

Supporting Communities

An Interview with Barbara A. Jones,
Co-Managing Shareholder, Los Angeles Office, and Chair, Blockchain and Digital Assets Practice, Greenberg Traurig, LLP

EDITORS' NOTE *Barbara Jones maintains a diverse corporate and securities law practice across industry groups, emphasizing complex international and domestic transactions, including private and public financings, dual listings, mergers and acquisitions, strategic collaborations and joint ventures, and licensing transactions. She serves as a trusted advisor to public and private company boards of directors on governance matters and complex regulatory reporting and compliance issues. Jones' clients include financial institutions, private equity and venture capital groups, and public and private companies in emerging technology, life sciences and biotechnology, defense and security, blockchain and digital assets, telecommunications, information technology, energy (traditional and renewable), mining, media, entertainment and sports. She also represents Olympic and professional athletes and sports-related organizations.*



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different business cultures, but has also expanded my world view with respect to opportunities for increased global community.

Will you provide an overview of Greenberg Traurig's Blockchain and Digital Assets practice?

In 2016 and 2017, as we started to see a flurry of initial coin offerings (ICOs) coming to the market, we were getting questions from some of our clients about blockchain which was evolving rapidly. I was asked to lead that group because much of the work in

the early days was related to ICOs, which looked a lot like securities offerings and fit with my experience and background in capital markets. A big part of my focus within our practice group is risk management, both for the firm and for our clients, given the uncertain regulatory environment in the United States with respect to the blockchain and digital assets space.

and other industry groups, so we can serve as a one-stop shop to assist our clients with the plethora of issues they face in this sector.

Will you highlight Greenberg Traurig's commitment to supporting its communities and its efforts in Los Angeles addressing the recent wildfires?

This is at the essence of Greenberg Traurig's culture. Jimmy Carter said, "My faith demands that I do whatever I can, wherever I am, whenever I can, for as long as I can with whatever I have to try to make a difference." Regardless of what your faith happens to be, that philosophy really carries through at Greenberg Traurig. When the wildfires hit, our first and foremost obligation and concern was for our own attorneys, staff, and their families. We had many people who received a call and had a few minutes to get their belongings and pick up their kids at school – they had nothing but what was on their backs and in their cars at the time. We had many who lost everything, and many who were otherwise displaced for weeks. This was our initial concern, and we are now in the rebuilding process.

Simultaneously, and despite the chaos that was going on, the immediate outpouring of support from everyone in the office asking what they could do to help their colleagues, and what they could do to help their community, was amazing to see. We quickly initiated food drives and assembled goods and supplies for displaced families, both for our own team and for the broader community. The response was immediate, enabling us to provide those donations to the volunteers on the front lines and to recovery centers and nonprofits who were assisting with the fires, as well as volunteering our own time at the various centers. We provided support to our fire departments, police departments, and first responders who were doing outstanding work to keep us safe and help us through this horrible crisis. We also assembled teams of experts to assist with various issues faced by those displaced from their apartments and homes, including lease and mortgage concerns, insurance claims, securing assistance from FEMA, and guidance on available resources for immediate support and longer-term recovery. Providing these legal services on a pro bono basis is at the heart of Greenberg Traurig's culture. We have been an active supporter of the greater Los Angeles community for the past 25 years. We are proud of our commitment to ongoing and active support of our communities – it is fundamental to who we are as a firm. ●

Will you discuss your career journey and what interested you in pursuing a career in the legal profession?

I began my legal career in Los Angeles with a major Wall Street firm – something I never envisioned when I entered law school. I was then fortunate to be transferred to London where I practiced U.S. securities law for 13 years before relocating to Boston for family reasons, and eventually returning to Los Angeles. A strong part of my practice has an international focus with multinational companies doing work in the U.S. I became a corporate/transactional lawyer to be a "change agent." Practicing corporate law provides the opportunity to combine one's knowledge of the law and the ability to analyze a particular set of facts with the purpose of then finding an ethically appropriate and suitably practical solution to a client's needs. Ideally, that solution not only benefits the client but also serves as a best practice or model for others to employ in fostering positive social impact.

The law is always evolving, which is something I love about the profession, since you are constantly learning. I am fortunate to have a career that is so diverse and fascinating from a cross-industry, cross-jurisdictional perspective. Working with business and government leaders in the U.S. and around the world has not only broadened my understanding of and ability to work within

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We support clients as they develop products and bring them to market and evaluate how and if those products can be structured to fit in the evolving U.S. regulatory environment, or whether it makes sense to take them offshore in the interim until there is greater regulatory certainty in the United States. Our platform at Greenberg Traurig is comprised of practitioners focused on international tax, commodities, securities, intellectual property, real estate, financial services, healthcare,