



Patricia Young Partner

LATHAM & WATKINS LLP

My credentials: JD, Harvard Law School; SB, chemistry, Massachusetts Institute of Technology; SB, economics, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

My work location: Bay Area—Menlo Park and San Francisco, California

Words I live by: Always do your best.

My personal philosophy: Be honest, be objective, be authentic, and smile.

What I'm reading now: Do cookbooks count? *The Food of Taiwan* by Cathy Erway

My first job: As a dutiful daughter, helping my parents at their dry cleaning business. Paid, teaching violin.

My favorite charity: World Wildlife Fund; Rainforest Trust

My interests: Travel, gardening, painting, and music

My family: My partner, Kevin, and I have been together almost 20 years; we have a pet bunny.

Company: Latham & Watkins LLP

Industry: Law

Company Headquarters: none

Number of employees: 5,400

CEO: Rich Trobman, Chair and Managing Partner



Increasing Diversity in STEM

We have to get children of all backgrounds excited about STEM at an early age; it just requires a strong foundation. If you don't enjoy science or math at least by high school, you're not going to suddenly decide to major in engineering in college. And even if you did, it would be a huge challenge.

Exposing students to role models who look like them is an important step—the earlier the better. When I was growing up, my parents owned a dry cleaner and the only professionals I knew were their customers. I didn't know what any of them did—just that they wore suits every day. So I went to college thinking I wanted to be an investment banker. I found my way over time, but I think it would have been easier if, as a child, I had known someone in STEM.

Moving Women Forward in STEM

I encourage women to study STEM in college. You aren't locked into being a scientist or engineer your entire life, and once you have a strong technical background, no one can ever take that away from you. The problem-solving skills you'll gain in science or engineering will be really valuable in law or banking.

I grew up liking science, but never saw myself in the lab long term. I gave it a try, including a summer internship at a pharmaceutical company. And at MIT, I worked in a lab with a grad student who had a startup. But he explained that patent lawyers were really important to his business, which got me thinking about patent law. I think if you're directly involved in a STEM field early on, it gives you some flexibility to either be a scientist or find an adjacent area that maybe doesn't require a lab coat.

The Changing STEM World

The fact that we're even talking about it is a huge change. Technology is so central to our daily lives; I think that familiarity makes STEM much more prominent. Ironically, the pandemic has placed medical science front and center. It's almost impossible to have a conversation without talking about vaccines right now. Last year everyone was hyper-aware of clinical trials and FDA approval timelines. We have incredibly effective vaccines in an amazingly short period of time—this simply wouldn't have been possible even a few years ago. In some ways STEM seems more accessible than ever, not just to some brainiac scientist in a lab, but to all of us.