

Q & A

Q & A with David Villadolid



David Villadolid is the senior partner in the Employment Law Section at Burch & Cracchiolo, P.A. in Phoenix, Ariz.

A 1982 graduate of Georgetown University Law Center, Villadolid advises management and executives on a variety of employment issues including compliance with state and federal employment laws and regulations; recruiting, hiring, discipline and termination of employees; restrictive covenants; severance agreements; reductions in force; structuring the workforce (including the use of independent contractors and leased, part-time and temporary employees); executive compensation; and the defense of discrimination and retaliation claims before the EEOC and other agencies and tribunals.

A member of the Primerus™ Board of Directors, Villadolid also serves as the Chair of the Labor & Employment Law Section of Primerus™.



“Which is more important,” asked Big Panda, “the journey or the destination?”

“The company.” said Tiny Dragon.

A cartoon by James Norbury, an artist and illustrator in South Wales, underscores a philosophy that attorney David Villadolid holds dear.

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

A: In college, I waited on tables and scooped ice cream at a local luncheonette. After college, I worked at Bloomingdale’s and met my wife when I sold her a Famous Amos cookie. The year before law school, I did temp work as a paralegal for several white shoe law firms in NYC. I did start a full-time job as a paralegal at a big Wall Street firm but was fired before lunch on my first day.

Q: What motivated you to pursue a legal career?

A: My dad was an ophthalmologist and a skilled surgeon. Even though I did not want to become a doctor, I wanted the same relationship of trust and confidence my dad had with his patients.

One story I remember: Even though my dad always made sure that all patients were seen on time, one day he was running very late. My dad’s assistant peeked into my dad’s office and saw that he was holding the hand of an elderly patient as she cried softly and told her story.

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

A: When I got out of law school, I thought that lawyers had to be serious and pompous. I went to work for Tom Hogan, who was a skilled zoning attorney with a wry sense of humor and a rock-solid sense of ethics. There was never any question about what was right, what was wrong, and what we were going to do. Tom never lectured; instead, he let his actions show the way.

From Tom, I learned how to talk with clients and the importance of getting out of the library. I learned how to be an advocate even when clients don’t always tell the whole

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truth. And I learned how to do this with a sense of humor and humility. I also became more comfortable with asking the stupid question and simply saying, “I don’t know.” Instead of thinking I always had to know the answer, I started to understand that first I had to figure out what questions to ask.

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

A: After telling Tom that I had taken the bar in Arizona and was planning to move there, I said that I was having trouble deciding between two job offers. Both were reputable firms and did excellent legal work. I told Tom that one was offering a little more money, but I liked the people in the other firm more. Tom’s immediate response was, “You idiot! It’s the people!” I’ve now been with Burch & Cracchiolo for over 35 years.

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

A: I would like to learn how to weld, so I can make big sculptures.

Q: What is your proudest career achievement?

A: Convincing the attorneys of Burch & Cracchiolo to move to new offices; selecting and designing every single aspect of the new space; completing construction during the first few months of the pandemic on schedule and under budget; creating an amazing space for the future attorneys of Burch & Cracchiolo.

Q: What other career path might you have chosen?

A: Teacher.



A family photo op featured Nancy and David Villadolid; their daughter, Jamie; and son, Jake, with his wife, Natasha.



David Villadolid in a keepsake photo with his best friend Peter, who sadly passed away in 2021.

Q: What is your most treasured material possession?

A: My wedding ring.

Q: What is your happiest childhood memory?

A: Playing with my brother.

Q: What is your favorite movie and book?

A: Movie: “Everything Everywhere All at Once.”

Book: “Extremely Loud & Incredibly Close.”

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

A: Jerusalem.

Q: What are your favorite leisure time pursuits?

A: Listening to music, hiking, cooking, and making cocktails.

Q: What is your favorite famous or inspirational quote?

A: “Russian warship. Go f*** yourself!”

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

A: My best friend Peter, who passed away in February 2021.