

WASHINGTON'S

Most Influential Women Lawyers

In a profession still dominated by men, these power players have taken a sledgehammer to the glass ceiling to grab their place among the elite of the Washington bar.

EDITOR'S NOTE

A time will arrive, perhaps soon, when singling out lawyers by gender will seem wholly unnecessary. Unfortunately, we're not there yet. Don't buy it? Try answering this question: How many major law firms can you name that are run by women—ditto practice groups, corporate law departments, advocacy groups, public agencies? Some of them? Certainly. Half? Not even close. Barriers have fallen and continue to do so, and the lawyers on our list of Washington's Most Influential Women have career paths that any lawyer—male or female—would envy. These are power players, and they were selected by the editors of *The National Law Journal* for work that places them in an elite tier. We are recognizing their work, their influence and the fact that they may have had to work a bit harder than many of their male colleagues to get where they are today. Here's to the day when that won't be necessary. —DAVID L. BROWN, editor in chief



MARY ELLEN POWERS
Jones Day

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As Mary Ellen Powers has risen to the top of her profession, she's made sure to bring other women along. The partner-in-charge of one of Jones Day's largest offices—more than 400 lawyers and staff in Washington—Powers has played a key role in helping other female attorneys assume leadership posts. At her firm, women now lead five offices. In 1994, Powers became the first female administrative partner at Jones Day, and she led implementation of a firmwide policy that enabled associates and partners to work part-time. She knows the value of flexibility from personal experience. Powers was the first woman at Jones Day to become partner working on a part-time basis. "A lot of people thought it couldn't be done, and I made it work," she said. How? "Not easily," she said. Recently, Powers has represented a pedal manufacturer in the investigations into recalled Toyotas. She has also defended International Business Machines Corp. in workplace-exposure cases. Robert Weber, general counsel for IBM, said it's her "cold-blooded" ability to analyze the relevant issues that make her an exceptional litigator. Powers is equally crisp about the challenges of a Big Law career: She thinks the media exaggerate the obstacles women face. There's too much focus on women as "victims of historical problems," she said. "There's a lot of opportunity out there." —LEIGH JONES