

Paul Hastings Janofsky Walker's Barbara L Johnson: A Partner Making a Difference in Washington DC

By Kenneth Davis

Summary Barbara L. Johnson is a partner at Paul Hastings Janofsky & Walker's Washington DC office. Johnson focuses her practice on government contracts, litigation, investigations, and appellate matters. She provides practical, timely, and cost-effective advice on procurement and government contracting issues, contract disputes, bid protests, False Claims Act matters, administrative appeals, and debarment proceedings. In addition, Johnson has experience representing companies in national security clearance proceedings.

Johnson has represented some of the largest defense contractors and suppliers in the world, providing legal advice and counsel with regards to government contract and procurements. Additionally, she has successfully prosecuted hundreds of bid protests in forums such as the Government Accountability Office and the Department of Defense Office of Hearings and Appeals and has represented companies in arbitrations and mediations. She is well-versed in the rules and regulations of the Federal Acquisition Regulations (FAR) and Defense Federal Acquisition Regulations (DFAR).

Johnson also routinely provides advice to clients concerning contractor performance and disputes, contract terminations, the preparation of Source Selection Plans and the evaluation of proposals, and remedies for cases of non-performance. She also advises clients on matters related to the False Claims Act and has defended clients in investigations and civil enforcement proceedings. Finally, she frequently participates in appeals of agency decisions and is experienced in the distinct regulations governing appeals of contract awards and contract terminations.

Barbara L. Johnson is one of the top government contract and procurement attorneys in Washington, DC. With more than two decades of experience, she provides practical, timely and cost-effective counsel in government contract, litigation, appeals and investigation matters. She is well-versed in the rules and regulations of the Federal Acquisition Regulations (FAR) and the Defense Federal Acquisition Regulations (DFAR) and has successfully prosecuted hundreds of bid protests in the Government Accountability Office and Department of Defense Office of Hearings and Appeals. Johnson routinely advises clients on contract performance and disputes, contract terminations and remedies for cases of non-performance as well as False Claims Act investigations and civil enforcement proceedings. She also participates in appeals of agency decisions and is experienced in the distinct regulations governing appeals of contract awards and contract terminations.

Barbara L. Johnson, Partner with Paul Hastings Janofsky & Walker Washington D.C.

Barbara L. Johnson is a partner with Paul Hastings Janofsky & Walker Washington D.C. She specializes in corporate law and represents clients in a wide range of corporate finance, securities and mergers and acquisitions matters. Barbara has extensive experience in financial services, including banking and securities regulation, private equity and venture capital investments, private placements, and public offerings. She has represented numerous financial institutions, broker-dealers and venture capital and private equity funds in various transactional matters. Additionally, Barbara has represented public and private companies in a variety of corporate finance and governance matters.

Ms. Johnson has counseled clients in connection with other regulatory and compliance issues, including Sarbanes-Oxley Act requirements, FINRA broker/dealer rules, SEC registered offerings and periodic reporting requirements. Barbara also has substantial experience in representing public companies in connection with their ongoing corporate securities and governance requirements. She has represented a

number of publicly traded companies in connection with their SEC reporting and corporate governance requirements, including advising on the new Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform Act regulations.

Barbara L. Johnson graduated from Yale Law School in 1996. She is a member of the American Bar Association, the Washington DC Bar Association, and the National Association of Securities Dealers. She is also a member of the Council of Institutional Investors and the D.C. Bar Pro Bono Program.

Barbara L. Johnson has represented clients in many areas of corporate finance, securities, and mergers and acquisitions. She has extensive experience in financial services including banking and securities regulations, private equity and venture capital investments, and public offerings. She specializes in advising clients on the new regulations that followed the enactment of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform Act.

Ms. Johnson is highly knowledgeable and experienced in helping clients navigate the SEC's regulatory and compliance requirements, including Sarbanes-Oxley Act, FINRA broker/dealer rules, and SEC registered offerings and periodic reporting requirements. Barbara L. Johnson is also a member of a variety of bar associations, including the American Bar Association, the Washington DC Bar Association, and the National Association of Securities Dealers. She has been a dedicated member of the Council of Institutional Investors and the D.C. Bar Pro Bono Program.

Johnson took her friends' advice and enrolled at William & Mary Marshall-Wythe School of Law in Williamsburg, VA; she earned her law degree in 1984. Right after that, she began working as in-house counsel for Dow, and in 1985, she transferred to one of its Texas facilities, where she said she initially worked on "pretty much anything that came through the door." Then she began to primarily counsel the company's human resources department.

Johnson eventually chose to leave Dow and join a minority-owned firm--Wickliff & Hall--in 1990.

"I always knew that I wanted to try cases since from the time that I had been in law school and recognized that that was not going to be an option with Dow, which is why I ended up leaving and joining a law firm," she explained.

Johnson handled employment litigation at the Houston-based firm and became a partner in 1993. She left the firm in 2002 to join [Paul, Hastings, Janofsky & Walker](#) as a partner in its Washington, DC, office.

She explained why she left Wickliff & Hall to join Paul Hastings:

"I saw it as an opportunity to join just a [wonderful employment law department](#) that handles phenomenal cases, has tremendous resources, and an incredible variety of clients with whom we do work," she said. "And also to join a real full-service law firm with lots of opportunities to get to know amazing attorneys who work on very different types of matters, whether it be international arbitrations or major corporate transactions."

In her practice at Paul Hastings, Johnson represents employers in various discrimination matters, wage and hour matters, and issues centering on benefits. She said her practice has changed from being comprised of more of a single-plaintiff caseload to one that involves more complicated complex litigation, collective actions, and multiple-plaintiff class actions. Additionally, Johnson regularly tries cases involving issues of race, age, gender, and disability discrimination, retaliation, breach of contract, and various employment torts in both state and federal courts. She also provides employment law advice to her clients.

"Recognizing that so few cases actually go to trial, it's also very important to help clients develop strategies for avoiding litigation to assure that they are in compliance with the myriad of laws that affect them," she said.

In addition to her employment law cases, Johnson has litigated ERISA, Sarbanes-Oxley, premises liability,

toxic tort, environmental racism, and business tort cases.

She is also chair of Paul Hastings' Global Pro Bono and Community Involvement Committee, a member of the firm's Diversity Policy and Practices Committee, and on the Partnership Evaluation Committee.

Johnson discussed what she enjoys most about her job:

"I particularly enjoy litigation and the opportunity to learn to tell a story about a particular situation," she said. "Since becoming a litigator, I have learned that an important aspect of successful litigation is the ability to tell stories. And I mean that in a positive way, in that companies, like individuals, have stories, and I think to be successful you've got to be able to tell the company's stories through the company's witnesses."

Johnson said she "loves" to speak to law students. She has spoken to students at Georgetown University Law Center and William & Mary Marshall-Wythe School of Law, as well as to a number of BLSA (Black Law Students Association) groups.

"BLSA is a very popular organization on virtually every law school campus," she said. "Also, BLSA has regional and national meetings involving students of color from a lot of different law schools."

Johnson said she speaks to law students about the profession and the opportunities they will have as attorneys. She also talks to students about how to do well in law school, especially when it comes to thinking "strategically" about law school exams and getting ready for them. Johnson said that what she enjoys most about speaking to law students is the "ability to make a difference in terms of someone's future and future opportunities and possibilities in the profession."

She had the following advice for law students:

"Other than what I said about the [importance of thinking about law school exams](#) strategically [...] there's a tremendous interest right now, especially among large law firms, in attracting minority lawyers," she said. "And so my advice is to look deeper in terms of the organization that's wooing them and to really understand what the possibilities are there for advancement and what kinds of culture and environment they're going to get into."

Johnson said the two people who influenced her the most in her formative years as a lawyer were attorneys Anthony Sadberry and A. Martin Wickliff, Jr., both of whom she worked with at Wickliff & Hall.

"Marty [Wickliff] taught me about the value of really just hard work and the reality that this is a very demanding and challenging profession," she said. "And with Marty, it was never about cutting corners and always giving the clients more than they expect and exceeding expectations in every way."

Johnson said one of the highlights of her [professional career](#) was joining Paul Hastings, a prominent international law firm, as a partner.

"So few people of color and so few female lawyers of color really have the opportunity to experience practice at this level in terms of the clients we serve and the sophistication of this practice," she said.

Johnson was born and raised in Hampton, VA.

"I'm the product of very hardworking parents and a very loving family environment, where I was nurtured by not only my parents but my aunts and uncles and the whole community," she said.

Johnson is married to a management consultant with his own firm. She has three stepchildren, one of whom is majoring in [education at the University of Houston](#).

Johnson said that she has many hobbies and interests, including cooking, genealogy, community involvement, and fitness.

She discussed some of the goals she'd like to accomplish with her practice in the next few years:

"I'm looking to continue to take my practice to the next level in terms of the clients I represent and the types of cases in which I get involved," she said. "And I'm looking to help in developing the next generation of leaders for the firm...I just think that the development of and mentoring of younger attorneys is an important obligation that I have. So those are my primary objectives."