

## TOP WOMEN IN THE LAW 2016 AWARDS



# Barbara Becker



Partner,  
Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher

**B**arbara Becker is among the top mergers and acquisition attorneys in New York, with a roster of high-profile clients that include Merck, News Corp, PepsiCo, Pitney Bowes and United Parcel Service. As co-chair of Gibson Dunn's mergers and acquisitions group, she helped broker deals that included Alaska Air Group's \$4 billion purchase of Virgin America, Diamond Resort's \$2.2 billion acquisition of Apollo Global Management funds, global water technology company Xylem's \$1.7 billion purchase of utility metering company Sensus, and Equifax's \$1.8 billion purchase of Veda Group Limited. She also helped the firm revamp its diversity efforts as chair of its hiring and global diversity committees. She launched "Women of Gibson Dunn" to boost leadership and networking opportunities and organized four firmwide large-scale women's leadership retreats. She also helped to develop programs for women of color and LGBT women.

#### **If I weren't a lawyer, I'd be ...**

A psychologist.

#### **The mentor/lawyer I most admire is ...**

Gibson Dunn partner Dennis Friedman. He has great judgment and he is fearless and creative.

#### **What's the best advice anyone has ever given you?**

Take advantage of every opportunity presented, even if not convenient.

#### **#1 survival tip in a work crisis:**

Keep calm and carry on.

#### **Have you ever been treated differently on the job because of your gender?**

I recall as a young lawyer needing to find my voice so that when I was at the negotiation table I would be effective. Doing so enabled me to operate in a way that was comfortable for me and authentic.

#### **What must the legal profession do to improve opportunities for women lawyers?**

We all have an obligation to sponsor junior lawyers, especially women, and it must include discussions around how best to build confidence. With confidence, lawyers can find and take advantage of opportunities, get experience and develop technical and counseling skills. With confidence and opportunities to develop and network, lawyers can create their career path, whether within a law firm, at a corporation or otherwise, that best suits them.