

Pablo S. Quesada, Esq.

Shaping the Future

AALM: Do you have any mentors or professors that encouraged you along the way? What is the best lesson they taught you?

Quesada: From early in my career, I was blessed with excellent mentors. They not only taught me how to hone my legal skills, but also how to interact with clients and, importantly, the business side of the practice of law. Key among those mentors were Michael Kosnitzky, Marc Auerbach and Clay Parker. Today, they remain at the top of their games and are recognized leaders in our legal community. Each brings a unique skill to his trade, but all are tireless and have incredible business acumen. I have little doubt that but for such experiences and my learning from them, I would not have achieved such rapid success in my career.

AALM: What was the greatest lesson you learned in law school? How do you apply that to your career today?

Quesada: I could not have made a better decision in my life than opting to go to law school at Florida State University. Most importantly, I met and married my beautiful wife and law partner, Emilia Quesada, and also made some amazing friends who remain some of my most trusted colleagues. The law school itself did an excellent job not only in the classroom, with topics one would expect (e.g., legal writing, evidence, procedure, property), but also provided unending interaction with administration, faculty, alumni and other students outside the classroom that shaped the way we processed and analyzed information. It was truly a remarkable experience, and it has greatly impacted my day-to-day practice.

AALM: What do you find particularly rewarding about your practice?

Quesada: The most rewarding aspect of my practice is being able to work with other excellent lawyers I truly admire and with whom I enjoy sharing my day. We also have an incredible staff that sets the tone for the firm. With that foundation,

it makes it easy to delve into the practice, perform at a high level and provide the service our clients have deservedly come to expect. I have also been blessed with some wonderful, long-standing clients, some of whom I have worked with for nearly 20 years, and it has been exciting to essentially become part of their respective teams and experience their growth, as well.

AALM: What do you find particularly challenging about your practice? How do you overcome these challenges?

Quesada: The most challenging aspect of my practice is that I enjoy fully engaging with my clients and learning their businesses. With that, my role usually expands beyond simply being their legal counsel and I get more integrated on the business-side. I thoroughly enjoy that aspect of my practice, as I am continually learning new industries and adding value, but it also makes it difficult to delegate those functions. It makes balancing my schedule most difficult and I am keen on being responsive to my clients, as I understand that we are retained to advance, and not slow down, their businesses, and timing is key in many transactions.

AALM: What compelled you to start your own practice?

Quesada: I was presented some excellent opportunities early in my career to work with some of the most prestigious local and international firms, and then to serve as regional counsel for Visa's Latin America and Caribbean Region. These experiences gave me a breadth of experience, but left me with an entrepreneurial desire to launch my own firm. After Visa, I formed SMGQ Law with Roland Sanchez-Medina, Peter Gonzalez and my wife, Emilia Quesada, all of whom had already made a name for themselves with successful careers at some of the most recognizable firms, but were similarly ready to lead their own firm and make their vision a reality. We were soon joined by Gustavo

Lage, Joseph Gomez and Carlos Machado, each of whom had similar past experiences and shared our vision. That has been the core of our firm, and we have since been able to deepen our bench and expand our practice areas by adding select partners that have made us a better firm, such as Mitchell Mandler, Lee Osiason and David Peña. Over the years, however, we have remained true to our vision – to provide high-end legal services in an efficient and cost-effective manner and to do so in a professional, yet enjoyable, setting.

AALM: What accomplishment are you most proud of achieving?

Quesada: With all the time demands placed in serving my clients, and separately helping manage the law firm, I am most proud that both my wife and I have made our family a priority. We have two daughters in high school and since they were young, we have made every effort to remain on top of their school work and attend every recital, horse show, sporting event, party, etc. and, in short, be an important, present part of their lives. On the weekends, we do everything as a family and most cherish our time together going to church followed by a family lunch or dinner.

AALM: What do you most hope to accomplish in the future? Where do you see yourself in five years? In 10?

Quesada: I have now been practicing law for over 20 years, over 10 years with my firm, and I look forward to continuing that for the next 20. From my perspective, it's not merely a legal career. I am seeing my clients' lives and dreams play out, and I am fortunate that they allow me to come along and help them shape that future. So, I continue to enjoy that role and I am excited to see that continue and further develop my existing and new relationships. At the same time, I get to see the development of my own law firm, and the relationships we have forged over the years.

AT A GLANCE

SMGQ LAW

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Practice Areas

Corporate
Real Estate
Commercial Transactions

Education

Juris Doctor, Florida State
University College of Law, 1996
Bachelor of Arts in Business
Administration, Accounting,
University of Miami, 1993

Professional Memberships

Florida Bar
Georgia Bar
National Association of Minority
and Women-Owned Law
Firms

Community Involvement

University of Miami's Citizens'
Board

Hobbies

Family Road Trips
Stock Trading
Biblical Study

Favorite Quote

"There are no constraints on the human mind, no walls around the human spirit, no barriers to our progress except those we ourselves erect."
– President Ronald Reagan



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