KAUFMAN DOLOWICH LLP

"Uncommon Conviction: Karol Corbin Walk
the law began at home," cover story art
Super Lawyers Magazine, March 2021

Twice **Karol Corbin Walker** hits pause on her business, commercial and employ
nothing to do with the deeply isolating pandemic. It s a long-pr
spiritual messages, devotionals, prayers, affirmations and such

You never know what another person is going through, Walker sa
colleagues with inspirational messages. If it doesn t help one

Walker recently added an attorney to her text lists. She doesn t
children involved, she notes, and when they spoke during a busin
texts, but he told her niece, who was a close colleague and frie
that, that goes to the core of who I am, Walker says. We re al
our God-given gifts. That s what I try to do every single day.

Paulette Brown, senior partner with Locke Lord and the first wom
Walker can be unrelenting, but in the best way. That s how she
she s in your corner, nobody s going to talk her out of it.

She interacts with people with real kindness, says Anne E. Thor
That s not a word that s used so much. I believe she knows the
kind of person who knows if someone has a child who s sick or an
notes and caring.

I m not impressed by anybody s title or what they do. I was tau
who joined Kaufman Dolowich & Voluck in 2019. I know the [build
all have a purpose in life.

That commitment to others began at home.

She grew up in Jersey City with the kind of childhood where neig

Her mother, Jeanette, juggled a part-time job and raising a fami
persistence, she joined her daughter as each accepted a Bachelor
George, a laborer, was so determined not to miss a day at work t
Electric whenever inclement weather rendered the roads impassabl

Walker s childhood home had an open-door policy. Her mom would g
surrogate father to kids in the neighborhood who needed one. The
church but also individually: at the homeless shelter, the food

Jeanette shared her spiritualism. Until her death in 1992, she a
uni sts *This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it* . Her funeral was standing ro
crowded even into the choir loft behind the altar.

People I didn t even know came up to me and told me she d had a
will say, You ll never know what your mother did for me. Her l
today.

Walker made history in 1995 when she became the first Black woma
a predecessor to LeClairRyan). In 1998, she was the first Black
and Prosecutorial Appointments Committee. Five years after that,
Association in its then-105-year history.

One of the great honors of my life was to introduce her as the
lawyers at the convention in Atlantic City, says Ted Wells, a P
department. He met Walker when he interviewed her for a summer a
Walker is a history-maker, and she is a force of nature.

Wells and Walker s mentor-mentee relationship has flourished ov
resume or because she just likes titles, Wells says. She is au
started as my mentee, but she has become one of my heroes.

Walker s father, who died of COVID last year, used to say, Noth
Walker decided on law school.

She was working as a revenue officer at the IRS, a job she d tak
and the people, and it s where she met husband Paul Walker. This
imagined herself moving up through the agency s ranks, perhaps t

But she was deterred; international travel was often harrowing a
the world, Walker says. Plus, a review of the federal governmen
rank in her office, and even then, the salary seemed low. She we
faith came in, she adds.

She applied to two law schools. Only Seton Hall University Schoo
complete the Monsignor Thomas Fahy Legal Education Opportunities

Once I was admitted, one of my professors said, Karol, they op
Walker realized she could have one semester of law school paid f
she ran for office. She lost, but then realized the same perk wa
She was the first Black student to hold that position.

I always had a plan B, Walker says. Sometimes you have to ste
prize. The summer after her second year in law school, she cle
clerkship as well, to better hone certain skills. At the big fi
legal system, she says. There was nothing like that in my fami
was where I could research and write and not be intimidated by a

After graduating in 1986 and passing both the New York and New J
David S. Bane.

[For my legal career], that s the best thing that ever happened
have included Fortune 500 companies, publicly and privately held
believe in the justice system. I believe a jury of your peers wi

Some cases stick, like when she represented a plaintiff who d wo
was so traumatized by what she d experienced on a regular basis
children, Walker says. She was violated in a way she never sho

The jury agreed, but the federal judge overruled the decision. S
defending a company against a former employee who claimed he was
because of multiple sexual harassment claims that had been filed

In one memorable courtroom scene, the other side argued that a w
inappropriately touch a woman from 20 feet away. The lawyer used
could you see this far back? he asked.

Without missing a beat, the witness described every detail of th
recalls. In my closing, I referenced that and the jury nodded i
Oh, the plaintiff brought it. It must be meritorious, Walker

Danita Minnigan Cooper, an associate who worked with Walker at L
inspires. I ve grown so much as an attorney from working with h
and she ll say, I didn t think about that aspect. That s intere
analyze different aspects of a situation very quickly. She jus

Longtime colleague Joseph F. Lagrotteria, now of counsel at K&L
a good lawyer, she is interested in improving the bar associatio

Walker has long been an outspoken advocate for diversity and inc
Association in 2015, she appointed Walker to chair the Standing
the committee take implicit bias training, which Brown enthusias

She makes sure people have fair opportunities, Brown says. Wh
color, you can be sure she s going to do that.

Corbin Walker s niece, Dara Govan, turned to her aunt for suppor
diversity committee. It was a wonderful place to work, but I wa
Asian American associate and no partners of color, says Govan,
law firms and came up with a strategy so we could be more delibe
have had the courage to do that if I hadn t had her in my ear te

KDV holds a Mansfield Rule Certification, meaning the firm has s
and governance roles, and equity partner promotions.

Gino Zonghetti, co-managing partner of KDV s NJ office, says Walker s bo

If you re trying to develop young attorneys, diverse attorneys, model, a leader. I think she s someone we should all aspire to b

Walker says she has seen some progress over the years in terms o legal community.

Numbers are still at an anemic level, she says. Corporate cli legal teams. People understand that diversity helps with respect their respective experiences and it varies. You might see someth

If you re looking for Walker outside of her office, you ll often converted to Catholicism as an adult 27 years ago. Her husband, Christian Initiation for Adults program at the church since 2004 spring. She rarely misses a Sunday Mass, also serving as an Extr the Sovereign Military Order of Malta, whose members pledge to h

In 2009, Walker was the first person of color to receive the Sai 2019, she was the first woman and first person of color to recei recognize lawyers and judges who are committed to their faith an

She s also made pilgrimages to Poland and Spain and attended Ger 10 years since 1634 until last year. The 2020 performance was po She has four living stepchildren, 11 living grandchildren and si

Karol s a multifaceted asset to the church. She s down to earth faith into action, helping the needy, the sick, the less fortuna

But for Walker, it s just what her mama taught her.

It s not about me. I look at myself as being a servant doing wh but to open the door for others. I learned from my parents that world a much better place. Hopefully I ve been able to contribut

Walker s Daily Devotionals

What kinds of messages could you expect if you were one of the 1 inspirational messages and verses with us:

This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it. Psalm 118:24

Worrying is like a rocking chair: it gives you something to do, but you never go anywhere. Erma Bombeck

Everything is always in divine order.

Let go and let God.

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