yes

**Q: Do you fear allyship or resulting backlash based on how the media portrays women?**

**A:** No

## **Interview #77**

### **Q: How do you define allyship? Ally?**

**A:** I think you're an ally if you recognize that there are power structures that disadvantage certain people in the world and those power structures are unjust and you want to live in the world in a way that pushes against those power structures or dismantles them. More specifically, allyship means that you see power structures and you know that that's not your fight – you're supporting the people who are actually impacted and marginalized by those structures. You recognize that those exist and stepping back and making space and using tools you have to support other people in that fight. Recognizing injustice but also recognizing people who are fighting it and supporting those people.

### **Q: Do you consider yourself to be an ally for women? How so?**

**A:** Yes, I think I'm an ally for women. I'm a little skeptical of wearing the label of "ally" as a badge and self-identifying that way. "Ally" as a status...maybe reconceptualizing it as ally-ing as a verb is more helpful. Even the best ally can be destructive and they can be not helpful and need education. Things that I do that I think are "ally-ing" include some stuff on the micro-level. How you act with friends and family, pushing against stereotypes and assumptions that aren't helpful, supporting friends being affected in negative ways. I also try to get involved with broader stuff like supporting political causes and doing pro bono, and I'm writing this note about reproductive health care and access to abortion. These are kind of things that I do that are hopefully helpful to women.

### **Q: How do you speak up for women when they are overlooked?**

**A:** Depends a ton on context. Part of it depends how quickly you need to respond – the ideal is that you aren't just inserting yourself on somebody else's behalf. You're actually understanding what they want and what they're already doing strategically in the situation and not stepping on their feet as they navigate the situation. It depends—the place where it's easiest and simplest is when I'm in a context with only cis-men and somebody makes a misogynist or transphobic comment and just voicing your position as someone who doesn't support that and recognizes that it's harmful is really important. If you're in a class though where a woman is being continuously ignored, in one of our 1L classes someone was always disregarded and ignored by a male professor and I found a space where I could talk to her separately about it and she wasn't experiencing the interaction in the same way I thought it was happening. Getting her perspective and the context was helpful because what I wanted to do was talk to the professor and call him out – that wouldn't have been helpful to her.

### **Q: How do you help amplify women's voices, not competing with them for influence or for the sake of showcasing what an admirable feminist you are?**

**A:** In our employment discrimination class, we've had a student bring up the importance of giving people credit and acknowledging the points that they've made whenever we decide to add on to a previous point and contribute to the class discussion. I think it's really important to credit

what people are already saying and what women have already said. This step alone to acknowledge that you're building on or calling attention to what somebody has already said is really powerful. Knowing that when you're in a space that's about issues of oppression or power that aren't about you, knowing that that's not primarily for you and that space isn't primarily about you. You have to resist the urge to speak up and make it about you and you want to be okay with listening and supporting from afar.

**Q: How do you bolster and draw attention to women's voices, and the voices of women of color?**

**A:** The student in employment discrimination again is a good example – making sure you credit and are actually listening when women and women of color are sharing their thoughts about something. The other thing that's kind of tricky is that women and women of color and women of a bunch of different racial and ethnic backgrounds are not monoliths – don't pretend to speak for groups that you are not a part of is a tricky but important thing. Once you recognize that you cannot speak for monolithic groups because they are not monolithic, it forces you to listen to the people around you and who is not around you and who should be in these spaces because the world has been constructed to keep these people out of these spaces.

**Q: How do you help them to gain as large of an audience as possible?**

**A:** This will change when I'm not a student anymore, if/when I am a professional and have more influence and more professional platform. One thing that I've heard a lot of people talk about is not participating in panels. If you're an ally and there's a panel with all cis men, you should say no and ask the organizers to find more diverse perspectives and pay more attention to more justice issues in their organizing. When you're engaging with things, even things that aren't explicitly about race or gender or justice, being aware of that is really important. As a student, being aware of the different ways that men are treated as instructors from women and from non-binary and non-gender conforming instructors and thinking of the biases that are baked into that feedback. Being conscious of these systems that disadvantage of certain people and working against them in those spaces is important. Being aware of how students make different demands of women as professors.

**Q: What is proactive allyship? How do you behave when women or other members of minority groups are not in the room?**

**A:** Proactive allyship is a new term for me, but one of the real problems in professions as conservative as the law is dealing with the fact that women aren't in the room and their interests may not be represented in ways that I don't understand and that I don't see and that aren't obvious. Making sure that when you can, to get people who aren't cis-white-het men in the room is crucial. Groups aren't monoliths and it's important that I don't speak for them. Staking out a position or even just letting people know that you aren't cool with this kind of misogyny is really helpful and can sometimes change peoples' behavior at least around you.

**Q: Do you notice exclusion every day? Do you notice who are not there? Are you proactive?**

**A:** This looks different in law school spaces – the people who take different classes (repro, employment discrimination) are super different from people taking tax and financial regulation. The latter classes are mostly white men and you walk into employment discrimination and it's a completely different makeup.

**Q: How do you or will you open the doors to more participation for women and women of color?**

**A:** It's hard because it's future looking—I'm not a professional yet so I have less say over what happens. One little thing that I've noticed with firms is that they talk a lot about diversity but not enough about racial justice or gender justice or reproductive justice. Shifting the conversation from getting diverse associates to retaining diverse associates is really important – I'd love to help within any firm while I'm there to incorporate these principles.

**Q: How do you make sure women, especially women of color literally take seats at the table, rather than standing on the sidelines?**

**A:** Conditioning your own participation especially on panels on actually representing marginalized voices – more useful tool when you're actually established when people value what you say. Being willing to point out there's a lack of representation is really important. A lot of people only pay lip service to these forms of justice—sometimes doing the right thing to do is to take a bit of a hit so that you can advance the opportunities of others.

**Q: Data has shown that do speak out, they can be ignored, or have their ideas taken. As an ally, how will you address this?**

**A:** Give credit and understand that the ideas you think are originally yours are not your own and you probably learned them from someone else.

**Q: Do you attribute an idea to a woman who offered it, and do you endorse worthy ideas and ensure the appropriate person is remembered for them?**

**A:** I'm aware that it's a problem but I do my best to address it where I can. It's an issue that needs more attention and I do my best to live out those values.

**Q: How have you put a woman on center stage? How would you do it?**

**A:** If people care about your participation and you condition your participation on other people's voices being represented, just attribute those values.

**Q: Are there times when you have or will privilege some women over others?**

**A:** The answer is definitely yes—and that's probably a mixture of conscious and unconscious bias. We're going to privilege women that we know better naturally – people in positions of power often privilege people they know better, etc. I'm sure that I do that and it happens and I can't think of a specific example, but if I was aware of it, I wouldn't consciously do it.



**Q: If no formal format exists, how do you offer peer to peer mentoring? Schedule phone appointments? How do you keep it professional?**

**A:** This is definitely getting at the Mike Pence rule of getting rid of the appearance of bad behavior. Being aware of what people are experiencing and being socially competent and sensitive is probably more impactful and essential than a blanket rule. I'm also attracted to men and publicly out so it's also a different situation here.

**Q: How would you help the company start a program to attract a diverse talent pool?**

**A:** Diversity isn't really the goal – I want to challenge this premise. Justice and dismantling oppressive power structures is the goal. But to answer the question, attracting and retaining talent is really challenging but actually restructuring policies so that the workplace is a hospitable place and not just for straight white men who have a partner at home. Talent and actual flexible work from home policies and being attentive to the nuances that make a workplace more hospitable.

**Q: What are your ideas on hiring practices that are clear and transparent?**

**A:** That can be helpful but maybe more helpful in specifically gendered stuff because I think that a big part of the problem of credentials is not just discrimination at the end point, it's discrimination over the entire life course. A lot of people are disadvantaged in ways that keep them from getting the same resume that a privileged white man would be able to get with the same amount of talent and skill and effort. It's helpful as a step but it gets us closer to formal equality rather than actually reckoning with systemic problems and actual legacies of gender and racial oppression.

**Q: How would you structure the design and layout of the workplace to advance diversity?**

**A:** One thing that strikes me about Penn is that there's a lot of portraits of white men at the law school. Gendered spaces and bathrooms are fine but we also have to have bathrooms that people who are non-binary. If we actually want to have work/life balance and let them have families, then we need to restructure the workplace in a way that's not assuming that everyone is a white male with a partner at home taking care of social and family needs. Having rooms architecturally that allow people to parent like spaces to pump, daycare spaces for people who have young children, etc. In terms of art, not being tokenistic about representation is really important – part of the problem is you have all these portraits of white men because the people who your organization has valued in the past and values today are a lot of straight white men.

**Q: How would you create a policy on equal wages for equal work?**

**A:** Do just that – but it's not just equality within job titles. It's whether more men or more women have certain job titles, are they performing the same work even though they have the same job titles? It's a little bit further than just equal wages than equal work.

**Q: How would you boost gender diversity within their own operations improving retention and lowering the considerable cost of staff turnover?**

**A:** Restructure workplace in a way that it's a livable environment for people who don't have all these accumulated privileges.

**Q: What rules and criteria will you create for promotions?**

**A:** Employment discrimination has made us discuss this a lot – should we go with a more transparent point-based system or should we go with a gut check? But we also need to recognize that just because something is transparent and isn't discriminatory doesn't mean that it won't produce discriminatory results. Affirmative action policies are really necessary along with having a reasonable and transparent process. I personally prefer the transparent system but think we need to recognize its limitations.

**Q: How will you eliminate gender bias in performance reviews?**

**A:** Some of this is easier to spot, and some of it is harder. The things that are harder to spot and reflect inequality are more subtle. It's a cliché, but implicit bias training is really important and having actual meaningful diversity in the people who are making the evaluations and maybe won't completely solve the problem but seems like a good step.

**Q: What are the sexual harassment policies and interactive training you will put in place in the workplace? How will you deal with arbitration clauses in sexual harassment policies?**

**A:** I don't have a brilliant silver bullet idea to solve sexual harassment, but listen to survivors and listen to the claims that come to your attention and there are things that are probably going on that aren't coming to your attention. Active support on this is really important. As for arbitration, it's challenging because I've heard some people say that arbitration clauses are better for survivors compared to trials because it can be less traumatic, but there are fears that the perpetrator won't be held accountable through arbitration hearings rather than in a public court setting. I don't know if I have all the answers in this space, but it should be a conversation that is seriously considered by whoever I am working for and I'd like to be a part of it if I have any say.

**Q: How will you ensure no penalty for flexibility?**

**A:** This is an interesting question because you can promise flexibility but punish it when it comes to promotions and performance evaluations because people who are showing up may get a lot more face time, etc. A lot of straight white men benefit from this most because they have a partner at home who isn't working. A conscious commitment to the importance of having these policies is really important.

**Q: What do you think of options for telecommuting?**

**A:** We're in a pandemic – everyone is telecommuting. Super important for expanding access especially for people with disabilities and it makes sense that it would improve access to the profession for women and minorities. Pro!

**Q: Will you put in place a program on male allies and sponsors? What about a program to counter stereotypes?**

**A:** I worry this would be performative and kind of white-knight-y. Wearing allyship as a label isn't super helpful so take those resources on initiatives and groups and sponsorship and mentorship for marginalized people who actually need it and don't create a platform for performative feminism.

**Q: How is the MeToo movement shaping norms of masculinity?**

**A:** Usually I think about how it affects victims of broader culture than masculinity. There's been a toxic response to MeToo, which sees that men are being held accountable for their actions and feeling vulnerable yourself and feel like you could be cancelled or accused yourself. Underlying that is the fact that most men have done things that are sexually questionable and deep down they realize that and don't want to be held accountable. There's a fear and anxiety that exists. There's been great conversations that have been brought up on consent but we haven't gotten to a place where a lot of people understand sexuality within workplace power dynamics and reconciled that.

**Q: Men mentoring women can make a large impact. Do you fear backlash?**

**A:** No – if you do fear backlash because you change behavior because of that, then you're perpetuating structural inequalities that occur by cutting off their network. The number one way to not be accused of sexually harassing someone is not sexually harassing them and being conscious of your conduct and how it affects people around them. The fear is out there but it's not super healthy.

**Q: As an ally, how can you transform the social value attached to child-care including the role of both parents in caregiving equally?**

**A:** Rhetoric is super helpful, as is talking about it. Being explicitly supportive of people being parents is helpful but backing it up with policies is super important. Not just having a formal policy of workplace leave, but not punishing people for taking advantage of it and actually treating your employees as whole human beings is crucial.

**Q: How will you advocate for Fair Workplace Policies?**

**A:** What's on the brain right now for me is OCI – I feel like I would have a hard time asking about that in a screener or callback but making a big deal about that in a second look could be a little thing that could be helpful. Making sure that firms care and people are looking and its impacting the decisions we're making could be something. Longer term, I would make it a

priority and cover for associates and other people who are taking advantage of those policies and being supportive and helpful in an informal way.

**Q: What are your thoughts on onramping (flexible hours at fully pay) and guardrails (predictable hours) to help those returning?**

**A:** I haven't thought about it super deeply but it seems like making it so that people who are taking care of their obligations outside of the workplace don't have to commit to billing 2000 hours in a year where they have a child or a medical event because there's kind of an all or nothing mentality in firms. You either have to be fully committed to the firm or the firm doesn't support you – having a gradient seems like a good tool for retention and furthering that goal for juniors and associates who aren't white men with all of these privileges that they've accumulated and a lack of responsibilities outside the workplace.

**Q: What are your perceptions on non-linear leadership tracks that take into consideration women with families?**

**A:** Options and flexibility for people are good and that increases retention and diversity. My immediate concerns are that I want to make sure that people who take that track don't end up in lesser positions at the end and they need to be making partner at the same rates and have the same decision making power at the end of the process. I'm worried about ending up with gendered tracks – men who don't have responsibilities end up doing traditional track and make partner faster or are more likely to do so and women with people or disadvantages and obligations end up in alternative tracks. I have a bit of hesitation about this because of that but it depends ultimately on implementation.

**Q: What are your views on work-family policies, such as parent leave, flex time, and part time work?**

**A:** Positive, want to support people, want to give people flexibility and options and again, a recognition that you're a whole human being outside of the firm and commitment to that seems important if you actually have a meaningful commitment to diversity and justice for marginalized people in your organization.

**Q: On a scale of 1-5 how likely would it be for you to request and participate in work family policies if your family situation made that need applicable?**

**A:** Right now I feel a lot of pressure to not make a lot of noise and focus on my work but if I had good policies, I would say a 4

**Q: On a scale of 1-5, how likely do you think your male peers would request and participate in one of the company's work family policies?**

**A:** 2, 2.5 – little less likely

**Q: On a scale of 1-5, how much of your decision to participate in the work family policies influenced by your perception of what is accepted and expected by your leadership/management and your male peers?**

A: 3 – what people say and how they respond is more important than the policy on paper

**Q: On a scale of 1-5, how comfortable do you feel in your ability to be fully yourself at work?**

A: Probably like a 2, not very comfortable

**Q: How much do these descriptions relate to something you have experienced? Cultural influences?**

A: A lot of it – I feel like not so much of the not feeling or displaying emotion, but the other stuff is a huge thing in the culture that I grew up in and in my family too. In the church I grew up in, there's almost a social capital that you can get through displaying emotions in the right place, especially religious emotions and religious sensitivity. That's one part that's colored my experience.

**Q: When you see men and women paired together on TV, in movies, or other media platforms, what tends to be their relationship?**

A: You expect romantic or trending toward romantic, that's a pretty common trope in media.

**Q: How often do you see women in leadership roles on television? Women in color?**

A: Pretty rarely – there's a huge representation gap and especially representation in power gap. Not very often.

**Q: Has the way you have seen women in positions of power on TV influenced actions or decisions to be an ally for women in your professional life?**

A: I can't tie it specifically to TV but women in media definitely matter a lot for representation. Going back to culture and church, I feel that there's a certain amount of paternalism whenever you want to help someone or a group so I feel like early in my political development I had a bit of paternalism...so it was almost anti-power to see people in positions of power. This can be illustrated through the idea of the perfect plaintiff – who is the perfect plaintiff? It's usually a white woman with some set of circumstances that make the court sympathetic and the court wants to use its power to right its wrong because it can see this sympathetic plaintiff doesn't have power. It's kind of the same problematic impulse here – almost by helping, you're acknowledging the messed up power dynamic that exists and reinforcing it.

**Q: Do you fear allyship or resulting backlash based on how the media portrays women?**

**A:** Not really sure how it ties into media, but I feel like if you feel safe as an ally, you're probably doing it wrong and you probably aren't actually an ally. If you aren't willing to stick your neck out and actually do something for people who have asked for your help, you're a fair weather ally and you aren't actually that helpful – you're just doing what's easy and convenient and makes you feel less guilty. When you're actually doing allyship well, I think you're supposed to feel insecure and you're supposed to worry about the professional and social consequences. In a weird way, I think that's something I aspire to.

## **Interview #78**

**Q: How do you define allyship? What does being an ally mean to you?**

**A:** I knew you were going to ask this one, so I thought about it. Being an ally is when a person outside of a group supports that group. I'm kind of choosing support rather than advocate on purpose. I think it really comes from a role of support, and built into the word "support" is many things. It can be very active, calling out, calling in. It can be lifting up. It also can be more passive. I think the first step in allyship is do no harm personally, and that involves a lot of introspective thinking about personal actions. And I guess that's an active thing as well, but I think of that as more of an internal rather than external thing. But short definition, I'd say allyship is when a person outside of a group supports that group.

**Q: It's interesting that you said "call in" because there was a New York Times article about this professor, she teaches a class on cancel culture, and she said instead of calling out people, we should try to call in people. So is interesting how you used that same phrase.**

**A:** I don't think I should say we should always call people in. There's really a time for both probably, depending on perceived intentions or the relative positions of the parties, if you're friends versus if you're already on an adversarial stance or something like that. I've always thought about it in the context of unhealthy masculinity. I think that men in particular if you call them out, they dig in. So if you want to get somewhere, you gotta call in or at least give them an out, so that the conversation can continue and they don't get into some prehistoric fighting stance where they won't listen to what you're talking about just because it's time to be an asshole. So it's more like a tactic than something the person really deserves, if that makes sense.

**Q: Do you consider yourself to be an ally for women or anyone who identifies as a woman? How so?**

**A:** I think I would say that I actively try to be an ally, but I don't think I can really proclaim myself an ally, if that makes sense, just because I know that there's a lot of ways in which I don't spend enough energy or active time trying to work hard at it. So in that sense, I'm critical of myself of not doing more. So while I have the ally intention, I am too cognizant of my own faults to call myself a good ally. That being said, I think I do benefit from having learned a lot over the past seven years since I started college in thinking about the ways in which I interact with women. Through that process, I'm pretty proud of the progress that I've made and I'm appreciative of the fact that I've had that opportunity I think.

Do I consider myself an ally? It may be better to talk about some allyship acts that I try to routinely do. I really try to get people's identity language right, whether that's pronouns. Dale Carnegie, the guy who wrote *How to Win Friends and Influence People*, talks about how important it is to say people's names correctly. So definitely saying people's names correctly, but also kind of everything about them, especially things that they choose to share. If someone talks about their personal identity or their gender or something like that, I'm going to assume that that probably means a lot to them. So not only respecting it kind of in the abstract, but kind of paying close attention to that and making sure I get it right is something that I do try to do and I think

I'm pretty good at most of the time. So I consider that to be a baseline first-do-no-harm allyship act.

Another allyship act I definitely engage in is to not talk about sex or relationships in any context, not just with women, but even among just groups of men. I consider that to be somewhat of an act of allyship because of the fact that I think a lot of men don't have any negative associations with sex. They think of it as power or like a good thing unilaterally. But I think one of the things that I've learned from listening to some women talk about their experiences with sex is that it can represent really terrible things. It can represent violence, oppression, and the feeling of fear. And so it's just another thing that I personally don't talk about and I'm aware of if things are inappropriately being discussed. That's something I'm pretty comfortable calling out or in. I think that's another allyship act that at least I have done.

And then also in class, having the experience of women talk about how they are treated in class or in groups or in a meeting, [I] try not to do the things that I know are upsetting to women—interrupting and not paying attention, or not deeply listening. It sounds so silly to say, when a woman is talking, actually pay attention to what she's saying, but I've also caught myself not doing that many times, so it's something that I actively try to do if I notice myself doing it.

And finally, I kind of think of it as a game, but it really has a meaning to me. I have a personal rule that if I'm in class or in a formal discussion where people are being called on, if two men have said something or contributed in a row, I'm not going to be the third man to talk. And you'd be surprised how often I'm sitting in a Zoom call being like, well, shit, I can't say anything.

**Q: That's interesting. Why do you do that?**

**A:** There was a presentation once in a group that my undergrad had called Men's Allied Voices for Respectful and Inclusive Community, which spells MAVRIC. They did a lot of healthy masculinity stuff, and so that was discussed at one of those meetings. I didn't think to myself I'd try it, but I'd start thinking to myself how much people of different genders talk in class and found that it was so lopsided. First, it was interesting, then very frustrating, and these days I'm just kind of in the habit of thinking about it. And sometimes I forget, for sure. Sorry that was a lot.

**Q: No that's great. That actually touches on a lot of the stuff we talk about in class, like “manterruptions” and stealing credit for other people’ ideas. Law schools are notoriously, classrooms are dominated by men, and women are less likely to participate in law school. So it’s interesting, that idea, that game that you play.**

**A:** Can I ask you what you think of a trick, a practice? A practice tip that I have heard before that if you would like to lift up a woman's voice, you could basically highlight what they have said. How do you feel about that? Because I perceive that as possibly the exact situation where a man says something, “Susan just said this and I really like this,” and somehow that gives credit to the man, or people remember that he said that, rather than the original thing. What do you think of that practice, is that a good thing or a bad thing?



**Q: That's interesting you brought that up. Joan Williams writes all about "bias interrupters" and the ways that you can do that. I think it's pretty effective. Literally in [one of] my class[es], someone stopped the discussion and pointed out that men were doing that in the class, but ever since then, people in class were very careful to attribute and build off of people's points. I think in general it's pretty effective.**

**A:** That's a good example of the power of the call out, too, if it has actually changed the vibe of the class.

**Q: Why is allyship important during a time of a public health crisis?**

**A:** That's one I haven't ever thought about before, why it's especially important now. Well, I'd say allyship is important generally because there could be—it's not necessarily true—but there could be some ways in which a person outside of the supported group has privilege that the supported group doesn't have. So as an advocate, it advances the cause in a potentially helpful way. I think right now, thinking about the ways that people with less access to technology, at greater risk of health complications, or are more willing or able to expose themselves to risk—if people with that kind of privilege were able to step up their support it could advance the cause in ways that people without that privilege couldn't. That's sort of a theoretical answer. I'm not really satisfied with that. I feel more satisfied if I could think of a way or imagine that really working out, but I think that could be one way.

I think a part of allyship is also just thinking about that relationship and listening and figuring out how your privilege matches or could enable a different method of advocacy. Half of allyship is just figuring out what, if anything, to do. Even in the interpersonal interactions that we have on Zoom, many of the problematic behaviors that could exist in real life are amplified whenever there's this awkward time lag between people or there feels like there's a big barrier to clicking off that mute button and stepping out in front of the group, your face is really big on the screen, or whatever. I'm trying to imagine how other people might feel because that feels like the first step towards helping, is to try to figure that out. I hate to admit I haven't thought very much about how others might feel on the other end of the Zoom call.

**Q: Why is allyship at the forefront of addressing systemic and structural bias?**

**A:** Gosh, there's a lot of reasons. One big reason is that systemic and structural bias is baked into so many places. If it's not all hands on deck, it's hard to make progress. Another issue is that some of the structural and systemic racist policies are geographic, and policy-setting is therefore limited to different groups. If it is one source of "white privilege" to make policy in an area, that could be an act of allyship to get rid of racist policy in the geographic area where you are able to effect it, just noting that there are intentionally less people of color in that area, so part of allyship could just come from that.

**Q: What are you thinking of when you say geographically? Like parts of the country?**

**A:** Parts of the country. I'm thinking of the white Philly suburbs compared to West Philly. And of course, there are some things that are city-wide and obviously everyone has a say in that, or at least there is more opportunity. That could be one opportunity for that.

I think it's also important in getting rid of bias, because again that first step of allyship, which is to listen to what is needed and what is being said, what is being called out as hurtful. Bias is really hard to find in yourself. I think a lot about my male bias, because I often note it. That first step of acknowledging your personal bias, first of all, it's key for allyship. If you want to be a good ally, you have to address that bias. I think allyship is also going the other way. It's critical for addressing the bias, because allyships in some ways a goal. If you don't have that goal, you're not going to work on the bias. It does go both ways I think. You can't be a good ally if you don't get rid of your bias, or at least think about it.

**Q: Have you taken concrete steps to serve as an ally to women and/or other marginalized groups? What do those steps tend to look like?**

**A:** I guess I'll talk about two things. First is a bias thing. I often note bias in myself and here's what that looks like. It's not going to sound good, but I'll think to myself, I don't really like her or I don't really like him. And when I have that thought it's not I don't like her because she's a woman, but she doesn't seem like someone I can get along with. But I have come to recognize that feeling itself as just a bias. I have an in-built bias for folks that look like me and act like me and talk like me. It also goes the other way. If there's a white dude with the same haircut as me, who says something in class, I'm like, yeah, exactly. I've come to recognize that as equally, I'm not thinking about this critically, that's just a bias that I have. So a concrete step that I've taken is to not act on those feelings and to try to ignore that, give this person way more personal attention and I'll reach out to them. It's not even giving them a chance. I'll try to go to that person, recognizing that my feeling towards them has less to do with them than it does with me. That's a concrete step that I think about somewhat frequently when I have the energy to. That's a rough one to admit, I've got to say. I don't talk about that very much, for obvious reasons probably. If any of my friends would then wonder I don't actually like them, but I do.

**Q: I appreciate your sharing that because I think when I hear that, I think not really bias, so much as judgment. We all make snap judgments of everyone. It can be the first person, the first time you meet them for five seconds, everyone makes judgments based on appearance. I think that's true for everyone. I think it's cool that you actually notice that when you do that and to take proactive steps to counter it. I don't think a lot of people do that.**

**A:** I don't know. I hope some people do. Maybe in many situations we're forced to because we have to work with who we work with. As long as we can get along if we need to, I hope.

The second concrete action, if you want an example of both a call-out and a call-in, I used to work in a lab. Not a great culture in the lab. My advisor was a person from Turkey. She was a woman from Turkey. There was a person who was Russian in the office. He was generally an asshole just to everyone for all reasons, but he would often make semi-sexual comments to my

Ph.D. student-mentor or would definitely make fun of her Turkishness a lot, make fun of her relationship with her husband a lot. He was a post-doc.

I was new to the group. The group was just putting up with it. There were seven or eight people in the group. We worked in a small room, basically a closet. They were just putting up with it. But I was new, and so that was kind of an opportunity for change in the group. Because the first time I heard something like that, I said, “Woah, hey, that’s not okay. That’s not very funny.” And it was super awkward, because I don’t have a lot of social capital, I’m not that cool. I didn’t say it that forcefully or well. I just said, “What the hell? That’s not cool. I don’t like that.” And it was awkward. And he kind of continued to do it, and I would say something about it every time. He eventually stopped doing it, at least around me. When I talked to him one-on-one about it outside of it, I couched it as, “Hey, one of the things that I’ve learned in my classes here at school is that teams work a lot better if you don’t have that kind of banter between people working. I mean, I know it just seems like you’re just joking around.” That’s what exactly he said all the time. “I know it just seems like you’re just joking around, but teams work a lot better and she will respect you a lot more if you get off her back. And I really want you to stop doing that.” And like I said, he stopped doing it around me. I don’t really know if he has decided he’s going to do other things in his life. But it kind of took both. And I feel like there was an opportunity for that because I was new to the group. I kind of perceived the others tolerated it because they felt they had always tolerated it and it would be weird if they started calling him out now, even though it clearly made everyone rather uncomfortable.

**Q: Are you on the board for any student groups? Have you taken any concrete action to promote inclusivity and equality within those groups?**

**A:** I’m on the symposium planning committee for the Penn Intellectual Property Group. I have not taken that many major steps to improve the inclusivity of the Penn Intellectual Property Group, although I think it could use it. One thing that we’re doing at least with the symposium is that we’re trying to make sure that panels are balanced, trying to avoid tokenism, trying to plan the symposium with diverse views and diverse demographics in mind. We are also going to have one hour and a half of our six-hour symposium devoted to issues related to diversity within the patent system, which is the topic of the symposium. One of our professors suggested that we do that. In fact, he didn’t suggest it. He told us that we had to do that. And we think that’s a fantastic idea, although I don’t think we would have thought to do that ourselves, if I’m being honest. But because of that, in trying to plan that panel for the symposium, gosh, there are a wealth of issues related to demographic imbalance within the patent bar, within the pool of people who receive patents and benefit from patents. I’d say overwhelmingly male, overwhelmingly white, overwhelmingly upper-class. So there are people who have written and talked about it and it’s been a great opportunity to personally learn, but also I think it’s going to be a good thing for our group to bring that discussion into the symposium. That’s my hope anyway.

**Q: How do you bolster and draw attention to women’s voices, and the voices of women of color?**

**A:** What strikes me as the most attainable for me personally is intentional kindness. And that doesn’t look like compliments or something like that. That’s extending the courtesy of paying

close attention, of treating people as a friend, as someone who you ask about and inquire about and care about; someone who you would help and mentor if you had an ability to do so and they were interested. I think that that is one way. Again the calling out and calling in can really help if it seems like there's a difficult situation that is not being intrinsically addressed. Another issue with that is it can be inappropriate to intercede on behalf of someone who doesn't need you to help. Just another layer of what can make that difficult. And then highlighting their work and their ideas and their voice when you have the opportunity. This symposium is a literal opportunity where I'm going to be having a hand in choosing voices to amplify. If I'm not doing it now, hard to say I'm going to do it in my regular life. So it's worth trying whenever there are concrete opportunities to raise voices to do it. And I think making more space, too. Every time I try to get out of my "manbox," that feels like making more space to me—being less overbearing, talking less, leaving empty space so that others can fill it is often a pretty big start. People will take the space that you give them usually.

**Q: Do you notice exclusion every day? Do you notice who is not there? Are you proactive?**

**A:** I think I do try to be proactive. I consider proactive to be going against my bias, going to talk to someone who I maybe have a negative feeling about. That feels like proactivity to me. I think I notice exclusion in the law school. I definitely notice professors letting women talk less—you know, asking a question, student says one sentence, professor jumps back in. The contrast is they'll let a guy monologue for thirty seconds, or more. Calling on women less, men talking a lot more in class if it's a volunteer-based thing. And I think again if space is made, more people feel comfortable about talking. I'm not sure how proactive I am at addressing those instances of exclusion. I'm not proactive at addressing those instances of exclusion, but those are things that I definitely notice. I also notice frustration from people of color every day, especially I think when we were in person, often frustration with the legal system or with the way that class was being run, or with I'm not exactly sure what. But I perceived white students to be happy to be in law school, whereas some students of color were frequently clearly frustrated by the experience that they're having in some way. And I think of that as exclusion for sure, if that's the feeling that you have in an environment of learning. You learn different things, but it's definitely a different experience. And that's a very real answer and I don't know if that's true or not. But I do notice that. And again I think the proactive thing is ask, "What did you think of that class?" And then do carefully listen to what is said. I wouldn't say that I consistently did that, especially when we were all together and it was easy to ask the person sitting next to me in class what they thought after class. It's something I sometimes did.

I think the Socratic method is a perfect embodiment of how it [law school] is not really designed for anything but a frankly too outgoing person. You have to be abnormally outgoing to succeed on a cold call. So the fact that all of our classes are centered around that is problematic. It's not true of everything, but mostly if something hasn't changed in the last hundred years, it should have. It's not good. Nothing in medicine is the same. Nothing in technology. Few things about our society are the same, so why is that?

**Q: How do you make sure women, especially women of color literally take seats at the table, rather than standing on the sidelines?**

**A:** My mom has told me before that when she leads meetings, she tries to figure out who the shy people are and call on them. Trust that the outgoing people will speak up if they want to say something, but actually single out the people who seem like they are less comfortable voluntarily taking up space, and point your finger at them. That works for all types of people, but I think the principle could apply to making sure that women, women of color take a seat at the table. If it is possible to directly ask, “Hey, what do you think about this?” even if it’s a little bit out of context, that person wasn’t previously saying something about it, it’s okay to just ask in case there was some aspect of the situation that was making them uncomfortable speaking up.

That being said, there are a lot of women, women of color not uncomfortable speaking up and it’s often just physically they’re unable to have a seat at the table because the seat is taken. If that’s the case, that’s the time when time and space need to be made. And that’s more than just not talking in a conversation, that could very well mean giving up a seat. The concept of people of privilege giving up seats, by which I mean giving up power, is very hard and I think very necessary. I’m not sure I can think of a time in my life when I have voluntarily given up some power or some opportunity that I had in order to make space, but I guess I hope someday I have that opportunity and that I have the courage to take it.

**Q: Data has shown that when women do speak out, they can be ignored, or have their ideas taken. As an ally, how will you address this?**

**A:** I think that it is possible especially these days because a lot of women have done incredible public communication groundwork to put these ideas of how women have their ideas taken or how women get interrupted. They’re existing in the world. People have a sense of them, and so I think it’s becoming easier and easier in the natural course of a discussion or meeting, just saying, “That was Susan’s idea,” and just immediately reattributing it if it looks like things are being misattributed. And then maybe there’s a call-in later. But because these ideas exist in the world, I’m not sure that every time that happens, there needs to be an explanation of hey, this happens often, it’s problematic that it happens, you just did it. I think because these ideas exist in the world it’s often enough just to the extent possible—you can’t fix an interruption—but to the extent possible to just reattribute in context, immediately, and then if need be then do a call-in later. That would be my approach to the situation I’m imagining.

**Q: What are your ideas on hiring practices that are clear and transparent? (e.g., blind résumé evaluation of résumés without names attached in order to reduce potential gender bias)**

**A:** I haven’t really thought of these problems so often at the administrative or policy-setting level. Are we referring to policies that are, how an instance of problematic bias is dealt with in the organization?

**Q: I think this [question] is getting to the idea of weeding out implicit bias in hiring processes.**

**A:** I think it’s a really difficult problem because within hiring decisions, you’re judging people. That’s the action you’re doing. So I find it hard to separate out the question of is this person the

right fit for our culture, do I like talking to them? But also don't let my personal biases, which often exist in my feelings towards a person, affect that.

A quick story. I was an RA [(residential adviser)] in undergrad. When you're a senior RA, you get to help in the hiring interview process of the incoming RAs. The way that would work is you ask a couple of the interview questions. The dean of our college, who was a black woman, would with you. She was a part of the interview. You interview them together. It was fun. It was fun to be a part of the interview. The thing that I noticed, we liked the opposite people. Not surprisingly, white guy looks like me, similar haircut, similarly confident, talks about things the same way, maybe similar background growing up. I walk out of the interview and I think I really like him, seems like a genuine, nice guy. And my adviser would say, I didn't really like him. I didn't really get a good vibe from him. And just likewise, there were applicants of color, I mean every person who applied for that position and made it to the interview was just a very personable, nice person. But my feeling towards that person was, I didn't like that person as much, but as soon as I would leave the room, the dean of the college would say, "I love them. I absolutely love them. They're the most amazing person. What a wonderful person."

It drove home to me that, gosh, whatever I think is personal to me. It really is not about the other person. I'm never going to be able to make an unbiased decision. If I were interviewing someone, I'd always want to have other types of people interviewing with me. And then I would like to have gone through some type of training that makes us as interviewers feel comfortable talking about our feelings towards people with the recognition that they're tinged by our personal backgrounds and our demographic. If we could somehow get to that space of comfort and then communicate to the outside world that that's how we operate, that would feel productive and hopefully transparent. I think that's hard. That's the world I'm imagining now for the future, but the realism inside me is worried that it'll be hard to achieve one day.

Having gone through that experience, I'll never forget it. I'll never interview another person and walk out of a positive or negative feeling that I act on, because it was demonstrated to me that I have big bias. So knowing that, I can hopefully do something different.

**Q: That's so interesting because I did a similar interview with my supervisor and four colleagues. There were five of us and we were all pretty uniform in who we liked and didn't like. We were mostly women and people of color, except for one white person. So it's interesting to see differences.**

**A:** And I think people probably have different levels of bias. I'm not willing to say that all people are really problematically biased. But some people are. At least I found myself to be even though I didn't expect myself to be.

**Q: How would you structure the design and layout of the workplace to advance diversity? (e.g., portraits, art, architecture, iconography, etc.)**

**A:** That's a cool question. My partner is an architect and now I want to ask them how they would design a building to foster inclusion. I'm sure they've got thoughts about it. I don't know very much about that. Iconography-wise I think it's important not to use honorific names of

problematic figures, etc. If that kind of thing is involved, get rid of it. That's an easy call. Especially for our generation, I don't think we're going to put up with it very much.

When it comes to how the firm presents itself in terms of images of the firm, I think that it matters to people the images that are chosen to showcase the firm. If you are intentionally engaging in tokenism if you're taking a representative firm photo, people are going to know that and it's going to bother them. And that kind of thing can bother them just as much. If that were the case, I would opt to not showcase the firm by putting faces if the diversity level of the firm is not something that it can be proud of. But also I'm not quite sure how I feel about that. I could very well be persuaded other ways.

I'm having trouble thinking about the layout or the physical embodiment of inclusion. But in thinking about how the firm could organize, I think that there's maybe two things that would help. Just like in hiring, in promotion and in compensation, apply procedures that recognize bias. I think applying procedures that eliminate bias, that's not going to work. It's got to recognize it, and so that means maybe multiple people make those decisions and ideally multiple people of different backgrounds. And they should explicitly talk about and think about it. That should be part of the policy. I don't think that any level of like, we'll just do it based on billable hours, or we'll just do it based on the performance of that person in some agnostic metric, doesn't really work either, because people with different privilege levels succeed on agnostic metrics in different ways. So the agnostic metric is just going to perpetuate underlying inequality in ability to perform if there is one. So there's that. That's like a method for getting to some imagined future when there are people of color, women of color in positions of managerial power within the firm. That is a goal that I think law firms certainly struggling with, but lot of businesses are struggling with as well. My feeling is that it will probably involve some amount of at least perceived ceding of seats at the table for white men. I'm saying perceived because it's a thing that men feel entitled to. They're not really ceding their seats at the table. They're just losing and that's what it feels like. But I would thinking that within the firm context, that kind of advancement mechanism would be helpful.

**Q: How will you structure a company's core mission on diversity?**

**A:** I'm probably not going to have the most insightful answer, but I think a structure that really could help is to have the policy be explicitly anti-racist is the word I'm using, but I kind of want to generalize it to other modes of marginalization. To have a diversity policy that is affirmative in that it recognizes that there is an existing imbalance that needs to be rectified. So people know that not only will it be equal opportunity, it will seek to raise up people who come from groups that have been traditionally less included, recognizing that need.

**Q: What are the programs and plans for structured careerplanning, mentorship, role models and networking would you recommend?**

**A:** One thing that has surprised me at the law school is the Initiative for the Future of the Profession. I got into it because I was expecting it to be about legal tech, which is a personal interest. But I have stayed and become even more interested because it wasn't about legal tech at all. It is about the ways in which the legal industry is flawed for the health of the people who

participate in it and for diversity reasons. So I have found the most radical thinkers. If you go to CP&P, they're going to tell you the way the world is. They'll tell you these are the hours you can expect to work, yada yada yada. The mentorship that I got from Jennifer Leonard, but also the other people involved in the Future of the Profession Initiative are—I wouldn't think optimistic—but they think radically about how could the world be different if lawyers worked less hours? If billables weren't a thing? If we were interested in really expanding access to legal help, how many more lawyers would we need to hire? How would we change the bar exam so that more people can become lawyers? It's been a refreshing opportunity to see there are people who exist in the world today who are working to change law, change the face of the profession. And I feel like that's given me the tools to think about those things as I go into the workplace. Obviously, they say you're a soldier when you go to work at a law firm. But I guess that I don't buy that. You're a person who participates in a system and should offer commentary on the system and work to improve that system as you are in it. And I feel much more confident about doing that after having spent time talking to people in that group, so I recommend them.

**Q: What work-life balance policies through flexible work policies, support systems would you recommend?**

**A:** I think it's similar. Work-life balance is something the Future of the Profession Initiative talks about. I think it's just a big problem in law. It leads people to do drastically unhealthy things. It leads to high suicide rates, it leads to high rates of drug abuse. That's just evidence of the underlying problem that people's work-life balance is not out of whack of their own volition, but because it's demanded as a uniform thing across the industry and that's a problem. So policy-wise, the death of the billables is pretty important. I'm not sure if I'd go so far as to say, setting caps on the amount of hours that people work. It's hard for me to think about these things really because I haven't spent a lot of time working for a law firm yet, so I'm not really the best person to think about these policies. But I'd really try to incentivize all people to take care of themselves, because I think just like studies show when you pay workers more, your business is more profitable, I think if you allow workers to take care of themselves better, the business will be profitable as well. So there's not even a downside, which is really important.

**Q: How would you create processes and incentives for those in the firm/company to serve as a mentor for women in the community, particularly those seeking to engage in industries that have historically been difficult for women to penetrate?**

**A:** I'm a Morris fellow and L [L'22] is one of my best friends. We have talked often about our respective Morris mentees and done joint meetings with them. We each have our own mentee and we treat them as such, I don't really think of the other person as my mentee, but we've done joint meetings together with them. I think that having a mentor buddy that I can discuss the mentoring process with has made it more meaningful and enjoyable for me, but it's also made me a better mentor. Maybe one suggestion would be to set up mentor buddy-type situations where you check in with each other on how mentoring is going, both for accountability purposes and to share useful information.

**Q: What have you learned from talking about mentorship with a mentor buddy?**



**A:** Partly because I think L is I think a good mentor, but it could be really practical things. When I knew something about how to get involved with the bowling league, I made sure to tell L so he could pass that information on to his mentee. L had access to a couple of really good primers on how to 1L and he was able to share those with me and I shared them with my mentee. So those are practical things. But we also just planned together and said, “When are you going to schedule your meeting with your mentee? Did you have it yet? What was it like?” And even that small level of check in gave me accountability to actually do it.

**Q: How is the MeToo movement shaping norms of masculinity?**

**A:** I think the awareness is very positive. The more men are aware of how their actions make women feel, that’s a good thing. I think the accountability is also really important. I would say that a lot of men are very aware of how their actions make women feel, but do it anyway because they can do it with impunity, and that’s unacceptable. So I think it’s shaping a norm of masculinity where people don’t assume you can get away with it as much. Although there’s a long way to go. I think there’s a problematic reaction within masculinity to respond to aspects of the MeToo movement like “believe all women.” That type of aspect I notice creates a reaction within masculine culture to be skeptical of all women. Again I’m using masculinity in this context to mean traditional masculinity inside the manbox. I do kind of hope for a world where there is such a thing as positive masculinity, that doesn’t subscribe to that sort of thing. But inside the manbox, I think there’s definitely that reaction to be even more skeptical of the things women say because of fear induced by the growing power of a group that they’re not a part of.

**Q: When you say reaction do you mean a backlash?**

**A:** That’s exactly what I mean. I wasn’t avoiding that word. Exactly.

**Q: Men mentoring women can make a large impact. Do you fear a backlash?**

**A:** I think that I’m personally more comfortable with men and women in a professional sense when I’m not in an intimate one-on-one situation with them. So I think to answer the question first of all, I don’t really fear the concept of mentoring a woman because of MeToo. One thing that MeToo has made me think about is, Josh, don’t put yourself in a situation where you’re alone with a woman, partially because in the worst-case scenario, this person could accuse you of assaulting them even if you didn’t. But it’s not really for that. It’s more for the fact that it’s not really appropriate to be in an intimate one-on-one scenario with your mentor. So within the concept of mentorship, regardless of who you’re mentoring—man, woman, or anyone—not doing your mentorship over a dinner at a fancy restaurant, or in a hotel bar, or even one-on-one on a walk or something like that. It’s just easier if you do it in a professional setting. It really doesn’t decrease the effectiveness of the mentorship to do your professional mentorship in a professional setting. It has the effect, in my mind, of defending against some I think irrational fear of false accusation, but it also is just good practice. And I think it will make your mentee more comfortable, too.

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not likely at all, 5-very likely), how likely would it be for you to request & participate in work-family policies (i.e. Parental Leave or Flexible Work Arrangement) if your family situation made that need applicable?**

**A:** 5. It's one of the things I'm researching when I'm bidding [for law firms].

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not likely at all, 5-very likely), how likely do you think your male peers would request & participate in one of the company's work-family policies (i.e. Parental Leave or Flexible Work Arrangement) if their family situation made that need applicable?**

**A:** My male peers are very diverse. Among my closest friends, I think 4. But among my wider peers, I think 2, among the whole law student population.

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not influenced, 5-very likely to influence), how much of your decision to participate in the work-family policies influenced by your perception of what is accepted and expected by leadership/management and your male peers?**

**A:** I'm going to say 2 because I no question feel the pull of the career as a man. However, I also am pretty good at getting out of that manbox. So as soon as I recognize that's where that's coming from, I hope to have the courage to overcome it, and I intend to.

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not comfortable, 5-very comfortable) how comfortable do you feel in your ability to fully be yourself at work?**

**A:** That's very hard. I think a 3. I think I do feel like somewhat of a different person as a professional, especially as a man, I do feel like there are things that I'm expected to act like, and I do act like them. But at the same time I definitely don't feel like I can't be myself the way that some people do.

**Q: The "man box" refers to a set of beliefs, communicated by parents, families, the media, peers, and other members of society, that place pressure on men to act a certain way. These pressures tell men to be self-sufficient, to act tough, to be physically attractive in a certain way, to stick to rigid gender roles, to be heterosexual, to not cry or show emotion, and to use aggression to resolve conflicts. How much do these descriptions relate to something that you have experienced?**

**A:** I think it has to do with mostly not showing emotion, trying to be sort of more analytical and not emotive about problems. An expectation of confidence and control is also in there. An expectation and also a reward whenever I do act that way or whenever I did act that way as a child, people would praise me. And so that of course becomes the goal.

I think the traditional thing is people telling you to act like a man. There's definitely a lot of that. I had a pretty irreverent British soccer coach, and he would definitely call people girls, call people pansies, call them fairies, call them gay. Weirdly though, those things feel so explicit that they're easier to be like, well, that's wrong. That's clearly wrong. The things that are more

nefarious are the aspects of my personality that were kind of rewarded, Pavlovianly trained to be overbearing. I consider that to be a part of the manbox, too.

**Q: What role do cultural differences (regional, ethnic, religious, class), if any, play in your attitudes to masculinity and allyship?**

**A:** I grew up in western Pennsylvania, where diversity is very low. When I was growing up, so I'm a quarter Japanese, and my skin is dark enough that it was the most salient aspect of my identity until I was seventeen going to college. Just because people referred to me as a Japanese person even though I'm a quarter Japanese and pretty white-passing in, say, Philadelphia. So for that reason, I growing up felt pretty defensive about that. And if people would cut on me for that, or talk to me about it in a mocking way, or say something about Japanese people, I'd want to fight. I think there's been a strange experience since then going to college, where there were tons of people, who grew up in some country in Asia and just arrived there. And so by comparison, my Asian-ess felt less salient. That's sort of like the big cultural background dynamic that I carry with me going around. And so in that regard, I think that has helped me to understand that people's identity within a group can be pretty different. My identity as a Japanese American is pretty different than someone whose both parents are Japanese American or who is Japanese. And to assume that we all have similar experiences or views on things would be pretty inaccurate, to say the least. So thinking about that can help me ask every person what they need, rather than assuming that what one person said is applicable to their whole demographic group. So if one of my female friends told me about their experience, I would know not to apply that to every person.

**Q: Does the way you see women in positions of power on television, in movies, or other media platforms influence your view of women leaders?**

**A:** Yes. I mean academically I know yes. I'm not quite sure I can tease out how. The thing that's influenced the way I see women leaders most is probably my mom. She was a manager in a manufacturing plant and just dealt with all kinds of bullshit. She started doing that in the 1980s, which was a pretty difficult time to be a woman manager. I think both knowing that she was a very good manager and was beloved by the people that she worked with is a prime example of that women can be really fantastic leaders. Also knowing that, she just says as a blanket statement that men are going to dislike you just because you're a woman in power, and they're going to give you a hard time just because you're a woman in power. And she would talk about that so much when I was a little kid that I do just accept that as just like a fact. And I've never really thought about it before, but I think it probably causes me to actively approve of women in power, in leadership positions, just because my mom talks about it as such an injustice, as such a dumb thing, as such a frustrating thing for her in her life. I think that's really helped me out a lot.

**Q: That's interesting. In Employment Discrimination class, we read about how when women are promoted to supervisors, there's sometimes an increase in sexual harassment. And the fact that the law protects mostly subordinates from supervisors, but not necessarily the other way around, is a problem for women.**

A: Well that's something I'll keep thinking about, too, and watching out for. Hopefully we can all protect against that in normative ways, even if the law doesn't recognize it.

**Q: Has the way you have seen women in positions of power in the media influenced your actions or decisions to be an ally for women in your professional life?**

A: This is going to sound silly, but I think the portrayal of Diane Lockhart. She's the managing partner in *The Good Wife*. She's really, really awesome. It's hard to say that she's really inspired me to be a better ally, but it's kind of given me this idea that I would like to work at a firm where I get to follow somebody like that. I would totally be down to be a soldier for her. So in that way, that's a great portrayal, because I think we struggle against this idea that we've got 500 law firms where the name of the law firm is four white men. The name of the law firm is four white men. That's where we're starting. I'm thankful that even just shows like that at least give an example of where we can have a firm led by a woman and have it be awesome and you can be proud of working there. I love it.

## **Interview #79**

**Q: How do you define allyship? Ally?**

A: Speaking up for those who can't and using my space to support others and uplift others.

**Q: Do you consider yourself to be an ally for women? How so?**

A: I do. I think that I actively look for ways to support women in the community and other minority groups. I actively seek to try to educate myself however I can to best support and where members of that community are asking for help or ways that they are disenfranchised.

**Q: How do you speak up for women when they are overlooked?**

A: I have been in situations where I have circled back a conversation to point out something that someone else said even if others quickly moved on from it.

**Q: How do you help amplify women's voices, not competing with them for influence or for the sake of showcasing what an admirable feminist you are?**

A: I validate other people's responses, whoever they are. I don't think I actively seek out to only validate women's responses, I personally feel like I try to validate and assist and help all people and wouldn't go down the path of taking their idea as my own.

**Q: What is proactive allyship? How do you behave when women or other members of minority groups are not in the room?**

A: Speaking up for groups of people that are not present and aiming to draw them into the conversation. Not perpetuating anything that anyone in that situation would say something that is improper. Speaking up for others who aren't able to even hear it.

**Q: Do you notice exclusion every day? Do you notice who are not there? Are you proactive? Marc Benioff, ED of Salesforce noticed exclusion and corrected it.**

A: Even more recently I think I am more aware of checking who is part of the conversation, who is talking, presence of women and people of color, in different environments whether it's on panels or speakers for things or on tv or in class or in a room.

**Q: How do you or will you open the doors to more participation from women and women of color?**

A: I don't feel like I have a lot of power in opening doors since I don't have a job. I think that that would be trying to diversify the community and working to bring people of different backgrounds into the workplace or the conversation.

**Q: Do you attribute an idea to a woman who offered it, and you endorse worthy ideas and ensure the appropriate person is remembered for them?**

A: Yes.

**Q: Are there times when you have or will privilege some women over others?**

A: I'm sure internal biases probably push me to act certain ways in certain situations, but I actively try not to jump to conclusions or make assumptions and try to view everything holistically in figuring out how to best make a decision.

**Q: How would you help the company start a program to attract a diverse talent pool?**

A: I think its training the people that are interviewing how to be aware of certain biases they may have and how to have structured criteria on candidates. Not perpetuate certain areas or certain types of people even in the application process. I also think there needs to be a push to diversify members of the law school education, who is in law school, because even within our law school there is definitely a lack of diversity in certain areas that doesn't replicate the general public. Even getting people through law school so they can be at the table.

**Q: How will you advocate for Fair Workplace Policies?**

A: Need to consider the work force and what their needs are and base policies off of that and they shouldn't be blanket policies based on stereotypical policies or rules. They should reflect what the people there need for support.

**Q: How will you send out the message that work family policies are important to men and women aren't the only ones caring for family members? Advocating for flexible hours, working from home, on-site child- care helps men and women. Observing how and when colleagues are evaluated and promoted can also be an important area where policies can be adjusted.**

A: It's clear that assuming the women takes the caregiving role in any family or community or relationship is an improper stereotype that shouldn't be assumed. Based on the individual employee and their circumstances what is needed to support them but also have the policies that will allow them take needed breaks for family based on their circumstances.

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1- not likely at all, 5- very likely), how likely would it be for you to request & participate in work- family policies (i.e. Parental Leave or Flexible Work Arrangement) if your family situation made that need applicable?**

A: 5

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not likely at all, 5-very likely), how likely do you think your male peers would request & participate in one of the company's work-family policies (i.e.**

**Parental Leave or Flexible Work Arrangement) if their family situation made that need applicable?**

A: 4 or 5. I personally don't see why males shouldn't if it is required in their situation.

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not influenced, 5-very likely to influence), how much of your decision to participate in the work-family policies influenced by your perception of what is accepted and expected by leadership/management and your male peers?**

A: 1

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not comfortable, 5-very comfortable) how comfortable do you feel in your ability to fully be yourself at work?**

A: 3

**Q: The "man box" refers to a set of beliefs, communicated by parents, families, the media, peers, and other members of society, that place pressure on men to act a certain way. These pressures tell men to be self-sufficient, to act tough, to be physically attractive in a certain way, to stick to rigid gender roles, to be heterosexual, to not cry or show emotion, and to use aggression to resolve conflicts. How much do these descriptions relate to something that you have experienced? What role does cultural differences (regional, ethnic, religious, class) if any, play in your attitudes to masculinity and allyship?**

A: Yes I have experienced this sort of expectation of assuming a certain masculine role and it has definitely impacted how I feel I can act in the workplace. I can't equate a certain thing that has changed my perception from a specific aspect of my culture.

**Q: When you see men and women paired together on television, in movies, or other media platforms, what tends to be their relationship?**

A: Romantic, friendship, coworkers, acquaintances

**Q: How often do you see women in leadership roles on television? Women of color?**

A: I definitely have noticed that it exists. With women of color, definitely less.

**Q: Does the way you see women in positions of power influence your view of women leaders?**

A: Yes I think television influences how I think about a lot of things.

**Q: Has the way you have seen women in positions of power on television influenced your actions or decisions to be an ally for women in your professional life?**

A: Probably but I can't think of a specific example

**Q: Do you fear ally-ship or resulting backlash based on how the media portrayal of women?**

**A:** No.



## **Interview #80**

**Q: How do you define allyship? Ally?**

**A:** I think of allyship as a commitment to understand, recognize, and address gender inequities both within a workplace and throughout society as a whole. An ally is someone who makes a conscious effort to listen to and learn from women about such inequities, working to eliminate any such sexism from his own behavior, and speaks up against any such discrimination that he observes either in the workplace or in other parts of life as well.

**Q: How do you help amplify women's voices, not competing with them for influence or for the sake of showcasing what an admirable feminist you are?**

**A:** After years of trying to listen to and learn about the struggles that women face, particularly in the professional and academic settings, I have worked to become conscious of situations in which women are overlooked in meetings or do not receive proper credit for their ideas and input. When I see this happen, I make a point of it to speak up, either to ensure that proper credit is given or that a woman who wants to speak is given the chance to do so. One way I will do so is to act like I have something to say myself, and then when called upon to speak, say something like "Yes, I believe that \_\_\_\_ had something to share." While there is the risk of coming across like this is just for show, I believe that when one's heart is in the right place, people are able to recognize as much and appreciate that it is being done in good faith.

**Q: How do you or will you open the doors to more participation from women and women of color?**

**A:** As someone who has planned and is in the process of planning several academic events, one thing that my peers and I have done is to make a conscious effort to ensure diversity on every panel, whenever possible. We make a point to identify qualified women, and particularly women of color, who can participate on each panel, and invite them. Although this is a rather small act in the grand scheme of things, it is a step towards normalizing a focus on diversity in such events going forward.

**Q: What are your ideas on hiring practices that are clear and transparent? blind résumé evaluation. evaluate résumés without names attached in order to reduce potential gender bias.**

**A:** I believe that such practices are very promising ideas to prevent biases in hiring. Additionally, I would look into other practices such as the NFL's "Rooney Rule," which requires teams to interview at least one diverse candidate for a head coaching vacancy. I know there is some debate about the effectiveness of such a rule (some teams seem to give these interviews just to check a box), but I believe that some version of this type of rule could be an effective tool to include in company hiring practices.

**Q: What work/life balance policies through flexible work policies, support systems are available?**

**A:** I think it is absolutely critical for companies to implement policies that allow employees, particularly women, to balance the demands of their work with other demands. If we have learned one thing from the Covid-19 pandemic, it is that a lot of tasks that previously were considered necessary to be done in-person can actually be done remotely. This should allow us to increase flexibility going forward, so that employees with family obligations can tailor their schedules around those obligations, perhaps doing more work from home. This is just one of the many ways we can work to make sure that women are not held back at work by family obligations.

**Q: How will you develop Certification programs like the Mansfield Principle which calls for 30 percent women in leadership?**

**A:** I believe that the Mansfield Rule is a very, very promising way forward and I would make sure it, along with other programs, are implemented at my firm if I have the opportunity. Statistics demonstrate that the Mansfield Rule is quite effective in terms of increasing diversity in leadership and promoting women into leadership roles.

**Q: How is the MeToo movement shaping norms of masculinity?**

**A:** I believe that the MeToo movement is doing an effective job of chipping away at the general public's acceptance of toxic masculine behaviors. What may have once been dismissed or laughed off as "boys being boys" is now taken seriously, which is a great development. This major shift should instill a greater respect and awareness in men about what actions are and are not acceptable. Such awareness can only be a positive going forward. Ideally, more and more men will include proper treatment of women in their definition of "masculinity."

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not likely at all, 5-very likely), how likely would it be for you to request & participate in work-family policies (i.e. Parental Leave or Flexible Work Arrangement) if your family situation made that need applicable?**

**A:** I would put this at a 5.

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not likely at all, 5-very likely), how likely do you think your male peers would request & participate in one of the company's work-family policies (i.e. Parental Leave or Flexible Work Arrangement) if their family situation made that need applicable?**

**A:** I would put this at a 5 as well. At least among the male peers I have now, I don't think any would hesitate to do so.

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not influenced, 5-very likely to influence), how much of your decision to participate in the work-family policies influenced by your perception of what is accepted and expected by leadership/management and your male peers?**

**A:** I would put this at a 4. Perhaps I am being naïve, but I would expect my male peers to be accepting of such decisions, and leadership as well. This would thus make me feel more comfortable in doing so. I suppose that if that were not the case, it would also cause at least some doubt to creep in about doing so.

**Q:** On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not comfortable, 5-very comfortable) how comfortable do you feel in your ability to fully be yourself at work? The “man box” refers to a set of beliefs, communicated by parents, families, the media, peers, and other members of society, that place pressure on men to act a certain way. These pressures tell men to be self-sufficient, to act tough, to be physically attractive in a certain way, to stick to rigid gender roles, to be heterosexual, to not cry or show emotion, and to use aggression to resolve conflicts. How much do these descriptions relate to something that you have experienced?

**A:** I would put that at a 5. I have never really felt like I had to be anything other than myself at work. I suppose I have probably been influenced by certain aspects of the “man box” beliefs, but I do not think they have been particularly relevant in my life. The one I would say I have felt the most pressure to live up to has been the self-sufficient part, instilled in me by my parents.

**Q:** When you see men and women paired together on television, in movies, or other media platforms, what tends to be their relationship?

**A:** I’d say the most common relationships are romantic ones, particularly involving a male protagonist. Other notable common relationships involve a male in a position of power or authority and a female subordinate, such as Harvey and Donna in Suits. However, I would note that increasingly, shows and movies have portrayed women as lead characters with men in support. One such example I thoroughly enjoy is Madam Secretary, where Secretary McCord is the lead character as Secretary of State and is supported by her husband as well as several men who are part of her staff.

## **Interview #81**

**Q: So the first thing I want to do is ask you some general demographic questions. What is your ethnicity, relationship status, and if you have any children?**

**A:** I'm a single, white man, and I do not have any children

**Q: Have you taken any concrete steps to serve women as an ally? Or any other marginalized groups? And if so, what do those steps look like?**

**A:** So right now I'm in "Diversity and Inclusion in the Law" and I've learned a lot in the class. I'd say that's the step I've taken that's the most active. I also just try to be aware of women's issues in general. And I try and be up to date on the feminist literature and, not that I'm reading anything in particular, just being aware of the issues.

**Q: Are you on the board of any student groups? And have they taken any steps to promote inclusivity and equality?**

**A:** I was on the board of a few last year. I was the symposium chair for the Entertainment and Sports Law Society, and when I did that I tried to make sure that I had a diverse panel. I tried to have 50% women and have people of color as well. It's not like I set markers or anything but it was definitely on my mind.

**Q: Great. So jumping to our questionnaire, first, how do you define allyship, and do you consider yourself to be an ally for women? And if so, how?**

**A:** I think there are a few steps. I think the first one is to be aware of the issues that women face in the workplace, and society at large. And supporting, in your personal day to day life, women to make sure that you can help remedy those issues. And also supporting general policies that will help limit the burdens that women face. And yea, I would consider myself an ally.

**Q: Awesome. So on that line of reasoning, how do you, personally, speak out for women when they're overlooked?**

**A:** So one thing I try and do is, when I am in a position of power, to make sure that women's voices are heard and that they are given active leadership roles. For example, the symposium, making sure that, in a symposium focused on sports and entertainment law, that we aren't just hearing from white men. I think that is important. And I think just making sure that, when I'm a part of a group that it's not just one white dude talking. And definitely, I try not to be that person.

**Q: So let's go further with this line of reasoning. What are your ideas with issues of gender bias in the work place?**

**A:** Well, I think the legal field is not diverse enough. I think it's something that they've really been struggling with. I know that specifically in regards to gender issues, there is a pretty significant motherhood bias. So, studies show that when women become mothers, it's kind of

looked down upon and they're valued less at the firm, and less likely to receive partner track, than if they had been a man or even a single woman. I think that kind of limiting that bias is one of the more important things that can be done, Things like making sure that there is significant maternity leave but also that this doesn't hinder their career in any significant way, and that they be considered just the same as they would have been had they not had a kid.

I also know that there are studies that show that if a woman leaves work to go take care of her kids, it's looked down upon. But if a man does the same thing, he'd be considered "such a great guy" and it kind of goes to this expectation that we have of mothers as kind of being at home and all that.

**Q: No I completely agree, and it's interesting that you bring those facts up because we talked about these issues in class and they're completely supported by a lot of the literature we've read.**

**So going down that path, let's say you were in charge of the company/law firm. What ways would you try to attract diverse talent pools? Maybe in the form of eliminating gender bias in performance reviews, or blind resumes, things along those lines.**

**A:** Yea, I think definitely blind resumes are a big step. As you know, women and people of color are graded kind of more harshly than their white counterparts, even when they turn in the exact same work. And that resumes with generic white names are more likely to get a callback than somebody who's clear from their resume that they're a diverse candidate. So I think looking blindly would be a big one. Recruiting at HBCUs and making sure that you're attracting a diverse talent pool. And maybe not setting a hard quota, but trying to make sure that you have something close to 50% women in your incoming class. And for a law firm, that may be difficult because you don't know exactly who's going to accept the offers they get, but I think you could give 50% offers to men and women and that would be a really important kind of step in the right direction.

**Q: Definitely. And, I think all of those are really good in thinking about the hiring process and specifically getting women a seat at the table. But further on, we know there are issues, regarding how women are treated at their jobs, such as with performance reviews and promotions. And I think you touched on that a little bit, but I want to press you further down that avenue. Maybe when it comes to work leave policies, or flex time?**

**A:** Yea so as far as performance reviews, to be honest I'm not totally sure how gender would play a pivotal role other than the mothership bias that I was mentioning earlier, and I think the most important thing is that you give people substantive work once available. You can have a diverse set of attorneys coming into your firm but if the only people handing out the work are white men, they're probably going to be more likely to give the kind of harder more substantive work in which an attorney could prove themselves to a white man as well. So I think setting up a process for the distribution of work in which race or gender doesn't play a role at all is an important step. I think a lot of the issues stem from the fact that women and people of color are less likely to get the kind of important work, and therefore their performance reviews might suffer because they haven't had a chance to prove themselves.

**Q: So as far as structuring companies, and implementing those policies, you think those start at the top?**

**A:** Yea, but I don't think it doesn't just end with the hiring of people. You have to make sure that you have structures in place that will allow your diverse attorneys and employees to get great experience and get substantive work and that you make sure you don't give all of the kind of really interesting stuff to the white attorneys you've got.

**Q: Definitely. And as far as, thinking of ways to make those changes, how would you, or what incentives do you think we could have to improve a focus on diversity? Or at least mitigate the lack thereof.**

**A:** So as far as incentives, I know that there are, specifically for law firms – a lot of clients, a lot of fortune 500 companies have diversity requirements and they won't hire law firms that don't have a strong enough diversity. So I think there has been relatively significant external pressures from the clients and the major companies who hire big law firms and that kind of thing, which is good and which I think should continue. I think the requirements that the clients set should be progressively heightened as well, so it's harder and harder to meet them. I'm actually researching for a paper in my diversity and inclusion in the law class on the kind of business case for diversity.

**Q: Can you tell me more about that? Because that seems incredibly relevant to what we're talking about.**

**A:** Haha, yea it is. So the problem with most of the business case is that most of it is correlation and not necessarily causal, but there is a pretty clear correlation between how diverse a company is and how well it performs. Again, that doesn't necessarily mean that they're performing BECAUSE they're more diverse, BUT I guess it's better to have correlation than nothing. And as far as the kind of clients being those pushing for diversity, there's this one 2011 survey I found, which found that 12.5% of corporations have reduced or terminated the use of outside council firms due to poor diversity performance. I mean 12.5% is quite a bit, so clearly there are external pressures here that are forcing firms to take action. And then, even though as I mentioned, I think McKenzie did a study that found that when boards have more women, the companies perform better. Again, that's not causal.

**Q: No no, we in class read some pieces exactly on that. We looked at a survey of European corporations and found that exact correlative direction of response, so I wouldn't say any of this is unfounded.**

**A:** No yea, it's founded. Now truthfully I'm not sure if I can say for certain if it means all that much since it's not a causal connection, but there are studies that show- well I guess the point is that it's not just having a diverse workforce, but really what you do with them once they're in the door. And you have to foster an inclusive community as well because if you have a diverse workforce but diverse points of view and cultural backgrounds that aren't respected or listened to, then it doesn't matter. So it's not just having a kind of diversity for the sake of having diversity, but you have to foster a kind of corporate community in which diverse viewpoints and

people can actually be diverse comfortably and be themselves. So it also matter what happens when people have their foot in the door.

**Q: Absolutely. So, to change gears a little bit here, one of the things we discussed a lot in class was allyship with the MeToo movement. And I have a couple questions on this point. First, how is the MeToo movement shaping norms for masculinity, in your opinion?**

**A:** Well I think it's definitely making men more aware of consent I would say. And I think I'm now more aware of how they treat women in the workplace. And I would hope it's making men less likely to be creeps.

**Q: Yea, and following that point. One thing we talked about was that men mentoring women can make a large impact in being that proper role model. Do you ever fear backlash on talking about issues like these? Whether it be taking certain stances or even having these conversations?**

**A:** No, no I don't think so. And like, maybe that's the privilege of being a white man but if anything I think that my career will be helped by being an ally.

**Q: Awesome, that's great to hear. So moving on to allyship and work family policies. Work family laws have the potential to advance a radical substantive equality approach which seeks to protect the rights of both men and women. And these policies are key to, like going back to Ruth Bader Ginsburg, before she was on the Supreme Court arguing for work family policies that were gender neutral. And the gendered nature of family leave policies result in subordinating women instead of just letting these policies be equal for both genders.**

**So, as an ally, how can you transform the social value attached to child-care including the role of both parents in equal caregiving?**

**A:** Well I think one of the most important things is to have long maternity and paternity leave. And I think that they should be the same amount of time. And I think that they should be mandatory for at least a certain amount of time. So, if a dad has a kid he has to take the time off. Because my guess is that, men would be much less likely to take advantage of it for fear of kind of repercussions in the workplace. But, if you make it mandatory, then it's mandatory and they have no choice. So I think that's one of the most important things, make it long and make it available for both moms and dads.

And then, also I think just kind of like the study I mentioned where the mom has to leave work to go take care of the kids and it's looked down upon, but when the dad does it, it's just "wow what a great guy, handling work and his kids" and all that. I guess that's great for me as a white man, but not so great for women, and it's a problem. I don't think that there should be that stigma.

Another study I looked at found that when a woman is a mom, even if she has the same resume- well how the study worked was they had a group of students evaluate a candidate and that candidate was either a mom or single. When they were looking at a mom, they were less likely to think that she should do the job, and they also offered her \$11,000 less than if she'd been single. Which is a lot of money, and totally perverse, especially since she has a kid which would mean she'd have more expenses and should need more money. So I don't know how to get rid of those

biases, but coming up with creative solutions is definitely important. And I think that starts with equality between maternity and paternity leave.

**Q: Right right. So we're nearing the end here, but I have first a few questions that are on a scale of 1 to 5, 1 being not likely and 5 being very likely. How likely would it be for you to request and participate in work-family policies like paternal leave or flexible work arrangements if you were in an applicable situation?**

**A: 4.5**

**Q: Ok, so using the same scale, how do you think your male peers would answer?**

**A: 2.5**

**Q: And on a scale of 1 to 5 1 being not influence and 5 being very likely influence, how much of your decision to participate in the work-family policies influenced by your perception of what is accepted and expected by leadership/management and your male peers?**

**A:** So I think it's influenced a lot by my perception on leadership, and not at all based on my male peers. So I think it would be 5 and 1 respectively.

**Q: Ok, so on a scale from 1 to 5, 1 being not comfortable, and 5 being very comfortable, how comfortable do you feel in your ability to be fully yourself at work?**

**A: 3.5**

**Q: Ok, so one of the concepts we talked about was something very close to that exactly, called the "man box". This refers to set of beliefs, communicated by parents, families, the media, peers, and other members of society, that place pressure on men to act a certain way. These pressures tell men to be self-sufficient, to act tough, to be physically attractive in a certain way, to stick to rigid gender roles, to be heterosexual, to not cry or show emotion, and to use aggression to resolve conflicts.**

**How much do these descriptions relate to something that you have experienced?**

**A:** I don't know. This is a tough one, I feel like it would be really weird if I cried at work for example. Without a really good reason I guess. So yea I guess I've experienced that, I think there are some things that are- you definitely want to keep your cool when you're in the workplace, you don't want to get too angry or get too upset. But usually that hasn't been something that's been difficult for me. But yea, I do think there is pressure to not, show your emotions too much.

**Q: What role does cultural differences, like regional, ethnic, religious, class, if any, play in your attitudes to masculinity and allyship?**

**A:** I think the kind of "I'm a male ally in spite of my culture not because of it" is important. I'm from Trump country, rural, poor, white, upstate New York. Where being a "meninist" is more



common among the men than being a feminist. So, but like, I have a very liberal family, so that's kind of the reason I am the way that I am. So as far as like, that being my culture, I don't think that it's influenced my views on allyship.

**Q: So do you think it's more from your family?**

A: Definitely my family yea. And you know, it's also just the right thing to do I guess haha

**Q: Ok, so the last topic here is on gender norms and media portrayal. I'm just curious as far as, how you see women and men being paired on TV or movies, or other media platforms. What that relationship tends to be, how you think women tend to be viewed in the media, just your take on the status quo.**

A: As far as viewed in the media, I think the relationship that men and women have on TV is usually romantic. I've been binge watching Madmen like crazy

**Q: Oh that's my favorite show, where are you in it?**

A: Oh it's so good, I'm in the middle of season 4. And, well I guess the point is whenever a new attractive woman comes on the show you know Don is going to take maybe 3 episodes at most before he cheats on his wife again haha. So yea most of the time, women are just being in relationships with lead men

**Q: And do you think the way that media portrays women like this, influences your view on women? Specifically women leaders?**

A: No I don't think so. I mean, there are fortunately some great women leaders in the world, and I do think that the portrayal in media is changing. And part of the reason I use MadMen as an example is that it took place in the 60s so it is a different time, and so we do have now shows like Orange is the New Black, and tons of shows in which women play important lead roles. Even Game of Thrones, I mean a lot of them were crazy but some of them were pretty awesome too.

**Q: Lastly, just to wrap things up, do you fear allyship or resulting backlash based on how the media portrays women?**

A: No, not really. I mean there are I guess some backlash. Some of it is kind of ridiculous, like Ben Shapiro reading out the lyrics to WAP and stuff like that. Talking about how they have a disease and some nonsense like that. So anyway, no not really I don't know. I think most of it is a little bit ridiculous.

**Q: Ok great, that's really all we have, thanks so much for doing this. I appreciate it a ton, and if you have any closing remarks, I'd love to hear them.**

A: Uh no, I think I'm all good. Great talking with you.

## **Interview #82**

**Q: How do you define allyship and do you consider yourself to be an ally for women?**

**A:** Being an ally to women means making sure they are included in every aspect of the workplace. It means bringing up women's names in conversation and evaluating and rewarding people based on their capabilities rather than their gender. It also means standing up for women in a respectful way that may include speaking to the individual who undermined a woman because of their gender as a way to address the problem without exacerbating it. Although I do not have much job experience yet, I fully intend to be an ally for women in the workplace and feel that I have demonstrated that allyship in the work I have done here at Penn within the clubs I participate in.

**Q: How do you speak up for women when they are overlooked? What about specifically women of color?**

**A:** I think the way you speak up for women in different situations is very contextual – you have to know the situation and as a white male I try to speak up in ways that don't come off as speaking up just to make myself look good but rather in ways that will get to the root of the problem. I prefer private discussions with other individuals who have expressed certain gender biases to prevent the issue from spreading.

**Q: How do you or will you open doors to more participation from women or women of color?**

**A:** Although I don't love saying this, I think you have to establish yourself first to be in the position to help open doors for others, because the only way to affect change is to be established enough to have credibility among your peers. Once I have reached this point I will do everything in my power to make sure to maintain a diverse workplace with women and women of color. I will also do my best to make sure they achieve prestigious positions within the workplace, which could include introducing them to high level individuals or mentioning their name in conversations. A good analogy to this point is that in sports it is difficult for a true freshman to have enough credibility to change the culture of a team, however once that athlete has established themselves they will be in a position to affect meaningful change.

**Q: How would you help your company develop programs to attract a diverse talent pool?**

**A:** Although affinity groups are important, I think to breed diversity it's important to make the workplace more integrated – for example if you're in the black affinity group those should not be the only people you hang out with. Everyone should be there for each other in the bigger scheme of things because it should be an inclusive group of people working towards a common goal. Plus I do not think you can enforce a diverse culture, it is rather something you have to develop over time. For example, people of minority status should not be promoted just to increase the diversity numbers at the firm but should rather be naturally taken through the process and given the opportunity to obtain prestigious positions in the workplace. Plus, if a minority employee

performs poorly on an assignment it should be enforced that this does not reflect poorly on the entire minority group itself, which is something that cultural stereotypes have a tendency to do.

**Q: What are your ideas on hiring practices that are clear and transparent? Should there be blind resume evaluation without names/gender/race attached to reduce potential bias?**

**A:** Blind resume reviews are great and should exist as part of the interview process to prevent bias against underrepresented groups. However I do believe that interviews allow you to get to know more about a person than just what you can see on paper and looking at a blind resume doesn't allow you to understand the circumstantial reasoning behind someone's past experiences or their motivation behind the work that they do. In all I think employment decisions should be made holistically with both an initial blind resume review process then an interview process.

**Q: How would you eliminate gender bias in performance reviews?**

**A:** A diverse committee should complete all workplace evaluations and feedback should be evaluated in an objective way that allows individuals to obtain constructive feedback from those higher up in the company.

**Q: What work/life balance policies would you implement to promote diversity in the workplace, and specifically support working mothers?**

**A:** First off, you never want anyone to be penalized for having a child, it's just a natural thing that women have to deal with while men do not. So there should be a lot of emphasis on adding flexibility in terms of hours and implementing work from home policies that allow women to care for their kids while also maintaining their job. Performance evaluations should not be hindered in a year where a woman is having a kid, which can be addressed through uniform performance standards as noted earlier. I think it is also important that employers sit down and have an open conversation with working mothers and ask them exactly what they need in order to be able to balance work and family, as a way to make this process a two-sided conversation.

**Q: Men mentoring women can make a large impact, however in this situation do you fear backlash?**

**A:** I personally do not fear backlash and have never had a negative experience when mentoring women. You can be clear that this is a professional mentorship relationship and nothing more than that. But I think it is important to warn the women that if they are ever uncomfortable they should voice that and relevant changes should be made.

**Q: What are your views on work-family policies, such as parent leave, flex time, and part-time work? (maternity and paternity leave)**

**A:** The firm should establish expectations in terms of what work needs to get done in periods of parental leave or flex time and then should provide employees with flexibility in terms of hours and working from home, as long as the expected work gets done. There should be a relationship

of trust between the employer and employee and as long as the work is getting done proficiently there should be no problems.

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not likely at all, 5-very likely), how likely would it be for you to request & participate in work-family policies (i.e. Parental Leave or Flexible Work Arrangement) if your family situation made that need applicable?**

**A:** 4 – I would like to do everything I can to be with my family while also balancing work and I would definitely request time off or flex time in situations where it was needed.

### **Interview #83**

**Q: How do you define allyship and do you consider yourself to be an ally for women?**

**A:** Allyship is supporting women in a way that allows them to achieve equality in the workplace and helping them overcome battles or potential biases that they may face in the professional workspace which would break down barriers and allow them to progress further in their careers.

**Q: How do you speak up for women when they are overlooked? What about specifically women of color?**

**A:** Generally if a woman is being talked over or what they're saying is being ignored I'll definitely try to highlight their opinion and make sure their arguments are pointed out. I think a woman's opinion is just as valuable as a man's so their ideas should be given just as much weight.

**Q: How do you or will you open doors to more participation from women or women of color?**

**A:** A lot of times at work or in general (even at Penn Law) you see boys clubs forming, which happens naturally. However this tends to perpetuate the separation of women and men which should not be the case. We should make sure that all groups, whether it be study groups, social groups, or sports groups, are open to men and women to foster an inclusive environment.

**Q: How would you help your company develop programs to attract a diverse talent pool?**

**A:** As I mentioned earlier, I think it's important to make it known that all practice areas and all groups within a company are open to women and men equally, along with women of color, to attract a diverse range of candidates that can feel like they will truly fit in at the company and have an equal opportunity in getting the work they would like to do or the promotions they would like to receive.

**Q: What are your ideas on hiring practices that are clear and transparent? Should there be blind resume evaluation without names/gender/race attached to reduce potential bias?**

**A:** Yes there should be blind resume review – but it's difficult to keep it blind all the way through the interview process. I think when you get deeper into the interview process a face to face interview may be too important to both parties to do away with, but initially when screening employees I think it would be a good way to do an unbiased review of candidates.

**Q: How would you eliminate gender bias in performance reviews?**

**A:** Focus reviews more on quantitative benchmarks to get rid of bias, because then it would be harder to let personal bias slip in. It is also important to have a diverse committee performing these evaluations so multiple perspectives are brought to the table.

**Q: What work/life balance policies would you implement to promote diversity in the workplace, and specifically support working mothers?**

**A:** Generous maternity leave policies should be implemented, and it should be a matter of months not just weeks. I also think that if feasible, having a nursery in the office could be a very helpful way to allow women to balance work with raising a child. Plus when a woman does come back from maternity leave they should have extra leeway in terms of working from home to address any extra needs their child may have.

**Q: Men mentoring women can make a large impact, however in this situation do you fear backlash?**

**A:** You do have to be careful in the situation of males mentoring females because it does add a background worry. However this isn't something I really worry about personally and have never had a problem with it in the past.

**Q: As an ally how will you help prevent retaliation and unequal treatment upon parental leave?**

**A:** It's important to make sure parental leave has no effect on performance evaluations or promotion opportunities. Parental leave should be widely accepted and respected within companies and no harm should come from it.

**Q: What are your views on work-family policies, such as parent leave, flex time, and part-time work?**

**A:** I am very much in favor of parent leave and flex time policies. And even when it comes to paternity leave, I think it should be widely practiced because it gives couples the option to decide who should take the work hit because it does have the potential of being a career hit to either party. So I think that although women should always have maternity leave, males should always be given the same option.

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not likely at all, 5-very likely), how likely would it be for you to request & participate in work-family policies (i.e. Parental Leave or Flexible Work Arrangement) if your family situation made that need applicable?**

**A:** 5, I plan to take part in work family policies in the future.

## **Interview #84**

**Q: Do you consider yourself to be an ally for women? How so?**

A: Yes, I was raised by a women and obviously want to see them do well.

**Q: Do you notice exclusion every day? Do you notice who are not there? Are you proactive?**

A: Yes, among senior management at my old job (in a male dominated field) there were not many women or minorities. Among employees of my rank there was representation.

**Q: Do you attribute an idea to a woman who offered it, and you endorse worthy ideas and ensure the appropriate person is remembered for them?**

A: Yes, I believe in giving credit where credit is due no matter who brought forth the idea.

**Q: What are your ideas on hiring practices that are clear and transparent? blind résumé evaluation. evaluate résumés without names attached in order to reduce potential gender bias.**

A: Yes, studies have shown that there are implicit biases connected to names, so I believe in removing the name from process completely.

**Q: How would you boost gender diversity within their own operations improving retention, and lowering the considerable cost of staff turnover?**

A: By making sure diverse voices are heard, open door policies, anonymous feedback, mentoring females in the field, mentoring males on how to become better allies.

**Q: How will you structure a company's core mission on diversity?**

A: I would ensure that diversity is represented at all levels of the companies, that diverse voices are heard and that diverse perspectives are celebrated.

**Q: How would you create processes and incentives for those in the firm/ company to serve as a mentor for women in the community, particularly those seeking to engage in industries that have historically been difficult for women to penetrate?**

A: I believe that diverse mentorship should be part of employee performance reviews. If senior management is only taking the time to mentor one type of person, that is a detriment to the company.

**Q: How is the MeToo movement shaping norms of masculinity?**

**A:** Since the MeToo movement I've noticed a shift in the media's perception of masculinity. The media has been slowly accepting a less ridged standard of masculinity. For example, the recent Harry Styles vogue cover.

**Q: Men mentoring women can make a large impact. Do you fear a backlash?**

**A:** No. It is important to recognize the time and place for mentorship, but no.

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not likely at all, 5-very likely), how likely would it be for you to request & participate in work-family policies (i.e. Parental Leave or Flexible Work Arrangement) if your family situation made that need applicable?**

**A:** 4

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not likely at all, 5-very likely), how likely do you think your male peers would request & participate in one of the company's work-family policies (i.e. Parental Leave or Flexible Work Arrangement) if their family situation made that need applicable?**

**A:** 3

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not influenced, 5-very likely to influence), how much of your decision to participate in the work-family policies influenced by your perception of what is accepted and expected by leadership/management and your male peers?**

**A:** 1

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not comfortable, 5-very comfortable) how comfortable do you feel in your ability to fully be yourself at work?**

**A:** 3

**Q: When you see men and women paired together on television, in movies, or other media platforms, what tends to be their relationship?**

**A:** Usually a romantic relationship

**Q: How often do you see women in leadership roles on television? Women of color?**

**A:** In the past not as much but now, fairly often.



## **Interview #85**

**Q: Do you consider yourself to be an ally for women? How so?**

**A:** Yes. I think I am supportive of the women in my life. For example, my girlfriend is currently working to break into the field I work in. I'm really excited for her and have been doing everything I can to help her succeed. There is a serious shortage of women in the field so I'm happy to help.

**Q: Do you notice exclusion every day? Do you notice who are not there? Are you proactive?**

**A:** Yes, I notice that my coworkers are mostly white men. The company is small though, less than 20 employees, so there isn't any overt exclusion within the office.

**Q: Do you attribute an idea to a woman who offered it, and you endorse worthy ideas and ensure the appropriate person is remembered for them?**

**A:** Yes, my boss is actually a woman so her ideas dictate my life. But like I said the company is small, we don't have many right now women despite the recruiting efforts. When another woman joins the team I'm sure her ideas will be respected the same as anyone else.

**Q: What are your ideas on hiring practices that are clear and transparent? blind résumé evaluation. evaluate résumés without names attached in order to reduce potential gender bias.**

**A:** Yes I think that is a great idea. It is a simple solution to an important problem.

**Q: How will you structure a company's core mission on diversity?**

**A:** Personally I'd like to see diversity at all levels of a company. It's just tough since there is a major shortage of diverse candidates in my field. I hope the pipeline issue resolves in the future so that mission can become a reality.

**Q: How would you create processes and incentives for those in the firm/ company to serve as a mentor for women in the community, particularly those seeking to engage in industries that have historically been difficult for women to penetrate?**

**A:** Everyone is very busy, especially my superiors. They hardly have time for lunch themselves. People are going to see that hour out to lunch with a mentee as another hour they are going to have to stay at work that night, and one less hour with their family which they already barely get to see. The only way I see a mentor program like that working is if the company mandated it and reimbursed lunches with the mentee. Hopefully a few reimbursed lunches would be enough to kickstart an organic relationship. Providing a strong incentive is key. In general I think

mentorship programs will be more successful in a typical 9-5 environment. It's hard to get people genuinely interested in mentoring when they are working 100 hours a week.

**Q: Men mentoring women can make a large impact. Do you fear a backlash?**

A: Sure I do. But I have not formally mentored anyone yet so I can't speak to how I would feel about having a female mentee.

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not likely at all, 5-very likely), how likely would it be for you to request & participate in work-family policies (i.e. Parental Leave or Flexible Work Arrangement) if your family situation made that need applicable?**

A: 3. I would love take at least a brief paternity leave if I can, but it really depends on my workload at the time.

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not likely at all, 5-very likely), how likely do you think your male peers would request & participate in one of the company's work-family policies (i.e. Parental Leave or Flexible Work Arrangement) if their family situation made that need applicable?**

A: 2. It's really hard. I have a colleague whose wife is due in a couple weeks, but he is staffed on two very important deals right now that require 24/7 attention. He's working at least 130 hours a week right now with no end in sight. I have a feeling he won't be meeting his kid until 2021.

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not influenced, 5-very likely to influence), how much of your decision to participate in the work-family policies influenced by your perception of what is accepted and expected by leadership/management and your male peers?**

A: 5. It's tough. If you go to management to talk about time off for family leave, they will tell you to absolutely take it. And honestly, I think that management really thinks that they mean it when they say that. But when it comes down to it, if you aren't there to do the work, someone else is. It's a messed up system we live in, but its true. Taking a month, or two or three off of work is detrimental to your career. My field isn't conducive to part time work either. It's just not a very family friendly field in general. Before COVID a lot of my colleagues were seeing their kids once or twice a week.

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not comfortable, 5-very comfortable) how comfortable do you feel in your ability to fully be yourself at work?**

A: 4. About as comfortable as I can be while still remaining somewhat professional.

**Q: When you see men and women paired together on television, in movies, or other media platforms, what tends to be their relationship?**

A: Usually romantic

**Q: How often do you see women in leadership roles on television? Women of color?**

**A:** All the time. There are a lot more women in leadership roles on TV in 2020. I think right now TV is in the middle of a huge market correction in that respect.

## **Interview #86**

### **Q: How do you define allyship? Ally?**

**A:** I think allyship is about being there as a resource for someone. I think sometimes you say you're an ally, but you're not really giving them the power to speak their minds. It is sometimes easy for people to place their own thoughts onto someone else's just because that's how you assume things. I think for allies, it is important to be there if needed, whether that's attending an event, speaking out for someone who may be in the minority, or just advocating when there is an imbalance of power or gender. I think those things are just examples of how someone can become an ally.

### **Q: Do you consider yourself to be an ally for women? How so?**

**A:** I think I try my best. I think there's still a lot that I need to improve on. But I think for the most part, yes. For example, in group settings, like when there is a teamwork assignment, I try to include as many women as possible in the conversation. Within the law school community, there are always petitions floating around, and it is important to show that you care by signing those petitions. And telling people that you know, although you're a man, you still care about these causes and still form a sense of solidarity. Those are some examples, but sometimes it is hard too. Especially in a workplace that consists of mostly men, sometimes there are jokes and stuff like that. And I do think that like, at least in my undergrad, it was hard for me to speak up just because I was afraid of how the other men would think of me. Sometimes, it could just be an innocent joke, and I understand that and know that the man doesn't mean any harm, but sometimes I don't know how the woman perceives the situation. Sometimes I don't really ask or follow up to continue that conversation to find out if that joke was insensitive to her. So I think there's a lot I can do, and I look forward to kind of getting better at it in the workplace.

### **Q: How do you speak up for women when they are overlooked?**

**A:** Even if something is already settled, I make sure to ask the opinions of women and just say, "Do you have anything to add?" I think some women are more timid than others, which I completely understand, especially when there is an imbalance of gender on the team. So I think it's important to include as many people as possible in the conversation.

### **Q: Data has shown that when women do speak out, they can be ignored, or have their ideas taken. As an ally, how will you address this?**

**A:** It should be a habit that everyone should cultivate. I think it shouldn't just apply to women but also to men. When someone comes up with an idea, you need to give credit to that person for coming up with that idea. I know sometimes in the workplace, when you are at a higher level, you tend to not purposefully take credit, but an email may be submitted to your supervisor, and you don't list the people that helped you on that work product. I think, you know, it should be something that one should adopt because that is one way to maintain that motivation in the people under you. If you don't really acknowledge their contribution, they have no incentive to work hard and be a team player. SO I think it's all about being mindful when you write the work

product of who has helped you or assisted you. I think law school is a good forum to cultivate that habit because whenever you turn in something or write a paper, in the footnotes, the first thing you do is write who has helped me in preparing for this report and stuff like that. I think it's about giving credit where it's due. I think it's something that should apply to women but also men, but I think women tend to get ignored more often than men because, perhaps, when they speak up, they are not really noticed, or some men have an internal bias against women's opinions. You know, I have been in a situation, like group projects, where an opinion is expressed by both a man and woman, but the credit is only given to the man, not the woman. So I just think it's about trying to purposefully eliminate that internal bias, and whenever a woman speaks, take their opinions seriously. As an ally, it is definitely easy to respect women's opinions, but I think for some men in the workplace, it might be hard because of how they grew up and also how they have been functioning for many, many years.

**Q: Do you attribute an idea to a woman who offered it, and you endorse worthy ideas and ensure the appropriate person is remembered for them?**

**A:** Yes, definitely. It is important to encourage and motivate the team by saying that the work is really appreciated and very much acknowledged whenever it is passed on to other people. Taking someone else's idea is definitely some form of plagiarism—you are taking someone's work and putting your name on it. I don't think that should be any different in the workplace. At least, I think, if it's not too much work, you should acknowledge what each person said. I think at the very least, what one can do is include the team members' names whenever you are submitting a work product so that your supervisor knows who has really helped out with the work.

**Q: What are your ideas on hiring practices that are clear and transparent? blind résumé evaluation, evaluate résumés without names attached in order to reduce potential gender bias.**

**A:** I think the first step is to include more women and more diverse individuals in these hiring processes. If you invite them to interviews and to serve on hiring committees, that is one way to eliminate any bias. Also, I think the decision process needs to be transparent, and blind résumés and evaluations are great methods, but I also think it is important to come up with a set of objective criteria and even assign points to each and also have comments on the side to explain why you picked a certain point to make the process very transparent. I think feedback is also important. Post-interview, I think it's important for the interviewer to communicate to women how they did and how they can improve in the future to make everything really transparent based on an objective rubric. I think for the interviews, too, it's important to have a very structured process; I think for some positions, there's always a side process as opposed to a very general process. I think the side processes are very subject to like who you know and also very vague standards. I think the interview process has to be very transparent so that the candidates know exactly what they are getting themselves into and how to do their best during these interviews, like focusing on the interviews themselves instead of worrying about who's going to interview me or the probability that other people are interviewing with a different process. I think that's very important.

**Q: Is women's empowerment part of the empowerment of women and part of corporate social responsibility efforts?**

**A:** I think definitely. I think CSR initiatives are pretty expansive, and I do think equality should be one of those areas of focus. I think female empowerment assumes that there is an imbalance of power, and there is definitely more power attributed to men in the workplace than to women. In order to achieve equality and bring out the best selves in every stakeholder and for the company's own success, you do need to have that as part of the CSR initiatives.

**Q: How is the MeToo movement shaping norms of masculinity?**

**A:** I think the MeToo movement is important because it doesn't just shed light on women being mistreated; it also sheds light on the toxic environment that a lot of organizations have that is also directed at those who are less masculine or do not live up to these perceived standards. I think one of the things that I read is that Harvey Weinstein would not only be very rude and sexually harass women, but he would also call male colleagues names who were not as strong or assertive as he was. I think that is really part of sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is sex-based discrimination for women, women of color, as well as men. I think the MeToo movement helped redefine sexual harassment and make the scope more inclusive.

**Q: Supportive work-family policies have become increasingly more common. However, research shows that men's responses to these policies are shaped less by their own personal beliefs and by their perceptions of what is accepted and expected by their male peers. What are your views on work-family policies, such as parent leave, flextime, and part-time work?**

**A:** I think one of the reasons that men don't really take those options could be that they don't want to miss out because I feel like sometimes when women take these leaves, they do have a period in which they are not able to develop their skills and advance in a corporation. I think men sometimes feel obligated to work during that period so that they are not missing out. I think that's a fair concern. I do think, especially when your partner, assuming a heterosexual relationship, takes that option, you feel like there's room for you to continue working, but also, it's not really healthy. It doesn't really contribute to a healthy environment. I do think that it's something that the companies need to be more mindful of. Whether that is in their promotion policy, stating very clearly that they do not take these family leave periods into account or encourage more men to take these options, even in the form of incentives. For example, offer pay or just a more flexible work schedule, stuff like that. I think it's important but also hard. Companies are more driven by profit over their employees' well-being. Also, if there is no industry-wide initiative, it is really hard for one company to spearhead or take the lead. So I think this needs to be an industry-wide practice. I think it takes time. I do, however, think people nowadays are more concerned about work-life balance.

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not comfortable, 5-very comfortable) how comfortable do you feel in your ability to fully be yourself at work?**

**A:** It's really hard to say because every job is different, and every law firm is different. I think in some law firms, I can be completely myself and act the same way, but with other law firms,

sometimes you need to change the way you do things to fit in. I think culture is important, and you want to be a team player, so you need to adjust your style. For law firms in general, I would say a 3-4 because I think most law firms are very inclusive. Most people focus on the work rather than just who you know and how chummy you are with your supervisor, but obviously, you need to get along with your team.

**Q: How often do you see women in leadership roles on television? Women of color?**

**A:** Not often enough. I will say I think sometimes you get the sense that there are a lot of women in power because whenever there is one, their presence is sort of magnified, and there's a spotlight on them. I do think there is still a long way to go. I think it is hard to say because I feel like there is a lot, but I am pretty sure that at least 80% of the people in power are men.

## **Interview #87**

### **Q: How do you define allyship? Ally?**

**A:** To me, essentially, what it's doing is providing opportunities to everyone, including people who previously have not been given the proper opportunity. So it's a combination of equal opportunity and also assisting people that are disadvantaged in the workplace. So that could be underrepresented minorities that could be gender and women that could be people from LGBTQ backgrounds. It could be a lack of diversity in terms of representation in certain areas as well. I know within the legal profession lack of diversity is a big problem.

### **Q: Do you consider yourself to be an ally for women? How so?**

**A:** Yeah, I absolutely do. I consider myself to be an ally in terms of, you know, supporting their efforts to have the same opportunity to have leadership positions. One thing that I think is critical is that there are many instances where women have not had the same leadership opportunities as men. Even though they're more than qualified to have these positions and you could look at the CEOs of Fortune 500 Companies, and they're predominantly male. In sports, I'm a huge sports fan; there's some news last week, as the Miami Marlins hired the first female general manager in Major League Baseball. My favorite team is the Chicago Cubs, and I watch every game. The Cubs President of Baseball Operations, Theo Epstein, after the George Floyd tragedy said in an introspective interview, "Well, why am I sort of hiring only people that share my background and look just like me." I thought to myself and just realized that the Cubs front office lacks diversity. I think it was nice of him to be introspective and realize that we need to have more diversity within the game. I just feel like putting women in positions of leadership because they're qualified is what allies can do. I'm hoping that more people, like Theo himself stated, and leaders in other industries recognize that this is something that needs to be more widespread.

### **Q: How do you bolster and draw attention to women's voices, and the voices of women of color?**

**A:** So I think it is critical that you listen to everyone's perspectives, and I think it's important for people to pinpoint what they are advocating for. It is important to support those advocacy efforts, especially in the context of equal opportunity. So in the baseball example I gave, if you want to increase representation of women in leadership positions across sports and you have someone advocating for it who happens to be a woman. You need more people to listen and then support initiatives and actually become advocates. So whether that means in a front office hiring people from a different background, if it means listening to how can we improve training so that more people are qualified. With the Marlins GM who was just hired, I read a bunch of reports, and she's more than qualified for the role and has been for a long time. We need to get more people from underrepresented backgrounds, whether it be race or gender, into those positions where they are qualified for them because then it's easier to say oh, it wasn't just because they had less competition., they are truly qualified for this, and they would do a great job. It's a disservice that they have not been given an opportunity at this point. I think the more we could help get people to get experience is important for women.



**Q: What is proactive allyship? How do you behave when women or other members of minority groups are not in the room?**

**A:** Generally, what you do is when you hear things, you know, when people say certain things that may not be deemed as an equal opportunity or supporting those efforts, you have to push back and say, “Well, that’s actually not true, and people are not given the same opportunities. When you’re in a room, you need to correct people and say, “This is actually not the case, and people from different backgrounds don’t have the same opportunities and don’t have leadership in many cases.” For example, yesterday was international men’s day, and many women’s advocacy groups framed it as a thank you to all the men who are allies. I think that’s good because if you look through our history, we’ve had over 225 years of independence in this country. It has been hard for underrepresented groups to have representation, whether it be voting and politics or leadership positions in companies. This country is diversifying, but we have still not had a female president. It shows that people from different backgrounds have not been given this opportunity. You really have to tell people that it is time for a new type of leadership. I think everyone benefits because if you have different backgrounds, you bring in different perspectives. When we have more of those perspectives, there is less opportunity for groupthink and less opportunity to miss blind spots. I think that is proactive allyship. I think one important thing is that people realize that it is an ongoing effort to continue to improve equal opportunities to find ways to train people for leadership positions. You need to not just react to short term events but actually see this in advance. So, for example, after the tragedy of George Floyd in June, I saw a lot of companies respond, which was nice. It was great to see them put out statements about how they want to fight for racial justice, equality and how they want to improve diversity in hiring and improve capital access to minority communities that don’t have access. The risk is that you know an event happens, and then three or four months later, people forget about it. And then the next event happens years later, and then people start to advocate again. Why can’t we have a continuous process and say, “We need to always fight for this over a long period of time because, at the end of the day, this helps our society?”

**Q: Data has shown that when women do speak out, they can be ignored or have their ideas taken. As an ally, how will you address this?**

**A:** I’ve had experience in the workforce, and I’ve had women bosses, and they’ve been incredibly intelligent, motivating, and great mentors to me. Women bring a lot of creativity to the table, and when people take credit for their contributions, I think that’s really unfortunate. I think the best way to guard against that is to view yourself as part of a team. If you’re a male boss and you have a woman who is a really good employee who’s bringing lots of ideas to the table, then do speak up properly to acknowledge them and say she just had a really great idea and recognize her for her contributions. Maybe, also give women the platform to speak up more. So let’s say she says something, and someone takes the idea, why not let her expand on the idea more, why not after the meeting, take the initiative to immediately set up a meeting for 30 minutes like two days later and say, “Why don’t you present this idea to the bigger group?” So then they can get ownership of that idea, and it’s clear that it’s coming from them. That is how men in positions of power can support their team members. If you have more of a behind-the-scenes role, and this happens a lot, and I think this applies to men and women when you generally have a hierarchical structure where a subordinate will give an idea to the boss, then the boss will present it to the

whole team. And then, you know, the boss gets credit for it. I think it's better if the lower-level employee who started the idea is able to present. They may not be as experienced in terms of answering the questions, and it may be stressful for them, but it's a good learning experience. That way, they can take ownership. Even if you're the boss, it's still your team, and you're still benefiting when the team does well. So I think that's something that we can do to avoid women feeling that they have not been given the proper attribution for their rightful ideas.

**Q: What are your ideas on hiring practices that are clear and transparent? blind résumé evaluation. evaluate résumés without names attached in order to reduce potential gender bias.**

**A:** One thing that is helpful is that the legal industry has the Mansfield Rule, which sets metrics that if you have X number of minority or women partners, you meet the standards we set. I think, this year, a record number of firms signed onto this, which is a great initial step. I think metrics are very important. In terms of biases, managers need to realize how important it is to have a diverse workforce with people from different perspectives. When you have a diverse workforce with people from different perspectives, there is more creativity, less groupthink, and the team will perform better. Managers should undergo training that emphasizes the importance of having a diverse workforce. If they do end up hiring a team of employees that are predominantly not diverse, you can reiterate it should be a company mission to improve diversity in our hiring practices, which research backs up. I think you should have training sessions with the hiring managers and show quantifiable statistics and data that demonstrate the improvements to organizations when you do have multiple voices. We talk a lot about racial diversity, but it's also about age diversity. I have seen some discrimination against people that are older, maybe 60-65, but they still want to work and can bring a different perspective from someone who grew up in the 2000s. I think it's easier to have this in larger corporate workspaces because the numbers are more on your side. In smaller startups or smaller businesses, it is harder, but it is still really important to train hiring managers.

**Q: Is women's empowerment part of the empowerment of women and part of corporate social responsibility efforts?**

**A:** Absolutely I do. I think women empowerment, investing in communities that are disadvantaged and don't have opportunities are absolutely part of it. When I think of corporate responsibility, I think of a few different things. I think of investing in sustainability efforts, like environmental initiatives, and simple things like focusing on educating employees about recycling and riding your bike more than taking an Uber. I think charities are part of it as well. I also think that improving access to capital for communities that have been disadvantaged economically is a part of this role. In terms of empowering women and empowering disadvantaged minority groups that don't have representation, you want to make sure that everyone has the same opportunity. Right now, I don't feel people have that opportunity. I feel if you come from a certain background, then you are given opportunities to get ahead in life. I come from a similar type of situation where I was able to go to college, and my sister was able to go to college, and everyone has something to offer, and you don't want to cut people off because they haven't had those opportunities before.

**Q: What kind of global and local outreach program would you design? Examples might be supporting global symposia, leadership excellence for women awards and symposiums?**

**A:** Yeah, so I think it should be about truly focusing on metrics. I think that is critical. I think something like the Mansfield Rule should be more broadly applied in the US and globally. I think it's easier to probably start in the US because other countries may have more cultural push back. I have heard from guest speakers in classes that in other countries there is a lot of cultural push back against diversity in hiring and having a balanced workforce. Obviously, that's not good and is something you want to guard against. I think focusing on the metrics and explaining that if you have more people coming from different backgrounds, that will benefit your company. But I think this should start in the US.

**Q: How is the MeToo movement shaping norms of masculinity?**

**A:** Workplace harassment has effects not just on the employees but also on the general culture of the company, which becomes toxic in terms of masculinity. If people do this type of harassment in the workplace, that is toxic masculinity. The MeToo movement shined a light on this. Now it is up to corporations and the people in power to actually act upon it and say that this type of behavior is not acceptable in the workplace. If it does occur, we will work with HR to ensure that we do not create an environment where women feel uncomfortable because men are behaving improperly. It is toxic to potential employees and the culture of the firm because this culture detracts from the purpose of going to work to be a part of a team and provide for your family. The media reports are critical, but it is also important to make sure that each one is investigated because you obviously don't want improper allegations. That's the other side of this because you want to make sure that these allegations are thoroughly vetted and that when there's a lot of credit to them to act accordingly. You want to create a good workplace culture, and I think any type of aggressive behavior in the workplace does not create that type of culture. I think ultimately that is detrimental to the company, to the employees, and to their families. This permeates to multiple corporations and, unfortunately, has been a problem for a long time.

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not likely at all, 5-very likely), how likely would it be for you to request & participate in work-family policies (i.e. Parental Leave or Flexible Work Arrangement) if your family situation made that need applicable?**

**A:** So, for me personally, I would say I'm very interested in that and am probably a 4 or 5. I think it's important that you know women should be given the proper time, but the burden should not be fully on them to take care of a newborn, especially when they have a partner. I think changing workplace policies is good for company culture and society. And I just think the status quo norms is a function of the existing culture. I think other partners should be able to take more time off to help at home to make sure that everything's good with the newborn so that the woman has less of a burden.

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not likely at all, 5-very likely), how likely do you think your male peers would request & participate in one of the company's work-family policies (i.e. Parental Leave or Flexible Work Arrangement) if their family situation made that need applicable?**

**A:** Right now, I would probably say a 2. It is unfortunate, but I don't think it's in the public consciousness that this is something that you can think about. Honestly, my fiancé is the one who changed my perspective on this. When she first talked about this, I realized that I had never thought of that. If I didn't speak to her, it's possible that I would be much lower on the scale. The norms are that men just go back to work. I think a public relations effort could be really beneficial here because once you think, why does one partner have to take all the burden, just because that's the way it's been, and why can't you also take time off work to help, the 2 would probably go to 3 or 4, and it'd be better.

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not comfortable, 5-very comfortable), how comfortable do you feel in your ability to fully be yourself at work?**

**A:** I feel sort of in the middle, so like a 3. Maybe that's something that, as time goes on, I should start advocating for more.

**Q: Does the way you see women in positions of power influence your view of women leaders?**

**A:** I try to take out the biases because I think there's an inherent bias against how women in positions of power are portrayed by the media. It's automatically assumed that they have to behave a certain way. I think about the vice presidential debate and, you know, Vice President Elect Harris. I was reading a lot of media reports and how they were saying, "Oh, she has to conduct herself in a very certain way and not come across a certain way." To me, that was gender bias. They're not told to be a certain way. I'd say quite a few people are influenced by how the media portrays women in positions of power. I am hopeful that as time goes on, it will improve. I try to see it through the lens of this may not be entirely fair, and I'll be honest, I'm pretty heartened by where things can go from here because we have the first female Vice President-Elect which is a historic accomplishment for empowering women leadership in this country.

## **Interview #88**

**Q: Hi, TK. As you know, I'm currently taking a course on Women, Law, and Leadership, in which we discuss challenges and support systems to overcome challenges for women in the workplace. As you are about to be an incoming associate at a law firm, and a lot of these questions are oriented towards people who are in the workplace already, I'm hoping to capture your perspective on what supporting female leadership might look like as a junior male associate, and the unique challenges that may come up from that new position.**

**A:** Yes, and I can try my best to answer what I think (workplace) life will be like.

**Q: How would you define allyship or what does it mean to be an ally?**

**A:** I guess the question is kind of general, but I'll speak to what it means to be an ally for women because [ally] is kind of a big term. For me, allyship looks like being someone who supports women or minorities in finding success in their careers, understanding their needs specifically in the workplace and being someone who is for those policies and also being someone who speaks up on behalf of women or other minorities in company discussions and conversations—more specifically supporting policies like equal gender pay, paid parental leave, and flagging harassment when it happens in the workplace. These are more specific examples, but those are some of the ideas that come to mind when I think about being an ally.

**Q: You touched on a lot of points that we can come back to later, too. Going from here, do you consider yourself to be an ally for women?**

**A:** I do. I think – I haven't had a lot of experience in the workplace yet, so it's easier for me to say that I am, rather than proving with my actions. But I do think that I'm supportive of women—especially in law firms—in finding success and reaching leadership positions. At the law firm, for me personally, I know I'll be working with partners who are women in the group I want to work, and so insofar as being a young associate at a firm looking for various assignments in my group, I certainly do have an intention to work with women partners and women who are in leadership at my firm, as well as men, especially who are not minorities. So just being supportive of various policies that pertain to women, whether it be equal pay or discrimination, harassment and parental leave, I certainly think that those policies are specific policies I imagine are discussed at a firm, and if there is any way for me to show support, I want to do that.

**Q: Because a lot of these questions I feel are geared toward men who have leadership positions or demonstrated positions in the workplace, if I were to go off script a bit, I'm curious to hear your thoughts on what it'd be like to support women and their ideas as an incoming new associate. And say, these women in a difficult situation could be women who are not in leadership positions and are in similar career situations as you. There seem to be certain challenges to speaking out on their behalf when you see their ideas being ignored or if you see them not being acknowledged for their accomplishments. I was wondering if you could talk a bit about that and maybe how you could see yourself overcoming those challenges.**

**A:** And I think it's helpful for whoever's reading this questionnaire to know I am a minority myself, especially in the law. And I do think this is a question that also applies to minorities in law firms or the business workplace in general, so I think there is an overlap. Not all issues are the same between women and other minorities, but there are certain areas of overlap, and I think this is one of those areas. One thing I have in mind is making sure the right people are given credit, and if it's a woman or minority who came up with a certain idea or did work for a certain project—rather than me trying to take all the credit—or I imagine there could be a circumstance where someone else is trying to take credit. I think that certainly might be a tricky circumstance for a newer associate like me, but I do think that it would be right for me to try to give credit where it's due and speak up in that instance. And I hope that the same would be done for me too. So I feel that that is one place where I would have more control despite being at the bottom rung of the hierarchy in the law firm. But otherwise, I think it's helpful for me to just be in conversation with my colleagues who are women and minorities and making sure that we are doing what's best for each other, keeping abreast of developments at the firm, learning how to work as a successful and efficient associates in the firm so there's a peer help and mentoring aspect to it, which I think comes best in the form of organic natural relationships.

**Q:** This is really helpful for me to think about as well, as I'm also going to be joining a law firm in the near future and these are good concepts to think about. Although I am a woman, I'm also a racial minority, it's a good way to think about how we can be allies to other minorities as well. I'm continuing to reorient a lot of these questions so that it's applicable to us right now. I feel that a lot of law firms have a lot of associates participate on the recruiting committee pretty early on in their career. If you were part of your law firm's recruiting committee as a young associate, what are some ways that you could contribute towards its attracting a diverse talent pool or contribute ideas on hiring practices?

**A:** In terms of recruiting, since I'll be pretty new to the firm, I probably won't have had the most experience working with various minority or diversity groups within the firm. But at the same time, I do know my firm tries to be proactive in increasing diversity and having structure within the firm like diversity groups and mentorship programs to make women and minorities feel not only welcome to the firm, but to grow as respected leaders in the firm. To me, a good way to communicate as a recruiting committee member would be to convey to potential candidates the kinds of diversity initiatives happening in the firm. Otherwise, what I think I can do as a minority myself is just be someone who really acts as a welcoming face to the firm. And in my heart of hearts, I really do want to see more diversity at all law firms, and I think a lot of people hear diversity as a buzzword at various law firms. But I do feel like my firm is making an earnest effort to address diversity issues, so being able to express that earnestly to the interviewing candidate would be key. At all law firms, it's not perfect, there isn't the kind of diversity ratio or demographic that is reflective of the larger country, but I do think that firms are trying to get past that. In terms of hiring practices, I haven't thought too specifically about it, but I know there are definitely biases in terms of hiring, like all the studies that discuss when people's names are different, they're treated differently, so blind review could help. But I think beyond that, firms are trying to hire more diverse classes, so I trust that at the point that people are interviewing and getting offers, there are certain intentions to have a diverse pool of summer associates. But I do think that that kind of diversity recruiting could start even earlier. I see firms collaborating

with various affinity groups on events at the law schools, and that may be when firms do show that they care about diversity and affinity issues just beyond the OCI hiring schedule. Those extra steps definitely go a long way in terms of showing people that a particular firm cares about diversity and is working towards that. Those events and mentorship opportunities go a long way. I can't speak to specific hiring practices, but I think it would be meaningful to see firms doing more of those initiatives even prior to OCI.

**Q: And it's been really good to see a lot of law firms make that conscious move beyond diversity just being a buzzword, and especially in this current climate. Thanks so much again for your time.**

## **Interview #89**

**Q: Hi, WB. As you know, I'm currently taking a course on Women, Law, and Leadership, in which we discuss challenges and support systems to overcome challenges for women in the workplace. I'm excited to hear your perspective as a campus minister working with college students in a religious organization, and I hope to ask you questions about male allyship as it applies to your work and expertise.**

**A:** Glad to be here.

**Q: You mentioned before this interview that your organization has a mission statement with an aspect on supporting women. Could you give us a bit more detail?**

**A:** Yes – all staff members have to sign this mission statement. Supporting women is the belief for our organization, which is why I think you'll find more egalitarian people here. We believe that in all aspects, women can be a leader. For people who don't believe that in Christian circles, they're trying to make it alright in their head, but I know our organization believes that no, in all aspects, women can be a leader. This is the belief that you have to be alright with, and if you're not, I don't think they'd let you on staff. We empower not just leadership corporally in our organization, but that's also how we lead students – the college campus is where we're reaching. It bleeds into how we're doing ministry to empower female students.

**Q: When you have a mission statement that reflects the goals of the organization, on a more day-to-day basis, how do you think people encourage those goals to be achieved—to encourage women speaking out or to be in leadership?**

**A:** On the day to day, in more conservative (religious) spaces, I see women not being allowed to teach men unless they have a co-lead. Usually in conservative spaces, you'll see a woman and a man lead together. We always try to have co-leads – two bible study group leaders together – but sometimes we might not have the numbers to have that even split. So if we don't have those numbers, we are alright with having two female co-leads – they can lead a co-ed bible study group. As these students come and they choose which bible studies they want to join, they can see the message from our leadership that our organization believes that women can lead on their own. Same with guys, we can have two guys lead a co-ed group, but we'll never have two guys lead a women's group. We know there's a blind spot too, because we might be missing the dynamics of where male privilege is, because men won't understand all the time what it's like for a woman to be under male leadership, and how men lead could affect women in that way. That's another thing too, that we try to explain, because there are definitely places of power and privilege, and we recognize that and steward and use it to support equality.

**Q: Are there any special programs for the female staff to empower, train or mentor them at your organization?**

**A:** None come to mind – even as I'm processing right now, I'm a guy at this organization, and I haven't actually thought about that. This is a privilege that I have, because I don't have to worry about it. I know female staff who go to trainings and get mentorship through other means, other



programs that they've attended together, but not necessarily within our organization. I don't have an answer, but it's getting me to think – not that female staff should go to outside organizations, because we want to be collaborative, but if that's the case, I'm wondering and questioning how little or much we have in place for women within our organization. I know of female staff who are doing good work on their own (more organically), to help women – older previous staff are doing coaching for female P.O.C.s – but I don't know of more official programs. There's one regional female staff member coaching women, and I know that my own supervisor, she is getting coaching from another staff located elsewhere in the U.S.

**Q: Here is a tough question for you. I know that your organization is more egalitarian than most traditional groups—but also, the biblical beliefs and values that are at the core of evangelical Christian groups can often conveniently be linked to traditional, male-centric conservative values, or backward gender roles. So I'm wondering what challenges there are to supporting women in leadership or teaching positions, or how your organization, or you personally, seek to reconcile these issues.**

**A:** I think definitely there are difficulties, but from what I've experienced about our organization, our teams, and my own walk with them, I've been fortunate to have male leaders who try their best to model well what it means to have women in leadership positions – that their voices are heard equally. We're seeing there's a gap, a blind spot, so how do we help with that. Not just treating them equally, but recognizing we may actually not know those blind spots, so encouraging them [females] to speak and teach us. I think much of this recognition also comes from the intersectionality of my own identity. I have a lot of P.O.C. leaders at our organization, and when you're able to connect those things – I know how it feels when someone doesn't "see" you – so where I do have privilege, I try to channel that to "see" them [women], too. My supervisor's supervisor is a Taiwanese man, and he's one of the most intentional people. He's humble in recognizing that he doesn't know either, but he's trying his best, and that's what we can model to. It starts with knowing that we don't know, but we want to learn, be teachable. So I think trying to be in that posture, and humbly accept and learn from my sisters out here. I've actually been fortunate to be under direct leadership from women the whole time, from my team leader to my own supervisor. So for me, very personally, the people who have worked so closely with me and have grown me are women. Who am I to say that because they're women, it doesn't all count? But because of their experiences in this world, where the mainstream goes against them being in leadership, it's helped me to see that more, and I know that women can be in leadership because I've experienced it myself. I know that there are people who will go against that by saying, "Biblically, it says this or that..." I've also learned that while there is traditional theology, and I'm not saying all traditional theology is wrong now, but we can always go deeper. The [biblical] Word is alive, and the bible is so nuanced. I think some of the biggest instances that people use is when [Apostle] Paul told women to be quiet. And people weaponize that a lot against women in leadership, especially Christian leadership. The more I learned, the context was that women were not educated in those times. Maybe the reason why Paul said that was not because women weren't supposed to be talking, but because they just didn't understand and their husbands could explain later because of the context. But really, I think women should have been educated, and now we live in a world where women are educated, and they can speak for themselves. If women at the time were taking away from Paul's message just because they weren't educated and were distracting, not in a bad way, my belief is that if they were educated,

Paul wouldn't have said that, because the women would have understood. We live in a different context now, so what does that mean for us? So I think of these nuances within the biblical teaching—and until someone gives me a good enough reason that this is not the case, I believe it to be true. That's just one story, but there are so many other things in the Bible that show [these nuances].

**Q: Thanks so much for your time. I'm excited for the class to hear your perspective on being an male ally for women in leadership.**

## **Interview #90**

**Q: Through your active involvement in student groups at Penn Law, how, if at all, have you taken concrete actions to promote inclusion?**

**A:** For an event that I'm planning for in the Spring, I'm [hoping] to bring a renowned public intellectual, who is a woman to the school. [Through my affinity group,] the majority of individuals [who] I've been reaching out to at firms are women, not that that helps things, that's just a peculiarity of mine. There's both a positive aspect of identifying leaders who are women but it's also my own hang ups. My experiences growing up having difficult relations with my father, make me have trust issues with men so it's just as much a positive reflection of trying to work with women, as it is [because] I just don't get along with a lot of men.

**Q: Could you talk a little bit more about that in terms of how you navigate these different gender differences in both professional workspaces and academic spaces? What makes you feel more comfortable and what do you seek when you are developing relationships?**

**A:** The first thing I would say -and to make sure I don't forget it because I think it's a very important point, is that [my preference for non-male relationships] severely limits the work I could and should be doing in terms of advocacy. I've heard and I agree with the idea that men need to hold each other accountable, it's not women's duty to do that. If you want to be a "male ally," you need to check the men in your life because it means something different when it comes from you than it comes from a woman. I think I'm deficient in that area because I don't have a lot of male friends, I tend to sort of avoid them. Some of that might be [a byproduct] of historical accident and I'm older, but most of my professional experience has been in environments where not only are women in positions of power but there's maybe even an over representation. When I was a paralegal the attorney immediately above me and the supervisor of the of the unit that I worked in were both women. I'd rather just work with women. When I was [working at a store] I had three different store managers. Two of the women and they were in their roles for the longest time. I only had one male boss for less than a year who ended up being transferred because of difficulties with employees. He was seen as abrasive and having inappropriate, not sexual but inappropriate, dynamics with women who I worked with. Even in situations where the boss is a woman there were still really problematic interactions between subordinate male supervisors. You asked, what is it in particular that [I] control for in my own personal history, what are the things that I bring to the table, what makes working with or under women more enjoyable or more comfortable for me. First, when you're dealing with someone who has some experience, has some angle of marginalization, it tends to engender an ability to understand how marginalization works in other ways against other people. So that's already a shared basis and because of that I think women are in the workplace tend to devote more mental resources to maintaining a professional workplace and do not trespass boundaries that individuals have as easily as men do, who sort of who come to the situation assuming that the way they wish to speak to one another, and their standards of professionalism are *de facto* appropriate. That's generally what I've noticed. Even when we're being light-hearted and having a watercooler conversation, [when I'm conversing with women] we don't have to talk about these things that are really problematic. You can have friendly conversations and make jokes that aren't awkward

and cringy. I really appreciate that [about women]. Putting a little effort into being tactful around others pays off in dividends because everyone feels comfortable.

**Q: I feel like you have a really interesting story because you had really different experiences and careers before law school. When you did see the sort of problematic interactions and difficult situations that you either perceived or were told were uncomfortable or inappropriate for women, how did you sort of navigate those different scenarios? Do you have any tools that you sort of go to when you notice that there is some sort of exclusion or inappropriate behavior towards women in the workplace occurring that you feel isn't acceptable? How do you deal with that, do you deal with that, do you feel like you need to get involved, what's your approach in that scenario?**

**A:** I would identify this as another weak point. I guarantee that I have missed situations that I can't even bring up here because I didn't even pay any mind that something happened, I simply missed the opportunity to do something and I won't even ever know that that was a missed opportunity. I know that that's happened multiple times. Another point of weakness is that I'm sometimes frozen in action. I see something happened, I don't react immediately, and then what happens is, hours later or a day later, I reflect on the situation and I'm disturbed. Maybe I reach out to the individuals involved and say, "is there anything I can do now?" which is not as effective as actually acting in in the moment, of course. There have been moments where I think I could have made a more effective intervention and instead I was uncomfortable with the situation and then did a post-game analysis which was probably not as helpful. I think the most effective interventions have been immediately after something like something occurs. I will approach the person who might have committed some sort of trespass and I'll act from the standpoint as it was unintentional. I'll say, "Listen, I don't know if you consider this but ...". One situation, I remember during a breakroom conversation and someone use the "r" word. Someone was being stupid, so they used stereotypical term for mentally disabled people. I approached them immediately afterward and said, "You may not be aware of this but there are some people who are uncomfortable by the usage of the term. You might want to look for another word." Even though this person immediately became defensive said, "it's just language" etc. I [realized] I'm not going to change this person's opinion. What I can say is, "you can hold those views, but you can't use that word around me or the people I care for. That should be a respectable standard that you should be able to meet." He said, "I disagree with you, but I won't use that word." That's just an example. What want I try to do is react is to afterwards try to [figure out] out what's going on and see if I can intervene to make sure it doesn't happen again because often times, I get frozen in the moment and I can't effectively advocate right then and there.

**Q: And what does effectively advocate even mean, right? I'm thinking back to a situation such as in class when you reached out and asked if you had potentially been complicit in a very stereotypical practice of men repeating what women say and repackaging it to sound novel. I remember you reaching out to me and at first I thought, "Why would [he] think that he did that? He's not that type of person." That's my own bias of thinking that certain people who I'm know do not infringe on these sorts of barriers. Maybe I was unaware because it wasn't really happening to me. Sometimes I wonder what an effective way of addressing these instances is. I think reaching out was good because it also made me think,**

**“other than the men repeating what women say, have I done that to anyone?” Then you start to sort through these issues when you talk about it together and decide that this is just a dynamic that we don’t want to have in the class, this is a dynamic that we don’t want to then carry on to the workplace. The conversation brings the larger issue to the forefront, so I thought that was an interesting approach that you took. Did you speak to other people about that? If so, what that reception was like I did?**

**A:** I did. I tried to reserve it to the people that are my friends that I trust because I think it’s a lot to ask marginalized people to constantly advocate for themselves. There’s a level of exhaustion and you have to be careful with that. Do some work and learn. What struck me about that situation is [that] it reminds me how good we are at finding loopholes to make ourselves comfortable. I understand the concept of allyship when it comes to trying to teach individuals how to be better but I in no way think it’s helpful as a label for people to wear because I think it just so [susceptible] to manipulating the worst parts of your ego to skirt responsibility. What I noticed when [our classmate] brought that up was the extent to which I had not been thinking about that? Yes, I wondered, “did I do that?” But it was more about the extent to which I had not been thinking about that. It reminded me that anti-racism and anti-sexism are more than just an absence of behavior, it has to be like a conscious intervention. To the extent that we weren’t even thinking about that, that’s a problem because if you’re not thinking about it, then the status quo is what’s taking over there is no absence of a power. If you’re not correcting the power, then it’s the status quo power that’s being asserted. Donning the cloak of allyship is something that I think would make me commit a number of errors, so I hesitate to do that. I try to keep myself from the mental pitfalls that I would avail myself of those “outs.” There are these instances where you hadn’t been thinking about [an issue], why is that? It’s because I’m in the position where I don’t have to think about that all the time. If it’s been the whole class [without me thinking of this issue], then that’s a problem.

**Q: I think that’s what comes up a lot with this discussion about allyship. Perhaps a way to help to get to a better understanding of this is really looking at the people who shape what allyship means to you. Do you have any female mentors? I know you mentioned that you had a number of female supervisors. Do you feel like you had any who you would consider a mentor who guided you or shaped your perspective? This could be outside of or in the professional setting. That’s one part. The second part regarding mentorship is whether or not you had a male mentor and if that shaped your perspective on your own understanding of allyship.**

**A:** Are we’re talking about mentorship in the traditional sense in the way it’s talked about in business schools or are we talking about mentorship from a looser notion of someone who you look up to and who maybe instructs you in other ways? If it’s a looser notion, then I would say yes to both. Following from my previous remarks, [I’ve had] more women [mentors] than men.

**Q: Have these mentors guided you in some way in your understanding such as in thinking about your interactions with the people who you would consider mentors or hold in high regard. Have they either demonstrated through their actions or explained something through a conversation with you that led you to expanding your understanding of what allyship is?**

**A:** Probably the most prominent thing that I can think of is that the women in my life are not afraid to explain the female perspective through a variety of lenses, even if it's something small. For instance, as a man on like a dating app, you have one perspective of what the world must look like for the other side. So much of [that perspective] is not the case until a woman tells you exactly what's happening on the other side of it. So even someone who like self-declares himself [aware] or in a position of allyship or even like even does mental exercises to imagine what it must be like to be a woman in X scenario, when [women] tell you [their reality], you realize that [experience] didn't cross your mind at all. Because of gender dynamics and dominant heterosexual world we live in, I assumed women probably get more messages than men do [on dating apps] but my friend tells me she gets hundreds of messages and men give her an attitude for not responding, not even to mention the [sexual harassment] and inappropriate messages that get sent as well. [...] This is a tangent, but I wanted to share that this is just an example of how it's necessary for me to be close enough to women. Women sharing their perspective [...] and how they're existence feels like with me allows me to better adjust my [understanding] of where women are coming from in a variety of pursuits, whether that's the office, dating or friendships.

**Q: Right, having women in your orbit is an important first step. If your circle isn't diverse and doesn't include people of all backgrounds, how are you really going to attempt to understand different perspectives.**

## **Interview #91**

**Q: In your capacity as VP of BLSA, have you taken any concrete action to promote inclusivity and equality within BLSA or in the wider Penn law community?**

**A:** I would say there have been concrete measures, but it wasn't just me, it was the greater BLSA Board. There were indirect methods as well. Just being in law school, we're already outsiders to the predominately white male community in the legal field. [...] [Even today], the school has been operating in a way that has been pretty exclusionary to minorities, and specifically Black people, so we took the opportunity over the summer to address that [exclusion] and provide concrete steps for how we think the school can improve such as by implementing the Sadie Scholarships for Black women. That was important because one of the ways that the school is exclusionary is through financial aid, which you obviously know about through the Financial Equity Project that you initiated. We wanted to highlight the fact that the legal field lacks Black talent, not because Black talent doesn't exist, but because [law schools] have priced us out. These scholarships aren't there to say, "We fixed the situation," it's really just a drop in the bucket, but the point is that you're giving two people a little bit of an extra chance. Even when we push for representation within faculty and the administration, the school has worked to get a few Black professors and Black administration in CP&P. This doesn't remedy anything, but they are initiatives and tangible objectives that we want admin to achieve. The greater point is that we want to highlight how exclusionary the school and the legal industry has been both purposefully and indirectly. A Black professor isn't going to have an innate connection with every Black student who takes their course. You want to see us represented in all the places we go to. It's not about going to Penn and having the option to do all these things. If you don't have anyone who looks like you in any endeavor except the few students, that doesn't mean anything. Especially with us being virtual this year and not having a lot of in person contact, I think those are the ways that we've tried to be inclusionary so far in my role on the Executive Board.

**Q: At Penn Law, how do you feel you or other men that you know have opened the doors for more women, more Black women, and more women of color, to participate or be more involved in leadership, whether that's through BLSA, in class, or even amongst your friendships?**

**A:** I think I've evolved on this. Initially, I thought I was an ally, whether it be to women, the LGBTQ+ community or minorities in general. For example, my stance on LGBTQ+ rights used to be "That doesn't impact me in any way, so why would I be against it?" That used to be my mindset. I thought, "I'm an ally because I'm not against." As I became a professional, while in school, and as my network started to become filled with different types of people, I changed my mindset. Because if you're just a passive ally saying, "I'm not directly against you and therefore I'm for you," you're not helping anyone. You have to be proactive about your support and be able to rationalize why. If you just think it would be great if more Black women became partners at a firm, as in, "I don't mind it, as long as it's not taking a spot from me," you're not being an ally. Whereas if you're supporting the reason why women should ascend to those roles, that's different. That's how my mindset has changed. In BLSA for example, I could see myself having done a good job as President of BLSA, but at the same time when you weigh the pros and cons of going up against a Black woman who is equally qualified as being BLSA President, why

wouldn't you support her? There was no cost/benefit analysis. It made complete sense as to why Lei would be the President. I supported her right from the jump, there was never any push back from me. [...] I feel like I've kept that mentality with everything, even in organizations that I'm not involved with directly. When you and Aubrey became involved in CSR (Council of Student Representatives), I reached out to you both to see how I can support you in ambitions. Being in a law school like Penn Law, you're already unique in that it's not a diverse legal field, and you should take action where you can be an asset and an ally to people. You should do that especially in situations where there was no direct benefit to you. So that's how my mindset has changed because I've always thought about allyship in terms of how it impacted me whether negatively or positively, and as I've broadened that mindset, it's really helped me moving forward in how I interact with people and go about trying to be an "ally."

**Q: I think what you mentioned about doing something that doesn't have a direct benefit to you is something that we talk about often in our class. What is the benefit of having diversity on boards or in executive positions? We discuss how it would be nice to have more diverse representation, but what's really going to make professional and academic spheres change and fully embrace diversity in their ethos? We talk a lot about how there's a tendency to frame the benefit of diversity for a community – so the benefit of having Lei, a Black woman, as BLSA President, not necessarily for you, but what that does for other Black women, or what that does for an organization itself. I'm curious to know, either in the context of academia or professional settings, what you think is a way to better frame this idea that diversity has to be quantified as a particular benefit versus the ethics around more representation? Often the question is, "How does diversity add to the company's bottom line?" Diversity and inclusion are important, but how do you weigh the importance of that against the bottom line?**

**A:** When you think about quantifying things, there's an unfair burden that's placed on minorities when companies and schools think about how diversity will impact their bottom line. The mindset that they have is increasing diversity, but they don't have those conversations when speaking to our white counterparts. When you're thinking about diversity and if I'm a firm, and I'm thinking, "What's the business justification for hiring x more black people or like x more black women?" Businesses should want to be more representative of the people that [they] engage with. That's where the bottom line should be. The legal field should be trying to represent the communities that they purport to be serving, and they don't. I don't really understand the need [for there] to be a number justification for why they have x amount of people. I think that feeds this point that firms or schools are doing us a favor by hiring us, [as if they would be] taking a step down to have more Black people. That purports this idea that we're less than as if Black people take away "talent" compared to a white person. The intellectual quality of any institution is not degraded by having more diversity. Yet the hypothetical argument has been supported because institutions make it a big deal when they've increased diversity by one or two people. It is an embarrassment for the legal field that numbers only increase by a few people in an institution that has hundreds, if not thousands, of people employed. Minorities are just as capable as all of our counterparts in any endeavor but we [weren't] in any of these spaces to show what we're capable of doing. Once you get us into these spaces, [last year] our Law Review's Editor in Chief was a Black woman and Presidents of student clubs are Black women. [Black women] excel once they're given an opportunity, but it's just so rare that [they] get an



opportunity. The mindset needs to get away from quantifying [diversity] and aiming for a fair representation of what actually exists outside of the walls of these institutions.

**Q: Unfortunately, only five percent of attorneys in the US are Black and only 30-40% are women. In terms of really looking at day-to-day experiences of the women in your life, in particular women of color, do you notice if there's any divide in terms of how women interact in spaces of leadership? For example, women being potentially sidelined or mistreated in the classroom, in the boardroom, or in any other important meeting. Have there been any situations where you witnessed that? And if so, what did you do?**

**A:** I see it all the time. Even just thinking back to [our program] and hearing women partners describing their day-to-day, how they interact with others, or just seeing the director of [the program] and how she interacted with her [male supervisor]. Seeing how they're put in situations where they're retrained because they know how any sort of aggression, strength, or certainty in a response could be viewed. In leadership roles and in all [situations] there can be a hesitation to even give a response because of the way that it might be perceived. There's a fear of perception that doesn't exist with white men. What [women] say might be misconstrued and prevent [them] from being understood because of what the receivers' misconception of [women] is. Especially in class, there are little ways that I can support [women] by like saying, "I think that was a good answer." Yet there's a lot of the situations I saw such as during [our program] or at my firm where I didn't feel like I was in a position where I could speak up to the partner say, "I feel like the way that you're speaking to this person is wrong." [For example, there was] the first day of the program, someone came to speak to us and told women of color how they should dress and wear their hair. There were all of these ridiculous examples aimed at a group of minorities. Other people's perception can completely erase all the work that we put in to be successful. It's a vicious circle for people of color and I see it all the time. You see it in the classroom, you see it at work, you see it in day to day interactions. It's frustrating, because I can work hard to try and change one person's perception, but their perception of us or women or people of color isn't unique. It's an internal dilemma, because I don't know what to do about that. If, as chairman or partner, you can start making the rules and bending [them] and you're 20-30 years into your career, why haven't the rules changed? [The message is], "Don't be yourself." Our authentic versions of ourselves are toxic to the fields that we're trying to break into [...] I'm not going to be shy about expressing how I feel about these norms of these spaces. At the end of the day, the question should be, "Are you capable or not?" [...] I can only do so much as an intern or law student but, I'm not passive and don't agree with this game.

**Q: Do you feel like there have been any female mentors that have maybe helped you navigate and shape your own perspective on how you choose to express your allyship? You mentioned you changed your perspective because you were around more diverse people and in different settings. Have there been any specific conversations or female mentors who you think may have had may have contributed to that shift?**

**A:** What jumpstarted that shift was my time in finance. That's another industry where you're a unicorn when you're Black. My mentor was a Black woman. We were one of a very small handful of people of Black people. She wasn't even my assigned partner, she just naturally became my [mentor]. The most impactful mentors to me have not only been the people that I

[connect with], but the people that I don't necessarily agree with. [My mentor and I] definitely had different approaches to various issues. I had a lot of those [conversations] with her in which I [didn't necessarily agree with her completely] but could see where she was coming from on a variety of topics. Similar to how I was a passive ally to the LGBTQ+ community, when she would talk about reproductive rights or women's rights, I had the same mindset: "This doesn't impact me negatively, so why would I not support it?" [Her response] was that it's not enough to just be a passive ally. You can't just be an ally on some issues if you're willing to sit on the sidelines for others. That doesn't mean all of a sudden that I need be on the frontline for every single issue, but you can't just [pick and choose when] to be an ally. I think it was helpful because having those uncomfortable conversations with someone makes the work [you're doing] so much easier. Her showing me the ropes of finance was way easier because we had the hard conversations already. [...] She had only been working a couple years longer than I had, but you could see how much more mature she was and that she had thought about so many issues that I thought I knew enough about when I was having these conversations.

**Q: Maybe having those hard conversations would make working together easier because you've sort of dropped some sort of veil.**

**A:** It's important because another misconception people have about diversity is that just because there's a presence of people that look like you, means that you'll have relationships with those people. That's just like not the case. Just because there are 20 [or so] Black people in my class at Penn Law does not mean I have 20 relationships with [them]. It's important for diverse people to be in these places, but it's not enough to just check this box once you have a [number of Black people of women] because that's not a sufficient support system. Who can I turn to in situations such as the murder of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor? [Just because someone looks like you] doesn't mean you can turn to them and feel like you're in a safe space. That's something a lot of these institutions just don't understand because they look at everything from a number's perspective. You have to look beyond that.

**Q: Do you have any final words or advice that you would give to other men who want to be an ally or who thinks that they're an ally? Do you have anything that you would share based off of your own journey towards trying to become an ally? What's the biggest takeaway that you would share?**

**A:** Everyone needs to reassess what it means to be an ally. People should refrain from proclaiming themselves to be an ally and get comfortable with other people being in charge of labeling them as an ally. It's easy for me to go around and say, "I'm an ally." I [mistakenly] thought I was an ally to the LGBTQ+ community. [Similarly], as an ally to Black women, you don't get to make the ultimate decision on that. [Allyship] comes from an outside determination, based off your actions and your words. A lot of people think that because they treat [the women in] their circle well and they would never disrespect them, that makes them an ally. You also need to think about how you treat and interact with women of color outside of your circle. If your actions don't match up as with the people in your circle, then how can you really call yourself an ally? A lot of this is about unpacking things that have been learned over years and it's not just going to disappear in a second. You have to ask, "Why is this [perception or behavior] so innate? Why am I blind to obvious microaggressions in the classroom or in the workspace? How

am I perpetuating these?” I had a criminal law professor who a lot of women had issues with. I asked in a why women thought he was a “bad” professor because while I didn’t think he was great, I didn’t think he was “bad.” I didn’t feel the same impact. A female classmate messaged me a long explanation of all the microaggressions [that he committed] and the reasons why she felt uncomfortable. I hadn’t noticed any of these microaggressions because most of them were targeted at women. If you were to ask me before I posed that question, whether or not I would I have considered myself an ally, I would have said, “Yes.” My classmate’s message showed me I still have so much more to learn and understand. There are definitely steps that people can take, but it’s a process. There isn’t going to be some “aha” moment where I’m the ideal ally. There’s always going to be a continual learning and unlearning. People need to recognize that, get comfortable, and not get frustrated with the process. If something upsets a woman or upsets a person of color, you have to [take the time] to understand. Maybe we were so used to certain comments being nonchalant, but you have to adapt with the times. It’s a process and [we all] need to get on board with it. What is an ally? The word is amorphous, nebulous, and abstract. Like you said, I don’t think there’s this correct definition, formula, or series of boxes you can check that would make you an ally or not, but it’s about being flexible and trying to understand [someone else’s experience].

## **Interview #92**

**Q: Are you familiar with the concept of allyship?**

**A:** Yes, I am. I think it is a very important concept, because in any group of oppressed people that are trying to make better lives for themselves, they can't do it alone. They need to have people who are not in that group help them. This has always been true—in the civil rights movement in the 1960s, there were always white people who went down to the South and fought for voting rights and equal treatment for their black allies.

**Q: Do you consider yourself to be an ally for women?**

**A:** Yes, I do. I am a great believer in equal rights for women and equal opportunities for women. I think that men and women are different, but when it comes to rights and jobs, it is important to advocate for women.

**Q: There has been documentation and studies showing that when women speak up at work, they are often overlooked—men will take credit for their ideas or they will say something in a meeting and it will be ignored. Have you ever witnessed that, and if so, what did you do about it?**

**A:** I actually don't think I have ever seen that happen in my practice.

**Q: What do you think proactive allyship is?**

**A:** I'm not sure if that is a term-of-art, but what I would consider to be proactive as an ally are things like helping to mentor a female lawyer and doing what you can to make sure that, for example, firm policies are non-discriminatory and fair.

**Q: How would you help your company start a program to attract a diverse talent pool?**

**A:** I'm at a very small firm, and when we are hiring, which we don't do very often, we try to cast a very broad net using things like LinkedIn that are equally accessible to everybody. We haven't had a program aimed at getting a particular type of candidate, but we have cast a broad net and historically, a majority of associates at my firm have been women.

**Q: There actually are equal numbers—or even more women—going to law school than men, but there is a drop-off once you get to senior roles which are disproportionately held by males. What do you think the cause of that is and what do you think some solutions are?**

**A:** I think a large cause of that is self-selection, that women, more so than men, make the lifestyle choice that they do not want to work those kinds of hours and do not think they can do that and also have a family. More women drop out of law or switch to in-house positions or firms that do not have as taxing a demand on the lawyers in terms of time. From what I have seen in my experience, it is not really a function of discrimination, at least at the firms where I have practiced. It is a function of having demands in the profession that women, more frequently than men, do not

want to have to deal with. One possible solution is being more flexible in the time demands of a law firm, but that is very difficult because there is a lot of work to be done, and unless you hire more associates, if you are being flexible with some by saying they do not have to do as much work, then the others have to do more work. I think to the extent it is something that it needs to be resolved, it is difficult to do that. When associates get out of law school in equal numbers, and if women decide that they want to drop out at a higher rate than the men decide they want to drop out, I don't think that is necessarily a problem, that might just be the pattern of the industry. It is a problem if women drop out because they are pushed out, but if they are making the choice to drop out, it is not necessarily an issue to be solved.

**Q: I agree that, at least from my experience, it is not discrimination by the law firm that is pushing out women, it is more societal discrimination over generations that has pushed women into child-care roles. It is a societal-level issue, not necessarily a law firm-level issue. The other thing I would say is that there can be different kinds of flexibility besides working fewer hours. For example, now everyone is working from home, but law firms could be more flexible with working from home, and that is a kind type flexibility that might allow women to stay on that career path longer. Now that a lot of companies have been forced to allow work from home, they have found that it works just as well.**

**A:** The problem is working from home disadvantages associates. If I, as a partner, have something that needs to get done while I'm working in the office, my first course of action is to walk down the hall to the nearest associate and assign it to them. Also, it is much more difficult to mentor someone remotely. It is an option that might inadvertently cut the wrong way—it might actually disadvantage women because mentorship relationships are probably more important for women than for men in some ways, so even if men and women are working at home equally, the women will be more disadvantaged than the men.

**Q: There are definitely downsides, but it might be a choice between dropping out of the workforce and working from home.**

**A:** Yeah, it's better than not being able to work at all, but I do think you lose something if you are working from home and other people are not.

**Q: What are your ideas on hiring practices that are clear and transparent? For example, blind resumé evaluation, where you evaluate resumés without names attached in order to reduce potential gender bias?**

**A:** In my experience, that is just not necessary. My firm, and the firms where I have practiced, have hired male associated and female associates and I have not seen a bias either way. At my current firm, the vast majority of the associates we have hired in the last six years have been women. If it were a problem at a firm, circulating resumés without names might be a little helpful, but there are often other cues on a resume as to what their gender is.

**Q: Sometimes an outside company can redact gender-identifying things from resumés.**

**A:** The problem with that is you put things on your resumé because you want someone to know about it. For example, if you were the national president of a sorority, that is pretty impressive.

**Q:** Another example is the study on orchestra auditions. They were already gender-blind because the musicians played behind a screen, but when they carpeted the floor so the judges could not hear the sound of high heels, a higher number of women made it into the orchestra.

**A:** Wow, that is interesting. I would think that blind auditions would be a great thing to do for an orchestra.

**Q:** They probably didn't think that gender was making a difference, especially since it was already blind, but it really was making a difference without them knowing. Some people think that blind resumé are not enough—that because of the history and patterns of discrimination we have to be prioritizing women and minorities.

**A:** I think there probably is a bias in the legal profession against racial minorities. There, taking the names off of resumé to hide ethnicity could make a difference. But if someone puts on their resume, for example, that they were president of the African American Law Society at their law school, that is something they want people to know. I don't think H.R. departments should mess with resumé other than potentially redacting the name.

**Q:** How would you eliminate gender bias in performance reviews? For example, the same quality might be viewed negatively in a woman but positively in a man. How can you avoid that kind of implicit bias in performance reviews?

**A:** That is an interesting question. I'm not sure of the answer to that because you can't do performance reviews blindly. I think maybe the answer is getting the message out to people giving the reviews that they should be conscious of the fact that there is gender bias. It is interesting when it comes to lawyers because lawyers are supposed to be advocates for their clients. If, for example, in a jury trial, the same behavior by a lawyer would be viewed positively in a male lawyer but negatively in a woman lawyer, the lawyer has to do what is best for their client.

**Q:** We had a speaker come to our class who was the first female trial lawyer in Massachusetts. She was representing a woman in a murder case, and the cards were pretty much stacked against her, but she was able to win the jury over. She talked about how instead of trying to have traditionally male qualities, like being loud and aggressive, she used her soft tone and calm demeanor to her advantage. Back to my question about performance reviews, what do you think should be done?

**A:** I think when you are reviewing someone, you have to be conscious of the fact that a person has this quality and then think is that a quality that you would rate differently in a man and is that fair in this case? It is hard to tell people that they have to treat those qualities the same, because if it is based on unconscious bias, it is hard to legislate that away.

**Q:** But how can you get rid of unconscious bias?

**A:** Good question. I think by trying to get people to be more aware of their unconscious biases. Maybe part of it is follow-up. Someone could review the reviews and say, “you’ve given this associate a negative rating because you think she is too argumentative. Is that really negative, or do you just think she is not acting like a stereotypical woman?” It’s education and then review.

**Q: How will you develop caregiving policies for both sexes and offer suggestions on how to design leave so that the outcomes are more egalitarian?**

**A:** Our firm follows the law on that. New York City has laws that are even more family-friendly than those on the state and federal level. In fact, the only associate that to date has taken advantage of our leave policies has been a male associate.

**Q: My next question is related to that. Supportive work-family policies have become increasingly more common. However, research shows that men’s responses to these policies are shaped less by their own personal beliefs, and by their perceptions of what is accepted and expected by their male peers. Men might feel more pressure not to take their full paternity leave even if they are technically allowed to. How would you respond to that?**

**A:** Our associate who took paternity leave took the full amount that was available to him and had no compunction about doing that. There was no pushback from the firm on that. We did enter into an arrangement with him that paid him a little extra for being available on a sporadic bases while he was on leave, but that was completely voluntary and we did pay him extra for that. I had a baby in the 1990s and things were very different back then. Paternity leave was coming in at some of the more progressive law firms. I spent some time, though not when my child was born, at a very progressive firm that was one of the first to adopt a paternity leave policy, but most people did not take advantage of it because of the perception that if they took off twelve weeks, they would be seen as less valuable.

**Q: How could a firm promote work outside of their organizations to advance gender justice and diversity?**

**A:** I have worked at a law firm that did a lot of pro bono work and encouraged a lot of community involvement. I think firms should be keeping social issues in mind when they consider how to spend their philanthropic funds. Most big firms have a philanthropic fund where they donate money to various causes and I think social justice is an important cause. They should encourage their attorneys to work pro bono, and many large firms do that and give billable hour credit for work on pro bono causes. I don’t think firms should over-engineer it. I don’t think, for example, that firms should give pro bono credit for one type of pro bono activity but not give credit for other pro bono activity because they think associates should do “A” and not “B.” I don’t believe in forced pro bono.

**Q: Do you think firms have a responsibility to not take clients that are socially irresponsible, have policies that don’t agree with, or are considered to be unethical?**

**A:** I think there is no ethical issue with taking on the most despicable client. If there were, almost all murder suspects would be unable to retain counsel. On the other hand, I don’t think lawyers

have to undertake every case that a client wants them to undertake. For example, if you have a client, whether it is a prospective new client or a client that you have worked for over twenty years, if that client wants you to undertake something that you don't think is ethical or socially responsible, you have no obligation to undertake that case. Depending on what that issue is that makes you hesitant to take it, you may have an ethical obligation not to take it. If it is a case that is undermining democracy or is trying to disenfranchise voters, I think you arguably have an ethical obligation not to take on the case.