



## Lowenstein Sandler's Women's Initiative Network Podcast: Real Talk

### Episode 1 - Real Talk: Who We Are and Why We're Here

By [Megan Monson](#), [Nicole Fulfree](#), [Rachel Moseson Dikovics](#)

December 2021

---

**Amanda Cipriano:** Welcome to the Lowenstein Sandler podcast series: The Women's Initiative Network's "Real Talk." I'm Amanda Cipriano, an associate attorney and member of the Women's Initiative Network at Lowenstein Sandler. Before we begin, please take a moment to subscribe to our podcast series at [lowenstein.com/podcasts](https://www.lowenstein.com/podcasts), or find us on iTunes, Spotify, Pandora, Google Podcasts, and SoundCloud. Now let's take a listen.

**Rachel Dikovics:** Welcome to the very first episode of the Women's Initiative Network: "Real Talk." We're your hosts.

**Megan Monson:** Megan.

**Nicole Fulfree:** Nicole.

**Rachel Dikovics:** And Rachel. And we're so excited to kick off this podcast, tell you a little bit about ourselves, and give you a preview of the first few topics we're going to cover in the coming weeks.

**Megan Monson:** My name is Megan Monson and I'm counsel in the Employee Benefits & Executive Compensation practice group at the law firm of Lowenstein Sandler, where all three of us practice law. I've been at Lowenstein Sandler for close to six years and have been practicing since 2013. My work focuses on advising businesses and C-suite executives on a wide variety of employee benefits and executive compensation matters, with a focus on ensuring compliance and minimizing costs. I represent an array of public and private businesses of varying sizes and across multiple industries.

**Nicole Fulfree:** Hi everybody. I'm Nicole Fulfree and in September I'll have been at Lowenstein for seven years. I'm counsel in Lowenstein's Bankruptcy & Restructuring Department, where we primarily focus our practice on corporate Chapter 11 cases, which is when a bankruptcy seeks to reorganize its debt and or sell off or liquidate its business. Although we do represent companies seeking to file bankruptcy (who are called debtors), Lowenstein is widely recognized as a creditor-side firm, meaning we represent those who are owed money by the company that has filed bankruptcy. I represent individual creditors, creditors' committees, institutional shareholders and investors, and also class action plaintiffs with claims against a bankrupt company.

- Rachel Dikovics:** And I'm Rachel Dikovics an associate in Lowenstein's White Collar Criminal Defense practice group. It'll soon be my fourth year practicing law at Lowenstein, which is hard for me to believe. I represent corporations, government entities, and individuals in internal and external investigations, white collar criminal defense and regulatory compliance matters, and complex commercial litigation. Pro bono work is also very important to me. And in that space, I focus on helping victims of domestic violence obtain final restraining orders against their abusers.
- Nicole Fulfree:** Along with Lynda A. Bennett, the chair of our firm's Insurance Recovery Group and an all-around badass attorney, we make up the executive board of Lowenstein's Women's Initiative Network, or as it's usually known, WIN. Our work through WIN is aimed at empowering and supporting Lowenstein's women attorneys to achieve both professional and personal success.
- Megan Monson:** WIN provides a forum for our women to build genuine friendships, facilitate trust and camaraderie, and gain new perspectives from one another. We celebrate and embrace our differences. We encourage creativity, generosity, and passion in all of our personal and professional endeavors. We strive to create a community that facilitates the recruitment of women law students and lateral women lawyers who recognize and appreciate the different approach that we're taking to supporting and developing one another.
- Rachel Dikovics:** That's who we are. And now we'll tell you a little bit about why we're here. The three of us have spent a lot of time talking together and with other WIN women, some of whom you'll hear from in our upcoming episodes, about the issues that often come to define the personal and professional lives of women operating in the corporate world. In this podcast, we're going to discuss strategies and practical tips that have been key to our successes and those of our colleagues and mentors. And, just as importantly, talk through constructive ways to deal with setbacks and disappointments. Our goal will always be to keep our conversations honest, and to provide our listeners with real, actionable advice and information to enrich your professional and personal lives.
- Megan Monson:** That's exactly what we strive to provide in our WIN programming as well. To kick off our conversation, we're going to talk a little bit about our own experiences as women attorneys, how and why we found WIN, and the work that we do together. I joined Lowenstein as a lateral hire and found that I struggled to find my place at the firm. I initially got involved with WIN in a limited capacity by helping with the WIN book club. But I soon realized that WIN was a great way to connect with other women at the firm. It helped me build so many personal and professional relationships. As I attended more WIN programming, I started to understand the power and benefit of supporting other women and how developing a sense of community could really shape me as a person and as an attorney. WIN helped me find myself.
- Megan Monson:** I eagerly sought more opportunities to get involved with planning the programming that was so eye-opening and game-changing for me. WIN is one of the reasons that I genuinely love working at Lowenstein. Participating in events and planning programming is a labor of love. WIN has provided me

with so many benefits and opportunities that I wanted to share its benefits with others.

**Nicole Fulfree:** Megan, you mentioned how the Women's Initiative helped you in your struggle to find your place. And I think that WIN plays a really similar role for me. Although there are more women practicing law than ever before, the unfortunate truth is that the law has traditionally been a male-dominated field. Perhaps particularly for me in a financially-focused practice group, I find that I'm often the only woman in a conference room, a mediation, a courtroom, or staffed on a case. And we're lawyers, we spend a lot of time at work. So being able to seek out support from your colleagues is super important to just surviving the everyday grind of our jobs. But at the same time, some issues that women face are particular to women. Nothing against my male colleagues, whom I greatly respect and whose company I enjoy, but there's just something about discussing issues in a room full of women who trust each other and can speak with vulnerability, whether it's about the impact of traditional gender stereotypes on our personal and professional lives, the importance of allyship at work, or the pervasiveness of imposter syndrome that really makes me feel like I belong.

**Nicole Fulfree:** WIN has opened the doors to conversation that have helped me realize that other people feel the way that I feel, which gives me confidence and a greater sense of self. And I think these are conversations that are very much worth sharing.

**Rachel Dikovics:** And when I was a law student searching for a law firm, the single most important thing to me was that the firm have specific support for women attorneys. I worked for a few years between college and law school in government and government oriented roles, and learned nearly immediately that being a woman in a professional environment came with challenges that my male colleagues simply did not face. That's not to say they didn't face their own challenges, but simply being male was never one of them. Women's advancement in the legal field quickly became a major priority for me. And I wanted to make sure that wherever I was practicing was on one hand already supportive of its women, and on the other open to continuing to make changes to better support and retain women. That's what brought me to WIN. I saw what my co-hosts, Nicole and Megan, were doing, along with Lynda Bennett, and immediately wanted to be part of it. Our next few episodes are going to keep the real talk going and cover some topics close to our hearts and important to our professional and personal development.

**Megan Monson:** On the next episode of the Women's Initiative's "Real Talk," we're going to explore the secret sauce behind a successful women's network. And in later episodes we'll plan to explore personal and professional resiliency and how to find mentors and sponsors. Just to name a few.

**Rachel Dikovics:** We're so excited to start this journey with all of you. See you next time.

**Amanda Cipriano:** Thank you for listening to today's episode. Please subscribe to our podcast series at [lowenstein.com/podcasts](https://lowenstein.com/podcasts) or find us on iTunes, Spotify, Pandora, Google Podcasts, and SoundCloud. Lowenstein Sandler podcast series is presented by Lowenstein Sandler and cannot be copied or rebroadcast

without consent. The information provided is intended for a general audience. It is not legal advice or substitute for the advice of counsel. Prior results do not guarantee a similar outcome. The content reflects the personal views and opinions of the participants. No attorney client relationship is being created by this podcast and all rights are reserved.