

Q & A

Q & A with Iker Dieguez

Iker Dieguez is a partner at Cacheaux Cavazos & Newton (CCN) in Mexico City, where he has worked since 1999. His practice centers on corporate and securities, industrial property, international trade, customs, and real estate issues. Dieguez received his law degree from the Universidad Iberoamericana in Mexico City.

Q: Before becoming an attorney, what was your first job?

A: My first job was as a clerk for a notary public. In Mexico City, notary publics are licensed attorneys who have undergone substantial preparation to compete for and earn a prestigious appointment as a notary public when one of the positions becomes available. It was a very formative experience. My second job was at my current law firm, Cacheaux, Cavazos & Newton (CCN), which I joined more than 20 years ago while I was in the second semester of law school.

Q: What motivated you to pursue a legal career?

A: Dealing with sibling rivalry as I grew up, I often identified what I believed were unfair outcomes and such unfair results were unsettling for me. I gained an appreciation for fair outcomes and how to creatively pursue them. I have always enjoyed analyzing problems and helping others resolve them. Accordingly, pursuing a law degree was a decision that came naturally to me.

Q: Who was your chief mentor and how did he or she influence your career?

A: My chief mentor was and still is Felipe Chapula, who is now my partner at CCN and who most of you have already met through Primerus. Felipe is a great role model; I admire him both as a human and as a lawyer. Felipe patiently taught and trained me. He helped me develop many practical skills during the almost 20 years that I was based in CCN's Mexico City office. He is the most relevant influence in my career and an important cornerstone of my professional success.



Q: What's the best piece of advice you've ever received?

A: Success is an inevitable consequence to dedicated work, and if you are only focused on achieving results, you will not be able to enjoy the process. Sometimes the process is more important than the result.

Q: What is one thing you would like to learn to do?

A: I enjoy learning about new technology and would love to learn the basics of computer programming. I believe that coding knowledge and understanding will soon become a necessary skill for lawyers as well as many other professionals.

Q: What is your proudest career achievement?

A: As a Mexican lawyer who began my career at CCN, a bi-national firm with offices in the U.S. and Mexico, I have been able to adopt the business culture of both countries and combine such with regional practices and multi-cultural skills. As an example, I lead a project that required pushing a complex country-to-country risk assessment procedure, with mutual official inspections and negotiations of new regulations between the sanitary authorities of Mexico and the U.S. to determine phytosanitary requirements to be satisfied by growers, exporters and importers, in order to allow Mexican tomato plantlets to enter the U.S. market. I enjoyed the bi-national nature of such a project, and I am proud that after so much hard work, we achieved the final country-to-country approval required to allow the plantlets to enter the U.S. market, including the site certification procedures for growers, the phytosanitary certificates for exports, and the controlled inspection of shipments. The resulting phytosanitary requirements still apply to growers who want to grow and export tomato plantlets from Mexico to the U.S.

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The sport of wakeboarding is a leisure time pursuit for Iker Dieguez.

Q: What other career path might you have chosen?

A: If I had not pursued a legal career, my Plan B was to study music and become a professional drummer. I love all kinds of music and still play the drums. Every Sunday, I practice cover songs with a neighbor who plays the guitar.

Q: What is your most treasured material possession?

A: I love my drum kit. I was 13 years old when I decided to take a break from tennis and picked up drumming. It was difficult to convince my dad to buy me a drum kit, but he ultimately agreed and bought me the cheapest one he could find, which was very old and heavily used. It was a sparkly blue jazz drum kit and sounded terrible. To my father's disbelief and although my drum kit was not well suited for a rock band, I did learn to play the drums and played in a band for several years. I have owned a few other drum kits after that first one my father gave me, but I see them all as the evolution of my first drum kit. My drum kit reminds me of my teenage self, which is still very important to me.

Q: What is your happiest childhood memory?

A: I do not have a single favorite one, but I do have a lot of happy memories of our family trips to a lake house in Valle de Bravo, which is a two-hour drive from Mexico City. It was our family weekend ritual to go to the lake house and we always had guests. Friday nights, we would play dominoes, poker, or rummy. Early on Saturdays, we would go waterskiing, followed

by lunch on the boat and ended the day with dinner at a restaurant. On Sunday mornings, we played tennis, followed by relaxing at the pool before packing and heading back to Mexico City. We still own that lake house, and in memory of my father, I continued that same weekend tradition with my wife and kids for many years.

Q: What is your favorite movie and book?

A: "Snatch" is one of my favorite movies. I love movies that make me laugh and that movie always cracks me up no matter how many times I have seen it. My favorite book is "Sophie's World" by Jostein Gaarder, which I read as a teenager and had a huge impact on my life.

Q: What is the most awe-inspiring place you have visited?

A: It is difficult to choose one, so I will share the most recent one. Last year, we took a family trip to Glacier National Park in Montana. We hiked to Avalanche Lake from the Trail of the Cedars trailhead, and the uphill part of the hike rewards the hikers with a spectacular view of the lake and background mountains with waterfalls, which remain completely hidden from sight until you reach the very end of the uphill hike, which increases the wow factor. It was amazing and I will treasure the memory of that location forever.



The splendor of Glacier National Park in Montana served as the backdrop for a photo of Iker with his wife Laura Torres, and their two children, Maria and Iker.

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Q: What are your favorite leisure time pursuits?

A: Aside from playing the drums on Sundays, tennis is what takes most of my leisure time. I try to practice as much as possible throughout the week. I recently joined a team in a USTA league, and we play against other teams over the weekend. I also enjoy listening to podcasts while driving. I am currently following a podcast on a scientific approach to happiness. I am also very curious about blackholes and subatomic particles, so I enjoy watching videos that explain such concepts.

Q: What is your favorite famous or inspirational quote?

A: Nothing is absolute, everything changes. Reality is symmetric and balance is always better than any of the two extremes. The present is what determines both your past and your future. Assumption is the cause of many mistakes and validation is always key to success.

Q: Who is on your guest list for the ideal dinner party?

A: My wife and kids would be the first to be invited and, in an imaginary situation, I would love to have dinner with the following guests: Jagadish Vasudev, Neil deGrasse Tyson, John Bonham, Yuval Noah Harari, Rafael Nadal, Roger Federer, Eddie Vedder, Debbie Harry, and Carlos Santana.

Q: What are the top three items on your bucket list?

A: Visit Hawaii. Learn a coding language. To help one of my mentees become a partner at CCN.



Iker Dieguez is a drumming enthusiast, practicing regularly with his neighbor Ryan Ugland, a talented guitarist.