

Camillie Landrón

By: Laura Phillips

I've known Camillie Landrón since about 2009, when she was a summer associate and then joined the communications practice at Drinker Biddle & Reath. Over the approximately six years she was with the firm, I got to work with her on a number of projects - I'm pretty sure the 2014 inaugural version of the PLI Telecommunications Answer Book would still not be finished but for Camillie's diligence! I saw firsthand her legal ability and the deep, thoughtful approach she brought to all her work and relationships. We've stayed in sporadic touch, having lunch now and again, and we've videoed too. I was glad to video again to talk to Camillie, who is currently Special Counsel in the Communications, Internet, and Technology practice at Jenner & Block.



Q: What attracted you to the field of communications?

A: To be honest, I started doing communications work by chance. By the time my 1L summer associate program ended, I knew I could enjoy doing transactional or litigation work after law school, but had not identified a “one true calling.” One afternoon the following fall, a friend called me with an opportunity to take a last-minute on-campus interview slot for a summer associate position in DC. Working in DC was not on my radar at the time, but I was already wearing a suit, so I figured, “why not?” That interview ended up being a turning point in my career. I accepted the position, the interviewer ended up becoming a great mentor, and, a few projects in, I realized that a regulatory practice would allow me to do a little bit of everything. I became interested in learning more about communications and technology legal and policy issues, and enjoyed the chance to collaborate with engineers and economists on different kinds of projects. And here we are, more than a decade later!

Q: Have things unfolded in your career more or less the way you planned?

A: If you mean “what I had planned when I decided to go to law school,” then not at all—although the fact that things were not going to go according to any law student's plan was entirely evident

by the time I was interviewing for jobs in 2008. Setting the Great Recession and its implications aside, if you'd asked me what I'd be doing more than a decade out of law school, I would not have told you I'd be at Jenner & Block, advising clients across the communications industry on matters ranging from space and satellite regulation, to broadband deployment, to spectrum policy.

So, things have turned out better than I could have imagined. My clients and colleagues are incredibly smart, good people. They trust me to work on their most challenging, demanding, and exciting matters. I am continually learning, and I can genuinely say I enjoy my work and the people I get to do it with. I couldn't have planned it better.

Q: What's the most interesting or challenging thing that you've done in your current position?

A: Starting my position with Jenner & Block during the early days of the pandemic was definitely interesting, though surprisingly not challenging. I was afraid it would be difficult to integrate into a new firm while everyone was still figuring out how to work remotely 100% of the time, and that I would not be able to make connections with people outside my group without the benefit of random encounters and casual conversation. Thankfully, my worry was unfounded—it was a seamless transition.

Eleven months later, it's hard to believe that I have never met in-person some of the people I work with on a daily basis. And because the Communications, Internet, and Technology group and the firm as a whole are so collaborative and have been so intentional about building relationships, I probably see more people in a given week than I did when I was going into an office every day.

Q: Is there was something interesting or someone who surprised or impressed you during your career and why?

A: I've been surprised and impressed with how generous very busy and successful people can be when it comes to sponsoring, mentoring, and coaching others. I have consistently worked with people—within and outside the communications bar—who feel responsible for ensuring I have a path to success. I am under no illusion that I would have made it this far without their support.

Q: What do you enjoy reading?

A: I'll read anything and everything, although I have been reading for pleasure a lot less than I would like. With some exceptions—a friend's social media post recently prompted me to start re-reading some Borges poetry—I prefer fiction and essays. I recently read Jenny Offill's *Dept. of Speculation* and Jeffrey Eugenides' *The Marriage Plot*. I've been made fun of for this before, but I also enjoy reading Harvard Business Review-type articles and case studies.

Q: Can you share your perspective on the pitfalls to avoid or other career advice for those who are just getting started in the communications field?

A: Some of the best advice I received early on was “Be a good lawyer first.” Focus on developing your skills, learn as much as you can from others, and meet your deadlines. There is a lot of pressure to be the one person who knows

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X better than anyone else—to become hyper-specialized as soon as possible. Having a deep subject matter expertise is a great asset, but it will likely happen naturally, by virtue of doing your work plus maybe a little extra effort. And, ten years from now, you'll be working on products and services that don't exist today. The stronger your "lawyer skills" are, the more easily you will be able to successfully adapt your practice, and the more likely it is that you'll be able to provide an excellent service to your clients, regardless of how the industry evolves.

I'd also encourage those who are just getting started to remember they have no idea where they will be in three, five, ten years. Treating everyone with kindness and respect goes a long way towards building lasting bridges.

Q: What is something interesting about you that people are not generally aware of that you're willing to share?

A: I started playing the piano when I was three, after successfully convincing my parents that I would not

complain about not being able to watch cartoons on Saturday mornings. I took it pretty seriously until college, when I pursued other interests. My sister recently bought my son a keyboard and—surprise, surprise—I realized how much I missed playing. You can probably guess what my next quarantine adventure is going to be.

Q: How has your life changed as a result of COVID-19?

A: Workwise, it really has not made a difference, luckily—if anything, working from home has made me more productive. Outside of work, however, it's been a mixed bag. Having so many experiences "go virtual" means that I've been able to resume a consistent morning yoga practice without worrying about logistics, which is great. My high school friends and I now have a standing date every other week, even though we're all over the world at this point. I've also gotten to know my neighbors better. That has all been wonderful.

But I don't need to tell you how much we have all lost. Even in the very best case scenario, which is what I have been fortunate to experience, being unable to be physically present with friends and family is tough. My grandmother, who lives in Puerto Rico, turned 95 last

year. The last time my parents (also in Puerto Rico) saw my son, he was one; he's now three. I have not met my youngest niece, who lives in London. It's difficult to ignore the fact that this is time we are never getting back.

Q: How long have you been an FCBA member and what is the value of FCBA membership?

A: I joined the FCBA as a young associate. The greatest value of FCBA membership for me has been the personal and professional relationships I have developed over the years. The CLEs and lunch and learns are also fantastic resources—I'll never forget attending the "Communications Law 101" program early on and thinking just how much I had to learn. It's such an asset to have a community that promotes and supports that learning. The Women's Summit Series is an excellent initiative as well. And, of course, I'm very much looking forward to seeing everyone in person at the Chairman's Dinner again!

Interested in learning more about another FCBA member? If there is a member you'd like to know better, contact Laura Phillips at laura.phillips@faegredrinker.com.