

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

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WHF Member Spotlight – July 2019

Managing Director

Fannie Mae

Hometown

Bethesda, Maryland

Fun Fact

I went to Bates College in Maine and in all these years, I have never really gotten over Maine. It has so much to offer – beach, mountains, lakes, skiing, tons of lobster, and of course my favorite sleepaway camps. I visit as much as possible and I even enjoy it in the dead of winter.

Employer and Position

Managing Director, Fannie Mae

Walk me through your journey in the financial services industry and how your career has evolved to your current position.

I began my career as a lawyer working in private practice at a large law firm in DC. I practiced litigation and antitrust law. From there, I came to Fannie Mae where I worked on legal and policy issues related to the Making Home Affordable program, which was a loan modification program that was stood up during the housing crisis. The work was fascinating and we felt like we were making a meaningful difference at a time when people were losing their homes. From there, I shifted gears and began working in our Government and Industry Relations group where I manage a smart and devoted team of people.

What do you love most about what you do?

I love all the diverse things I do at Fannie Mae. Officially, I am an attorney in our Government Relations group where I respond to questions from Congress about our business strategy, our affordable housing work, and everything in between. My team and I also analyze state and federal law that could impact Fannie Mae. But over the years, I've taken on several other responsibilities and honestly, it is all the different work I do that keeps my job super interesting. I help develop content for many of our external events on affordable housing. I also provide legal advice to our lender-facing teams on the many, many legal questions they have. And finally, I lead the legal team's strategy on innovation where we are trying to get smart on artificial intelligence and its application in the mortgage financing industry. My work keeps me busy and I literally never get bored from doing the same thing again and again!

Hobby

My favorite thing to do is plan interesting trips for my family. I have a bit of a problem in that I take my travel research a little too far. If there are 500 reviews on TripAdvisor about a particular place, I will read all 500! I like to know everything I can before I decide on a destination. But I think my family would say I have a good track record in planning fun and different trips. Last year, we went to the Galapagos, which – after much research, of course -- had been on my bucket list!

How long have you been a member of WHF?

I've officially been a member of WHF for about a year, but I have attended WHF events for several years.

Please describe your involvement with WHF.

I thoroughly enjoy the brown bag events that WHF hosts. Now that Fannie Mae's offices have moved downtown, it is convenient to grab some of my colleagues and attend WHF's lunches.

What have you gained from being a member?

I've gained insight on emerging issues in the industry and I've been able to meet so many interesting people. WHF does a great job in marketing their events and many of them are relevant to my work.

How do you make the best use of your day? (think techniques to enhance productivity, time management, time out, meditation/prayer, etc.)

When Fannie Mae's offices moved downtown, I focused on the personal downside for me which was a longer commute. Instead of driving to the office, I instantly became a metro rider. On the morning metro, I make a "to do" list on my phone of the various things I want to accomplish that day. It really helps me focus my time. If there are things I haven't finished at the end of the day, then I use my metro ride home to finish up emails or read a document I didn't get to. Surprisingly, the metro has helped me manage my time.

Who or what inspires you?

Lately, I've been most inspired by quiet, local efforts that can have a huge impact. What comes immediately to mind is a program out of Auburn University in western Alabama where faculty and students build new homes for an underserved population in their rural community. Not only has the group provided dozens of new homes, a library, and a fire station for their community, but they are committed to designing a prototype that can be built for \$20,000 and replicated in other areas. Their work has changed so many lives and I can't wait to see how it continues to evolve.

What is the best advice you have ever received?

Trust your instinct.

Who do you look up to the most and why?

Ruth Bader Ginsburg. Until I watched the RBG documentary, I did not appreciate that she literally paved the way for women lawyers like me. My legal career wouldn't be possible if she hadn't been such a strong, persistent force in the 1960s.