

insights

TYPES NOT MAPPED YET May 16, 2023 | TTR not mapped yet | Jayna Marie Rust

Jayna Rust cites internal advocates as crucial in “How I Made Partner” Q&A

Law.com featured Thompson Coburn’s [Jayna Rust](#), a government contracts partner based in the firm’s Washington, D.C. office, in their April “How I Made It” series. In the article, Jayna shares her insights on navigating the path from associate to partner.

Jayna’s first experience at the firm was 10 years ago, during law school, as a summer associate.

“I wanted to find a firm that had a group dedicated to government contracts. It took some research to figure out which firms had attorneys dedicated to that practice, rather than just dabbling in it, but Thompson Coburn fit that criteria,” Jayna told Law.com. “During my summer with the firm, the people were great to work with, so that led me to accept a full-time offer.”

As an associate, Jayna says that one differentiator was that she had “always done a lot of business-development activities, such as writing articles, giving presentations, and networking.” She also identifies mentors within the firm as being critical to her success.

“From early in my career, I’ve had a lot of support from the government contracts group leadership and other leaders in the firm. I think those people had been advocating for me for years, and that pushed others to make me partner once I met my firm’s hard metrics for partnership consideration,” Jayna said.

To junior associates hoping to enter the partnership track, Jayna advises to “make sure you are in a practice area that has work that will interest you both as an associate doing associate-level work, and as a partner doing partner-level work. Many people only think about one or the other, but if you want a long-term career, you want to be—and stay—engaged and interested in the work.”

Mid-level associates, Jayna shared with the publication, should be sure to develop relationships and “have internal sponsors who are your cheerleaders and advocates. Without those people, you may be doing great work, but nobody knows—or only a few people know—about it.”

Jayna was elected to Thompson Coburn’s partnership effective January 1, 2023.

Read the article [here](#).

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