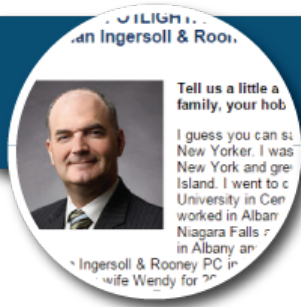


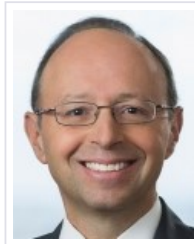
Member Spotlights



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Interviews with NABL Members from NABL News



Charles (Chuck) G. Toto, Hawkins Delafield & Wood LLP, Newark, NJ

December 21, 2020 60 20



Tell us something about yourself...

I joined Hawkins out of law school in 1986, and this fall marks 35 years with the firm. My wife Cathie and I have two daughters. Our oldest is a lawyer, she's an associate at Paul Weiss. Our youngest is our "Health Care Hero". She is an occupational therapist in a nursing home. When I'm not working, I enjoy spending time "Down the Shore" (in New Jersey of course), golfing and training in martial arts. Participating in karate has been a great adventure. I enjoy the people, the challenges and the competition. It is the kind of activity that forces me out of my comfort zone, and the workouts are a terrific stress reliever after a long day of working on indentures and official statements.

As a longtime NABL member, what motivates you to renew

NABL is a great organization. When my partner Howard Zucker was President, he encouraged Hawkins attorneys who were not members to join, and those who were members, to be more active. For a bond lawyer, it is the premier organization not only for continuing legal education but also for developing contacts in the profession and staying on the cutting edge of our industry. It also has an important personal aspect. When I started in public finance, each deal would have several face-to-face meetings and in-person closings. You would really get to know people. Now, even pre-pandemic, you often do an entire financing without meeting anybody. Sometimes NABL conferences were the only time all year I would see a colleague from another firm.

How has your involvement in NABL committees and panels been beneficial to your career?

Chairing panels at the Institute and participating in panels at BAW have been extremely beneficial to both my professional and personal development. The hours of preparation require you to revisit what you know (or think you know) and to research new cases, find new articles, and stay on top of the issues to be discussed in your session. It is also another experience that takes you out of your comfort zone. Standing in front of a large audience of colleagues is uncomfortable and can be unnerving. Whether you fear public speaking or something else, by committing to serving on a panel, whether as chair or a member, you force yourself to address what makes you uncomfortable. Also, committing the time, preparing the content, and hopefully delivering a good and worthwhile product to your colleagues is a real source of pride.

What has been the best advice you have received during your career?

I have received a lot of good advice, but the best advice was to recognize that the public finance bar is a small community. You will work with the same people over and over again and you need to treat your colleagues at other firms with respect and as friends. If you are lucky, these colleagues whether across town or across the country will be among your most treasured relationships. I will give you a bonus, the best career advice I have given, is to have something outside the law that brings you pleasure. This job is intense. It can swallow you up. Whether you enjoy martial arts, playing music, photography, or have a significant volunteer commitment, you need to have something that stretches your mind and takes you away from the job, in body and in spirit, even if only for a few hours a week. Remember, being a bond lawyer is what you do, it is not who you are.

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