

Education: LL.M., New York University School of Law, 2004; J.D., University of Houston Law Center, cum laude, 2003; B.A., University of Texas at Austin, with honors, 2000

Company Name: Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP

Industry: Legal

Company CEO: Kim Koopersmith, Chairperson

Company Headquarters Location: N/A, the firm does not have a HQ

Number of Employees: 1726

Your Location (if different from above): Houston, Texas

Words you live by: "Never give in, never give in, never, never, never[.]"- Winston Churchill

Who is your personal hero: Marcia Hyatt, my dear friend who I call "mom"—we met when I was in college and working as a leasing agent at an apartment complex and Marcia was the manager. She is my first real boss!

What book are you reading: *Leading Without Authority* by Keith Ferrazzi

What was your first job: My first real paying job was a pizza delivery driver.

Favorite charity: SEARCH

Interests/Hobbies: Reading; jigsaw puzzles, and mah-jong

Family: Single mom with a 14-year-old son, 11-year-old daughter.



Having a Diverse Group of Mentors is Invaluable

My mentors are extremely important to my career success. As a first generation immigrant, I relied heavily on my teachers and professors to mentor me throughout my school career, and, later on, found mentors at work to be my pillars of support. My first boss, Marcia Hyatt continues to act as a mentor to me today. She was the first person outside of my family to see my potential based on my work ethic, drive and talent. She showed me the importance of building consensus (rather than being right), and helped me develop confidence to believe in myself.

When I started practicing law, I actively sought out partners who I admired for advice. By building genuine and trusting relationships, my mentors served as sounding boards when I faced personal and professional challenges during my career. And not all of my mentors are women and diverse lawyers. In fact, I have many excellent mentors who are older white men, who showed

me how to navigate an organization, influence upwards and advocate for myself. I find that having a diverse group of mentors is invaluable, with everyone bringing their unique experiences, perspectives and strategies to the conversation to help me address a wide range of issues.

Given how valuable mentorship is to me, I now spend a great amount of time mentoring junior attorneys and law students, especially those that are diverse. For Akin Gump's Houston office, I head the women's initiative group where I lead monthly meetings and events designed to (i) identify and promote female talent, (ii) foster strong relationships and (iii) provide a forum for women attorneys to discuss work/life balance matters. I'm also a volunteer mentor for the Asian American Bar Association of Houston and Houston Bar Association. In addition, I frequently appear on panels and counseling law students and attorneys and sharing my lessons-learned. For example, in recent years, I have

spoken on UH Law Center's panel "Real Scoop in Big Law," discussing the importance of finding mentors, and a diversity panel regarding BigLaw diversity and inclusion programs. Also, I spoke on the Houston Young Lawyer Association's panel "First Generation Attorney Committee Presents: Behind the Hiring Curtain" about law firms' view and efforts on diversity and inclusion.

I continue my outreach to diverse students during COVID, having recently participated in Akin Gump sponsored panels such as "Shaping Your Future: Forging Your Own Path to Success" and "The Power of Mentoring." Additionally, I've recently spoken on UH Law Center panels including "Diverse Perspectives in Tax Law," discussing my career and the intersection of diversity and tax law, and "Grit and Resilience" as part of the Center's pre-law pipeline program. Mentorship is powerful and I hope to continue pave the way for the future generation of young lawyers.