



Education: Amherst College, B.A.; Columbia Law School, J.D.

Company Name: Patterson Belknap Webb & Tyler LLP

Industry: Law

Company CEO: Peter Tomlinson & Dahlia Doumar

Company Headquarters Location: New York, NY

Number of Employees: 329

Words you live by: "The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in service of others." —Mahatma Gandhi

Who is your personal hero: Martin Luther King, Jr.

What book are you reading: *The Second Founding* by Eric Foner

What was your first job: When I was 16, I served as summer camp counselor with the YMCA in Red Bank, NJ.

Favorite charity: Sponsors for Educational Opportunity (SEO)

Interests/Hobbies: Travelling with my family, piano, running.

Family: Jenelle DeCoteau (wife), and two children Noah (10) and Maya (7).

Taking Great Pride in Serving as a Mentor

As the legal and business professions have grappled in recent years with the shameful lack of diversity in our professions, a renewed focus has emerged on the tried-and-true practice of mentorship to address the problem. And with good reason. If we acknowledge truth in the sayings that "no man (or woman) is an island," or that "no one makes it on their own," than we must also accept the fact that mentorship is an essential ingredient to everyone's success. I am no exception.

I am the beneficiary of mentors from every season of my life. My parents, my first and most important mentors, taught me the value of education, the importance of striving for excellence, and kindness. But their mentorship had limits to assisting me in my professional endeavors: I had no lawyers in my family from whom to receive professional guidance.

I would not be where I am today without the many professional mentors in my career. First in my mind is the late judge William H. Walls of the United States District Court for the District of New Jersey, for whom I had the privilege of serving as a judicial clerk early in my career. Judge Walls, who was one of the first African American judges in the State of New Jersey, took a chance on me when he hired me out of law school. He challenged me—and all of his clerks—to compete not with each other, but with ourselves. He challenged us to think deeply about the law, and to observe, from the lawyers who appeared before the court, the difference between effective and ineffective advocacy. He would remind us that we can learn as much from watching our own—and other peoples'—failures, as we can learn from our successes. Perhaps most significantly, he instilled in me

the confidence that I could be successful at the highest levels of our profession.

I have immense gratitude for all of the personal and professional mentors I have encountered along my journey, and after practicing law for nearly two decades, I now have an opportunity to pay it forward. I take great pride in serving as a mentor to the next generation of young lawyers, especially attorneys of color. The investment of my time in their careers is returned many times over: I feel no greater professional satisfaction than watching a mentee's career flourish. If we all re-dedicate ourselves to actively mentoring the young diverse members of our respective professions, and especially giving them the confidence to believe they can excel, then I have no doubt that our society will continue to make great strides in creating more diverse, inclusive workforces.