



John Parker, Sahn Ward Braff Koblenz PLLC

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Name: John Parker

Title: Partner

Company Name: Sahn Ward Braff Koblenz PLLC

Who was/is your mentor and how did s/he influence/help you in your career?

I have had many profound contributions and guidance during the course of my career. One, a former commissioner of a state agency that I worked directly with on executive staff, however, stands out. He not only brought incredible knowledge to the job and great temperament, but also demonstrated to me how government can operate openly and fairly, even in controversial decision-making, and that it must never lose site of the mission and the residents of the state it serves. The mentorship has assisted me in developing critical professional skills, and a deeper understanding and appreciation of the fundamental fairness from state agencies needed for the commercial and industrial sectors of our economy that are heavily regulated and in need of government approvals to function effectively and successfully.

What recent project, transaction or accomplishment are you most proud of?

We work on a variety of complex real estate transactions focusing on the complex environmental conditions that they present that need to be addressed. In particular, are those that combine the cleanup of Brownfield sites impacted and contaminated by the industrial and military defense industry production of the past. A notable project involves the clean-up of a significant site for reuse as residences, involves multiple state agencies, and a complex set of land use approvals in project with a major regional developer. It will represent an incredible success story for the community when completed and will be a source of great pride in the accomplishment.

How do you contribute to your community or your profession?

I have spent the past 14 years on the Executive Committee of the Environment and Energy Section of the New York State Bar Association, and over 10 years serving as chair of its Legislation Committee. Taking a leadership role in this professional organization is an honor and challenge and I have focused my energies on keeping lawyers in the state informed on new and developing environmental and energy issues, and importantly on new and developing law from State Legislature as it seeks to address those challenges. It has been a significant commitment of time and energy, but service in this organization has also been quite rewarding.

What led you to your current profession?

I have lived my entire life in the New York metropolitan area and from an early age found the many dilapidated and unused factories and industrial and commercial sites to be an eyesore, a drag on the economy, and a challenge that needed to be addressed. These properties present many opportunities being located along waterfronts, rivers, and in key locations with substantial potential for reuse. I learned more about the challenges facing the future use for communities and developments of these contaminated properties, and have spent time both working to have laws developed in the state for their orderly reuse, and implementing those laws to enable new real estate developments of various sizes and scales in New York City and in the New York metropolitan

area.

Top three things on your bucket list:

Travel to and experience all of the continents of the world, become a certified scuba diver and explore the worlds barrier reefs, and to continue being an important part of my son's life.

Favorite quote:

"It is not over, until its over."

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