

## CORPORATECOUNSEL

### THE 2024 WIPL AWARDS: LAW FIRM

SEPTEMBER 19, 2024

#### LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT WINNER

• **Briefly tell us about your career so far.**

I spent the vast majority of my career in public service, first at the Ninth Circuit and then, for almost 35 years, at the California Supreme Court. I served three chief justices as principal attorney, a title that covered a broad array of responsibilities and opportunities to improve the administration of justice.

• **What has been the most significant barrier/challenge in your career and how did you overcome it?**

Early on, being a young woman was challenging, especially in open court. I also had medical challenges later in my career. I overcame both by focusing on the work at hand and nurturing my interest in problem solving. I often say denial was my most effective treatment, aided by the intense requirements of my work.



Beth J. Jay  
Horvitz & Levy

• **What is the best leadership advice you've given or received, and why do you think it was effective?**

The best way to lead is to ensure those being led are heard. It allows everyone a chance to participate, and often turns up good ideas. Leading doesn't automatically mean you know everything.

Next, take responsibility. Enormous amounts of time get wasted by efforts to avoid doing that. Quickly acknowledging a mistake or reconsidering a decision that isn't effective—and then turning to how to get things right—defuses anxiety, gets things moving, and can be very educational. It's important to remember that everyone makes mistakes, and what is most important is whether they have learned from them.

In other words, being open to learning, actively listening, and respect for those with whom you work are key to effective leadership.